

ECHO EVALUATION REPORT

GLOBAL PLANS 1996 – 1999

NORTH MALI AND NORTH NIGER

WATER and RURAL DEVELOPMENT - 2000

24 February – 29 March 2000

Final Report – 10 May 2000

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The comments contained herein only reflect the opinion of the consultant.*

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Contents

- Acknowledgements..... 1
- Contents..... 2
- 1. Executive Summary 3
 - 1.1 Subject of the Evaluation 3
 - 1.2 Description of the Evaluation 3
 - 1.3 Conclusions 4
 - 1.4 Recommendations 7
 - 1.5 Lessons Learned 7
- 2. Main Report..... 9
 - 2.1 Details of the Evaluated Programme 9
 - 2.2 Methodology 9
 - 2.3 Introduction..... 10
 - 2.4 Evaluation of Water and Rural Development Sectors in Northern Mali and Niger 11
 - General..... 11
 - Relevance 12
 - Needs assessment 12
 - Context and Humanitarian Situation..... 13
 - Intervention Strategy 14
 - Co-ordination, Coherence and Complementarity..... 16
 - Field Co-ordination 16
 - Coherence and Complementarity..... 16
 - Effectiveness 17
 - Results Attained 17
 - Factors of Success and Failure..... 19
 - Efficiency 20
 - Partner’s operational Management and Organisation..... 20
 - Administrative Management..... 21
 - Impact and Strategic Implications 22
 - Impact..... 22
 - Perspectives and Viability 23
 - Visibility 24
 - Gender 24
 - Security 24
 - 2.5 Conclusions..... 27
 - 2.6 Recommendations 30
 - 2.7 Lessons Learned..... 30
- 3. Annexes 32
 - Annex 1 : Abbreviations 32
 - Annex 2 : Terms of Reference 33
 - Annex 3 : Places visited and Resource Persons encountered 38
 - Annex 4 : Reference List..... 41
 - Annex 5 : Technical Notes on Water Projects 42
 - Annex 6 : Technical Notes Basic Infrastructure 50
 - Annex 7 : Technical Notes on Income Creation 53
 - Annex 8 : Technical Notes on Micro projects 60

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 Subject of the Evaluation

Evaluation of Humanitarian Aid and Rehabilitation programmes financed by ECHO

Sectors: Water and Rural Development

Countries: North Mali and North Niger

Period Covered: 1996 – 1999 Mali, 1997 – 1999 Niger

Main Partners: ACF/ H, CICR, Croix Rouge B, GTZ, VSF, Transafrica, LVIA, ACORD, ANS, UNHCR, Premiere Urgence, COSPE, Eirene

Operation Contracts:

Mali: Decisions: on 28/03/96 (1.0 M Euros); MLI/B7-210 of 11/07/97 (7,6 M Euros)

and MLI/254 of 03/09/98 (5,0 M Euros)

Niger: Decisions: NIG/B7-210 of 16/07/97 (1,0 M Euros); /NIG/B7-210/97 of

/NER/254/ of 27/11/97 (1,9 M Euros); /NER/210/ of 30/11/98 (2,0 M Euros) and

02/08/99 (285.000 Euros).

Mali: total 19 contracts in water and rural development (10,005 m Euro)

Niger: total 17 contracts in water and rural development (5,019 m Euro)

Type of Operation: Provision of potable water, food security, construction of basic infrastructure and creation of income to accommodate the return and reintegration of displaced persons and refugees.

Specific Objectives within the Sector:

The sites for the returning refugees and displaced persons should be economically viable and supplied with a minimum level of social services in education, health, livestock services etc. The families should be at least self sufficient, either through food production or the generation of cash. Access to potable water should be assured, both for human and for livestock purposes, for all people who are in the process of reintegrating into the local society.

1.2 Description of the Evaluation

Dates of the Evaluation:

Starting 21 February 2000 with briefing, followed by field work until 29 March 2000. Final report submitted on 15 May 2000.

Report Number:

Name of Consultant:

Sjaak de Boer for Water and Rural Development sectors

Purpose:

The purpose of the evaluation is to analyse the appropriateness and the degree of success of the humanitarian aid provided by ECHO for those beneficiaries in the process of reintegration, its contribution to a sustainable livelihood, and to the process of peace building. The team has therefore analysed the effectiveness; efficiency as well as the impact of the operations; the role of ECHO; the continuum put in place towards structural development and the team has identified lessons learned and formulated recommendations for future operations in similar situations.

Methodology:

The team aimed to conduct this exercise both to learn valuable lessons and to determine the effectiveness and efficiency of the partners, within the given time and resources available. The rather large scope in the ToR meant that some priorities had to be set. The team spent much time in the field with the actual beneficiaries, the partners of ECHO and the local authorities to assess systematically how claimed achievements had been realised. The fact that for both interventions no ex ante Logical Framework was prepared made it sometimes difficult to precisely assess the results. However the team has opted,

where possible, to assess results, via a range of rather conventional evaluation criteria. Where necessary, a qualitative assessment has been made.

1.3 Conclusions

Conclusions regarding ECHO's humanitarian assistance to both countries in 1996 - 1999

The funding of programmes by ECHO in Mali North and Niger North came at the time that both regions regained a certain level of stability, allowing the return and reintegration of refugees and displaced persons. ECHO filled with its presence partly the gap left by both governments, recovering from an unstable period. Restoring normality was the first thing to be done. As highlighted in the overall synthesis report the ECHO interventions were a direct reply to elements of emergency, which were a result of a period of rebellion and instability. However instability was not the only reason for the emergency situation. It is important to realise that both countries experienced already a period of about 20 years of structural emergency in the North due to unfavourable climatic conditions, which situation was severely compounded by instability. It was only around 1998 that a transition towards development could start in certain regions, thanks also to two consecutive years of good rainfall.

Conclusions regarding the ECHO interventions in the North of Mali and Niger

Several lessons were drawn after evaluating the different interventions in the water and rural development sector, determining their strong and weak points. The strong and weak points as conclusions can be grouped, according to the criteria of relevance; effectiveness; efficiency; co-ordination, coherence and complementarity; impact and strategic implications; visibility and some cross cutting issues like gender and security.

Strong points

Relevance

1. The priority given to the water sector at the start of the interventions was very appropriate as there is no development in any other sector possible in both countries without creating water
2. Social considerations, like the wish of refugees in exile have been taken into account in site planning, convincing many refugees to return
3. A reasonable balance was attained in attention to both returning refugees, internally displaced persons and persons who stayed on during the upheaval
4. The food for work programmes were in general appropriate at a time of shortage of food; food was distributed in the right quantities and food for work was boosting the morale and commitment of the population
5. ECHO had a reasonable balance in attention to both the river areas and the grazing zones concerning water and rural development requirements

Effectiveness

1. Partnership with local NGOs allowed the fragile civil society to gain experience in emergency and development work and created some capacity at local level
2. The intensive work programmes (HIMO¹) were effective, as food distribution should have distorted local markets; and they were timely and provided a source of income to many families when other sources were still scarce or absent
3. HIMO provided purchase capacity to local families at the time that a market for many income generating activities (co-operatives) was needed
4. The local purchase of food, commodities, animals, as well as the hiring of local transport like boats and donkeys for transport, has given a welcome cash input in local economies and created a temporary source of employment for many
5. Agricultural production projects have diversified the sources of income for the farmers, spreading risks
6. Local authorities have developed, also through the contacts with ECHO correspondents, a very positive approach towards consolidation of investment with an emphasis on operation and maintenance requirements

Efficiency

1. ECHO partners had in general a good feel for the local circumstances allowing them to continue with project implementation even during times of insecurity and instability
2. Most ECHO partners managed to work closely with the local population during the identification and execution of the projects, laying the foundation for a sense of ownership for the output
3. ECHO was flexible in adjusting the programmes where necessary, adding to overall impact of the programmes and creating a good image and relation with local authorities
4. ECHO partner delivered in general what they had promised to the local communities
5. Monitoring and reporting on quantities of input by partners was in general good

Co-ordination, coherence and complementarity

- There had been constructive consultations between the EU Delegation and ECHO on funding of the rehabilitation of existing infrastructure and the construction of new infrastructure in both water supply and irrigation projects

Impact and strategic implications

1. HIMO works created necessary infrastructure, and it contributed to the process of pacification and provided a valuable alternative for ex-combatants
2. The emphasis on agricultural production and storage of produce, after provision of emergency food supplies and water, gave a considerable boost to the local economy
3. Food and fodder distribution programmes did not considerably disturb local markets

¹ HIMO stands for Haute Intensité de Main d'Oeuvre, a work intensive approach using cash for work

4. The beneficiary contribution in cash demanded for a capital investment, like the case with water pumps and camels, created a feel of responsibility and ownership for assets among the beneficiaries
5. The Programme Mali North (PMN) diversified the sources of income for many dry-land farmers, mitigating potential impact of drought in years to come (disaster preparedness)
6. The PMN and the agricultural production programmes in Air Region in Niger gave farmers confidence in being able to take (part of) their future into their own hands

Visibility

- The visibility of ECHO as donor has in general been adequately cared for by the partner organisation

Gender

- There has been a balanced attention to gender in most of the programmes

Security

- ECHO partners often continued to do their valuable job, despite a sometimes insecure environment

Weak Points

Relevance

1. Need identification was sometimes poorly executed, resulting in buildings not being used by the target group, and / or infrastructure being put in place without a firm commitment from government for the operation budget
2. Market research regarding potential for income generating activities by co-operatives had often been lacking, resulting in some projects hardly or not being viable
3. Ecological carrying capacity has not been sufficiently considered in the planning of sites, with number of persons often as guiding principle in the planning of water points rather than their number of cattle
4. Although economic activities have been developed at many new sites, agricultural diversification, e.g. vegetable growing, was sometimes lacking
5. No Logical Frameworks had been developed in order to arrive at the most optimal solution to problems identified. As a result monitoring was limited to quantities of inputs (efficiency level), while there was little consideration for effectiveness and the impact of output.

Effectiveness

1. Insufficient attention for training in many cost recovery schemes and control systems (particularly at water points) led to sub standard operation
2. ECHO's restricted timeframe did not allow for funding of longer term training requirements, limiting local capacity for operation and maintenance of new technology, and affecting viability of economic activities
3. Partnership between international and local NGOs / networks did not allow for transfer of knowledge, limiting local capacity for further training of beneficiary groups

4. There was not always a good balance between the value of food distributed and value of the work executed in food for work programmes, adding to a feel of free hand-outs and dependency among the target group
5. ECHO had difficulty to determine its cut off point in the PMN: criteria for an exit strategy had never been discussed, giving the partner the impression that ECHO had become a structural partner in development

Efficiency

1. Tendering was seldom applied, despite contractual obligation, reducing transparency and to some extent accountability of money spent
2. Most NGOs had high indirect costs for personnel and transport
3. Lessons learned during the execution of programmes have not been systematically recorded into an institutional memory
4. Capacity of local NGOs in both countries is still very weak, despite some efforts by ECHO partners to co-operate with local partners

Co-ordination, coherence and complementarity

1. Although ECHO prefers to finance temporary needs of target groups (e.g. initial food and non food stocks) ECHO frequently ended up funding capital requirements in the PMN programme, being a major area of attention of KfW, one of the co-financers
2. ECHO policy was not always clear for partners when to apply direct contracting and when to apply indirect contracting in a HCR/ECHO co-operation

Impact and strategic implications

1. The dependency of some partners on ECHO funding was sometimes very obvious, limiting the continuation of momentum created
2. Many ECHO partners lack an exit strategy in their project proposals, as a consequence ECHO intervention lasted too long, highlighted also by increasing demands for funding of institutional capacity
3. Investment in infrastructure has created an operation and maintenance burden for both governments for which it has not sufficient budget
4. The design of water points was based on the number of persons, rather than on ecological carrying capacity and livestock, creating in some instances severe pressure on natural resources

Visibility

- ECHO part in the co-funding of GTZ, UNHCR and CICR programmes was not very visible, with the extent of co-funding often not known to the correspondents

Security

1. Local authorities did not always give the impression to do their level best in resolving the background of incidences

2. NGOs regarded the recording of security information a labour intensive task, reducing the efficiency of the system proposed in the new handbook

1.4 Recommendations

The success of linking rehabilitation in water and rural development to a phase of development all revolves around a sufficient developed integrated planning, in addition to an active participation of the population. Training in order to create sufficient institutional capacity at local level (e.g. water committees, village committees) to manage in a sustainable manner investment is integral part of such planning and will need a long-term commitment. Those dynamics cannot be easily caught in restricted timeframes and limited emergency funding formats as the ECHO instrument.

However in the absence of sufficient feasible instruments, like DG Development resources, ECHO made it possible to guarantee in the North of both countries at least a minimum level of services in water and basic infrastructure to accommodate returning refugees and displaced persons. Access to some income had been developed in a kind of accelerated emergency to development concept. Experiences in both countries however learn that another instrument than ECHO should be developed to support, after the initial ECHO phase of emergency and rehabilitation, the vital link in the grey zone between relief and development.

There is thus an urgent need for more integrated planning in both the North of Niger and Mali, linking sectors while taking into account specific social, cultural, economic and political considerations of the target groups. The National Indicative Programmes of EU in both countries could play in this regard an important role in increasing effectiveness of the Microprojects instrument to further build upon ECHO investment in water and rural development in both countries.

1.5 Lessons Learned

Concerning ECHO strategy in similar interventions

Although emergency programmes often do not allow much time for proper needs assessment with an active beneficiary involvement, a situation of more structural emergency with development kind of questions should allow for more in-depth assessment involving beneficiaries.

The use of Logical Frameworks will improve ECHO's ability to assess applications for project extensions in the context of the original objectives. In addition, the encouragement of the development of applications for projects with a defined beginning, end and a set of objectives will also facilitate funding of a range of projects, rather than the provision of funding for 6 – 12 months only, a practice which is often regarded as unsatisfactory.

UNHCR is an interesting partner for ECHO at the start of an emergency, there where UNHCR has already an implementing capacity operational through its partners. Later in time, when ECHO has established good contacts with its own partners, this advantage becomes less relevant.

Funding from ECHO in larger projects should not count for more than 60 % of total finance for a project in order to reduce dependency and to create more scope for continuing momentum created.

Where applicable and appropriate, ECHO partners should be encouraged to form partnerships with local organisations already at the start of programmes, as to stimulate the development of local institutional capacity and to create a feasible handover strategy on the longer term.

Tendering procedures in water and rural development projects should as a matter of principle always be applied in order to better guarantee transparency and accountability.

On sector level

The percentage of community contribution in a water and rural development project is less important than the fact whether the local community participated to their best capabilities, in order to create a sufficient level of ownership for the output.

Water points, at which water is extracted manually or alternatively with draught power, do not need a yield above 3 cum per hour, while a limited yield will further restrict the attraction of larger livestock herds than ecological carrying capacity possibly can sustain.

Ecological carrying capacity and a technology within reach of the community should be overriding criteria for the rehabilitation or design of water points.

Agricultural production projects, initiated with ECHO funds, should as soon as possible continue with more development oriented sources of funding and credit, once a certain level of self sufficiency has been attained for the target group.

Concerning Commission strategy

Co-ordination between ECHO and the Delegation should as a matter of principle already be developed during the early phase of ECHO for water and rural development projects with a distinct development character, in order to avoid unclear division of responsibilities.

A Micro projects instrument to further build upon achievements of the ECHO investment in water and rural development will be much more effective with a solid integrated planning, creating links between sectors while taking into account social, cultural, economic and political considerations of the target groups.

The minimum requirement of 25 % contribution towards the capitalised value of the project for the Micro Projects Programme in both countries might be difficult to fulfil for some communities, while others will easily comply.

There is need to co-operate also closely with other donors and organisations, as funding sources will not suffice for exclusive reliance on Commission funding only during the process of linking rehabilitation with development.

2 MAIN REPORT

2.1 *Details of the evaluated Programme*

The evaluated programme activities in this report concern the Water and Rural Development sectors in the different operation contracts in the countries of Mali and Niger during the period of 1996 – 1999 for Mali and the period of 1997 – 1999 for Niger, as part of the evaluation contract ECHO/EVA/210/1999/01010.

The operation contracts for Mali concern the decisions on 28/03/96 for 1.0 M Euros; MLI/B7-210 of 11/07/97 for 7,6 M Euros and the decision of MLI/254 of 03/09/98 for 5,0 M Euros. For Niger it concerns the decisions NIG/B7-210 of 16/07/97 for 1,0 M Euros; NIG/B7-210/97 of 27/11/97 for 1,9 M Euros; NER/210/ of 30/11/98 for 2,0 M Euros and NER/254/ of 02/08/99 for 285.000 Euros.

This report is part of three evaluation reports regarding ECHO's assistance to Mali and Niger. The evaluation of the health sector and a synthesis and strategy report analysing ECHO's overall intervention are the other reports.

The purpose of this evaluation is to analyse the appropriateness and the degree of success of the humanitarian aid provided by ECHO for those beneficiaries in the process of reintegration, its contribution to a sustainable livelihood, and to the process of peace building. The team has therefore analysed the effectiveness; efficiency as well as the impact of the operations; the role of ECHO; the continuum put in place towards structural development and the team has identified lessons learned and formulated recommendations for future operations in similar situations.

In Mali a total of 19 contracts were executed in the water and rural development sectors (10,005 m Euro), while in Niger it concerned a total of 17 contracts in water and rural development (5,019 m Euro).

The main partners for ECHO in the water and rural development sectors in Mali and Niger were ACF/H, CICR, Croix Rouge B, GTZ, VSF, Transafrica, LVIA, ACORD, ANS, UNHCR, Premiere Urgence, COSPE and Eirene.

The type of intervention funded under the ECHO programme in the water and rural development sectors concern the following activities: provision of potable water, food security, construction of basic infrastructure and creation of income to accommodate the return and reintegration of displaced persons and refugees.

The specific objectives in the water and rural development sector where therefore that the sites for the returning refugees and displaced persons should be economical viable and supplied with a minimum level of social services in education, health, livestock services etc. The families should be at least self sufficient, either through food production or the generation of cash. Access to potable water should be assured, both for human and for livestock purposes, for all people who are in the process of reintegrating into the local society.

2.2 *Methodology*

The evaluation team aimed to conduct this exercise both to learn valuable lessons and to determine the effectiveness and efficiency of the partners, within the given time and resources available. The rather large scope in the ToR meant that some priorities had to be set. The team spent much time in the field with the actual beneficiaries, the partners of ECHO and the local authorities to assess systematically how claimed achievements had been realised. The fact that for both interventions no ex ante Logical Framework was prepared made it sometimes difficult to precisely assess the results. However the team has opted, where possible, to assess results, via a range of rather conventional evaluation criteria. Where necessary, a qualitative assessment has been made.

2.3 Introduction

For a general description of the situation in both Mali and Niger this report refers to the synthesis report where the situation at the start of the ECHO intervention is described. A separate section in the synthesis report discusses under chapter I also the build up to the crises in both countries.

In this sector report some general characteristics in water and rural development will be described, for further information the reader should consult Annex 5 to 7, being the technical note on water; basic infrastructure and income creation.

Water

The government of Mali had made provision of potable water a priority in its policy in the early nineties². Investments in water under development and more emergency type of programmes from 1993 on had contributed to coverage of around 50 % of total water demand in 1998 in the rural areas. The fact however that 27 % of the pump operated systems (representing around 10 % of all water points in Mali) are either in bad condition or do not function at all poses a serious problem for securing sufficient access to water.

The government in Niger, through the EU funded PROZOPAS programme, had initiated in 1995 a water programme in the more permanent grazing areas of Tahoua, Agadez and Maradi. The objective of PROZOPAS was among others to improve the utilisation of grazing land through creation of additional water points, while introducing a sustainable management structure for operation and maintenance³.

The commissioning of the UNIGEO report in 1998 by the EU Delegation in Mali became a turning point in the policy of ECHO regarding the creation of water points, particularly in the grazing areas.

ECHO's policy before the UNIGEO study, which was requested by ECHO as well, tended to focus on the creation of new water points. The report recommended rehabilitating existing water points rather than creating new water points in order to:

- Minimise disturbance of local social relations in the communities, as it was not always clear to outsiders who was eligible to use of and control over the water point
- Avoid an extra burden on available natural resources in the immediate surrounding of water points

This phenomenon is also described in the Best Consult study for the PROZOPAS programme in Niger, summarising three major developments:

- Concentration of large herds of cattle around new water points, particularly pump operated stations, causing havoc to natural resources and disputes among users
- No control on herds by cattle owners for prolonged periods of days

² See 'Strategie Nationale' in reference list.

³ See also 'Etude de Faisabilite' of Best Consult of July 1999 on the necessity of a regional water fund, reference list 2.

- Insufficient or a total absence of maintenance of water points by technical government departments

The problem with many water points in both countries created in the past under donor funded government programmes is that by decree access became free for all, making it hard for the local population around a water point to assert sufficient control with regard to maintenance and sustainable use. Insufficient attention to the installation of reliable operation and maintenance structures (local water committees, village committees etc) has been identified in both countries as an area of concern. Investment in training and local capacity building is required, as highlighted in studies recently undertaken in both countries⁴. Demand for such had often been overlooked as a consequence of attention paid to investment in restoring sufficient capacity in the rural areas after the droughts in the 70s and the 80s.⁵ The fact that a considerable number of water points became defunct in both countries after the social upheaval in the early nineties completed the picture at the start of the ECHO intervention in both countries.

Basic Infrastructure

In order to accommodate the returning refugees from neighbouring countries the government in Niger had decided that several new sites should be constructed. It was important to facilitate these sites with basic infrastructure. In Mali there was particular demand for facilities in health, either to be rehabilitated or to be constructed. Therefore infrastructure was proposed under ECHO funded programmes in both Mali and Niger to accommodate the reintegration of returning refugees and displaced persons. In Mali returning communities have received support in construction of health centres or health posts; housing for medical personnel; veterinary posts. In Niger the package went further with construction of schools with dormitory facilities; community centres; canteens etc. As much infrastructure had been damaged or had fallen in disrepair as a result of negligence there was also need for stocking facilities for agricultural production projects.

Income Creation

One of the main concerns for all donors in Mali and Niger was to achieve a certain level of self-reliance for the returning refugees and displaced persons, once reintegrated into the local society. The climatic conditions, essential to develop economic activities, had always been harsh in the North and had even deteriorated over the last decades, making it not easy to develop alternative sources of income in both Mali and Niger. The debit of the river Niger declined over the last 70 years with at least 13 – 14 % in Northern Mali, while annual rainfall in both Niger and Mali declined considerably, with in some places drops of 30 – 35 % over the period over 1930 – 1990 (Tombouctou, Goundam, Gao).⁶

The wish of the government of both Mali and Niger for many nomads to settle more permanently is quite understandable. Water sources and grazing land in the vast

⁴ See also 'Etude d'Inventaire Hydraulique dans les Regions du Nord Mali, partie Socio-Economique' IRAM November 1998

⁵ See for Mali 'Strategie Nationale' and for Niger the PROZOPAS strategy papers (reference list 1, 2, 3)

⁶ See UNIGEO report 1998 (reference list 6)

regions of North Mali and Niger can provide income for only a limited number of families due to ecological carrying capacity.

The river zones and inundated areas around the river Niger in both countries reflect however an enormous economic potential. Reason is the capacity of these areas to even produce a harvest in times of drought. Many of these areas were deserted after the social upheaval. Emphasis in many programmes was therefore to proceed as soon as possible again into a phase of self-subsistence.

2.4 Evaluation of Water and Rural Development sectors in Northern Mali and Niger

General

At the start of both interventions in Mali and Niger there did not exist an overall global plan for the ECHO intervention. Funding decisions are however supported by separate global plans like the decision for Mali in December 1998. Strategy papers had been made in 1997, which stipulated the global objective of the different interventions envisaged by ECHO in the water and rural development sector⁷:

1. On the *humanitarian level*: Emergency aid to those most affected by the rebellion; be it returning refugees, internally displaced persons or local people who stayed in the area during the upheaval. The support concerned among others the distribution of food and non food items, in most cases under a cash for work programme and construction of basic infrastructure in water and for social services
2. On the *continuum level*: Socio economic reintegration of the affected population, including the ex-combatants, through rehabilitation and further development of water facilities for human, animal and production purposes; start of agricultural production (both in crop and livestock) and development of small enterprises.
3. On the level of *peace building and reconciliation*: contribution to stabilisation and peace building in the former conflict areas of Tahoua and Agadez in Northern Niger and in the three Northern regions Tombouctou, Kidal and Gao in Mali, through local capacity building and through support to the peace agreements.

The interventions proposed by the different partners of ECHO had to be within these broad objectives in order to qualify for ECHO funding. The overall objective or project purpose of the ECHO programme could be described as:

Contribution to stabilisation and peace building in the former conflict areas of Northern Niger and Mali.

The specific objectives of the ECHO intervention could then be derived from the first two stated objectives:

Emergency aid to those most affected by the rebellion, such immediately followed by the socio economic reintegration of the affected people into local society.

⁷ See internal ECHO documents 'Objectifs Globaux de ECHO au Nord-Mali' and 'Objectifs Globaux de ECHO au Nord-Niger', with contributions from among others ECHO correspondents.

These specific objectives will then have to be obtained through the following results:

1. Sites for returning refugees are in potential economically viable and supplied with a minimum level of social services in education, health, livestock services etc.
2. Self sufficiency, either through food production or the generation of cash, is assured for all families
3. Access to potable water is assured, both for human and for livestock purposes, for all people who are in the process of reintegrating into the local society

The specific sections in this main report regarding water, basic infrastructure and creation of income refer also to the annexes containing technical notes on these sub-sectors.⁸

If the text in this report refers to 'the programme' it refers to all water projects and rural development activities, like basic infrastructure, income creation etc., developed during the course of the ECHO interventions 1996 –1999, in both Niger and Mali.

Relevance

ECHO arrived in both countries at a time that a minimum level of stability in the Northern regions had been restored, allowing for direct interventions in the field. ECHO filled with its presence partly the gap left by governments, both recovering from an unstable period. Restoring normality was the first thing to be done. In order to understand to context of the programme it is important to realise that both countries had a period of about 20 years of structural emergency in the North due to climatic conditions and instability. It was only around 1998 that a transition towards development could start.

Needs assessment

Analysis of needs

Assessment of needs was in most instances done in close co-operation with local leaders and the population. Some programmes can even be described as very bottom up (Programme Mali – North), risking much influence from local political circumstances; other programmes were emergency oriented in their approach. In some instances particular attention has been paid to the wishes of the local leaders in order to speed up the return of refugees from camps in Algeria and other neighbouring countries.

The planning of the sites in most programmes (HRC, ACF/H, CICR etc) was based on the number of refugees to be (re) settled at a certain site.

Water points were considered by local leaders in all regions in Northern Mali and Niger as fundamental to any sector development and rehabilitation. Without water there is no development. ECHO's relatively large attention to water has therefore

⁸ One should therefore first read the annexes before reading the main report on water and rural development

been in compliance with the perceived way of development for both local authorities and the population.

The affection of the population, e.g. historic ties with the region of origin for a particular sub-faction, had been in some instances an important consideration for the choice where to settle. Water points, chosen for this reason, had sometimes a limited yield. Government in both countries consider the social circumstances sufficient justification for these water points. ECHO has been flexible on this issue. The UNIGEO study of 1998, commissioned by the EU also on demand of ECHO, has been an important guide for the strategy in planning ECHO water projects.

Beneficiary identification

Most beneficiaries of the ECHO funding in Niger and Mali were internally displaced, while a small minority concerned returning refugees who came from refugee camps outside the country. New sites have a relatively high percentage of refugees. Site selection was executed in such way that ethnic tension was to be avoided at all times. The few families, already living at new sites, were integrated in the village target group. Some NGOs managed to integrate communities of Touareg and Peulh in the same village, like the case in Arahamat, Niger. Ex-combatants were likewise integrated into the target group. Sometimes it took a while before ex-combatants were prepared to return as they claimed preferential treatment of fully serviced sites before return from exile. Unlike Mali, Niger had no specific demobilisation programme for ex-combatants.

Among government officials in Mali there was some complaint towards emergency programmes having addressed too much the interests of returning population from exile and less so of internally displaced persons and population who stayed put during the upheaval. One official used the word discrimination. There was however indication that this complaint concerned the HCR programmes as they particularly focused on returning refugees, although ECHO financed HCR programmes.

One example was cited where the destruction by local population of a new water point, for returning refugees, was narrowly avoided. The balance in the attention paid to the local population and the returning refugees was therefore key to the success of beneficiary identification.

The Mali North programme (PMN) had for the major part been focussing on internally displaced persons. This choice was logic as the region between Attare and Dire had been deserted during the period of 1991 – 1993, as a result of ethnic conflict. The identification of direct beneficiaries in the irrigation schemes has been done entirely by the communities themselves without any criteria from the PMN. The only common condition applied across the board by all communities was the fact that the farmer should have been participating in the food for work programme to repair or construct an irrigation scheme.

The flood plains along the river Niger are a relatively rich area, with also large grazing areas. It might well be that about 20 % of the population had already found a sufficient and reliable source of income either in cattle rearing or in commerce, leaving 80 % of the population totally dependent on arable cropping and therefore target beneficiaries for the PMN programme.

Most programmes had achieved a balance in attention across ethnic lines. Very few complaints were recorded regarding this issue, although the programme might have encouraged some segregation within the new villages.

Context and humanitarian situation

Partner choice

The choice for ECHO partners in Niger was limited by the fact that only a few partners were active in the project area in 1996 or able to employ activities at rather short notice. Among them were COSPE, Premiere Urgence and ACF/H. COSPE had for example already been active in Niger since late 1986 and had therefore a good knowledge of the local circumstances.

The fact that the 2 partners of ECHO PU and ACF/H could stay on during the difficult period of social upheaval in the Air region during 1997 is proof of a good assessment of the local situation and was particularly appreciated by local authorities. Other NGOs at that time deemed it necessary to leave the area.

In Mali the choice for partners was broader as more organisations had already been active in the region before ECHO arrived. The first organisations intervening in the conflict areas, UNICEF and CICR, had since 1993 paved the way with varying level of success as confidence building with the local communities proved to be a cumbersome and long process.

ECHO intervention had in general been timely in the regions, with appropriate services on offer.

UNHCR found it difficult to understand why ECHO was prepared to fund to a considerable extent some partners directly, while the same partner only received limited funding once being partner of UNHCR in an ECHO funded programme. Also established partners of ECHO, with a good performance record found it difficult to understand why they were in some instances contracted directly by ECHO for constructing wells, and in other instance doing the same through HCR with ECHO funding. An estimate, based on some factual information, assessed the extra overhead costs created in these instances at about 15 % of total budget, which at the end are costs to the beneficiaries without them receiving tangible goods in return. ECHO policy was not always clear for its partners when direct and when indirect contracting was to be preferred.

ECHO has in general a good record among local authorities in choosing the right partner for a given task. Although some were newcomers to Niger and Mali most soon characterised themselves by being coherent in approach, being complementary to already ongoing initiatives based on a dynamic approach which involved in an appropriate manner the local population.

Knowledge of local capacity and national strategy

Relations between local authorities and ECHO partners were ranging from good to sometimes nearly absent. Some NGOs behaved like being in an emergency situation, focusing exclusively on their target groups rather than on co-ordination with local authorities, while being involved in more development oriented activities.

Intervention strategy

General Objective in relation to Madrid Declaration

The overall objective, of a contribution to stability and peace building in the former conflict areas, is entirely in line with the declaration. Referring to article 2.1, ECHO assistance was considered independent and impartial by all parties, addressing a crises which was not high on the international agenda, but threatening the survival of many (article 2.6). Most programmes proposed in a practical manner to strengthening the link between relief and development, while reinforcement of local capacity to cope with the prevailing situation was identified as urgent priority (article 2.10).

Relations needs and proposed projects

In most cases ECHO partners had developed activities that made sense for the target group. However the team could not retrieve whether this has been more a question of coincidence than of a logical planned approach. None of the project proposals presented to ECHO had for example been presented in the form of a Logical Framework, this despite the fact that many projects had distinct links with development issues.

Many proposals had some mixture of general and specific objectives. Objectively verifiable indicators to measure this benefit for the beneficiary were often lacking, and if present, sometimes too ambitious (programme Mali North). Indicators, if identified, were often only input related: volume of items distributed, length of erosion control works completed, number of persons reached etc. Quantitative indicators to measure effect of output on beneficiary benefit were often absent: use of water and payment for this water, timely operation of infrastructure put in place, stock forecasts for the food banks in the villages, time path for envisaged self reliance and surplus situation in agriculture, market for income generating activities, operation of water committees and village committees etc. One should consider this in the light that many partners enjoyed consecutive funding from ECHO for a prolonged period of 2 – 3 years. Some partners had reflected the progress on some of these indicators in their recent reporting, like the development of food stocks in the banks. The value of these data remains however somewhat relative, as there were no original set targets quantifying benefits from project purpose for the target group.

After the initial first phase of emergency supplies, ECHO funding became more development oriented under the 2nd phase. With activities in income creation the need for training of local committees and co-operatives became also more evident. This however demands in general a longer-term commitment than the standard ECHO financing of 6 to 12 months, such in order to create sufficient capacity to sustain investment.

Appropriateness and feasibility of planned strategy

Beneficiary involvement

During the first phase of rehabilitation of irrigation schemes the PMN choose for a food for work approach for arriving at an active involvement of the local population. Giving the fact that for many shortage of food was the limiting factor to be physically active this was at the time of 1996 the right approach.

The community contribution in projects like the PMN and water well projects consisted of the unskilled labour provision by the community, in addition to local materials like sand, water, gravel etc. The programme always paid skilled labour. In

time of regional shortage of food projects were often executed under a food for work programme, with the programme providing a daily ration per family in return for labour.

The choice for cash for work in the labour intensive HIMO projects, after the initial phase of emergency supplies, proved to be a right choice. People know best, which their priorities are and have with cash on hand possibilities to fulfil their first priority. On the other hand one had to acknowledge that money was for many participants main reason to join a HIMO scheme, rather than the achievement of an intensive work programme, like soil conservation, erosion control or infrastructure construction.

A food for work programme or cash for work programme should be based on fulfilment of a need identified with full consent of the local population. If not, then the programme will be considered as a nearly free distribution of food, for which at best some work has to be done. There is need for a strict balance between the value of food distributed and the work done, if not, it might aggravate dependency on free hand outs and / or cause tensions within the local population.

The introduction of beneficiary contribution in the programmes was crucial in creating a sense of ownership for the output. The system of reservation by each farmer for the payment of seeds, farm inputs for the next season and for the depreciation of the pump in the PMN programme had contributed to the necessary feel of commerce among the farmers.

The appropriate procedure

The mode of distribution should be appropriate to the circumstances at the time. One ECHO partner in the animal-feeding programme tried to introduce a rather advanced distribution system for their animal fodder distribution programme. This included a credit component, which in itself should have been a perfect approach in a development situation, but was simply not appropriate at the time, after a draught with little fodder available for the desperate herds.

Identification of other parties

Some ECHO partners started a partnership with a local NGO during the course of their project. Examples are APEL ZP, an ex-combatants group in Tahoua, which became responsible for the sensitisation of returning population to new sites in the region. Subjects like basic need supply and socio economic activities were part of their work. APEL ZP considered the co-operation fruitful as they learned a great deal from the partnership, while it created a good base at grass root level for social and economic development. Although sensitisation is a longer-term affair, the contract lasted only 3 months. Most international NGOs and donors wished to work with local NGOs, but most were finally disappointed due to the fact that delivery by the local NGO often proved to be sub standard. As one NGO co-ordinator put it 'May be we expected too much from them'.

ECHO's restricted timeframe for funding and the attitude of most international NGOs were obstructing transfer of knowledge to local partners.

Viability aspects

The choice of technology for resolving the existing problems determined to a large extent the possibilities for sustaining investment, particular in water projects.

Manually operated water points are appropriate to local circumstances in Northern Mali and Niger, as the technique is well known to the local population. Some ECHO

funded wells included an agricultural project with some trees planted, and simple land use measures introduced around water points.

ECHO funded also high capital intensive water projects like the pump operated boreholes in Tahoua region, requiring skilled operators and specialists to maintain the system. The windmills in GAO Region had brought in the early 90s a new technology, which had been unknown to the local population. Lack of maintenance and damage during the upheaval necessitated rehabilitation of most of the mills. Wind technology is however considered rather complicated and surpassing the average comprehension of local water committees.

The funding of ECHO did however in both cases only allow limited training, while training and continued supervision is a precondition introducing new technologies. New technologies have therefore only a chance of being sustainable in the long run if and when training and supervision are already guaranteed at the start of operation by follow up activities, linking rehabilitation and development.

Co-ordination, coherence and complementarity

Field co-ordination

In both Mali and Niger there has been a reasonable level of co-ordination of ECHO with other donors in the area of emergency and rehabilitation. The role of local authorities and line departments regarding co-ordination was often only marginally fulfilled, allowing also for differences in approach between rehabilitation programmes. The co-operation with one of the Commission services in Niger, the PROZOPAS⁹ programme, could have been better than actually achieved. This was also partly due to the fact that their approach was rather top down and -up to recently- not very target group oriented. PROZOPAS and ECHO for example worked in the same region (Tahoua) with different approaches: PROZOPAS with food for work and ECHO with a cash for work approach under HIMO.

A good example of co-ordination was the role of the water department in Gao, where the water sector has been co-ordinated by a working group, representing all actors in the water sector under the presidency of the director of hydraulics. Subjects discussed every month were the activities of all partners, problems encountered and solutions proposed and work plans for the forthcoming 3 months.

Unfortunately such co-ordination depended often entirely on the good will and competence of an individual officer.

The fact that the director of hydraulics in Gao never received a copy of the UNIGEO water report, while the EU funded Programme de l'Élevage pour le Mali Nord Est (PEMNE) had a large water component in this region is a sign of poor co-ordination on field level between EU programmes.

Co-ordination with other humanitarian agencies

Co-ordination in the water and infrastructure sectors in Niger, with GTZ and the French co-operation, was executed in a reasonable manner. A good example of co-ordination in Niger is also UNHCR, which developed from 1998 on complementary

⁹ Programme de Développement pour les Zones Pastorales, PROZOPAS, an EU funded programme

activities to the ECHO programme, like soil conservation activities through one of its partner DRA.

The UNHCR programme in Mali facilitated the return and reintegration of refugees returning from abroad. ECHO policy was broader, caring for all vulnerable, be it returning refugees, displaced persons or local people who stayed on during the upheaval. In this regard it should have been easy to be complementary to each other. In practice however field officers of UNHCR considered the two in competition with each other, and could therefore not agree upon co-ordination. Most NGOs in Mali tended as well to see UNHCR and ECHO as competitors to each other.

Coherence and Complementarity with other interventions

The coherence and complementarity with other programmes differed from region to region.

In some instances the PROZOPAS programme and/or other EU programmes (B1 funding) have been complementary to ECHO funding, like in the Tegigalte water scheme in Niger.

In Mali the ECHO funding and the Micro projects Programme (PMR) could be complementary to each other in the village of Tiriken. The PMR funded the water point for cattle watering purposes, ECHO executed an animal vaccination programme through its partner VSF, and KfW provided water for human consumption. This combined effort has given the village a tremendous boost in development.

Despite efforts in co-ordination to achieve complementarity, success was not always guaranteed as the example of the site of Tchin Caye reflected. CIRC rehabilitated with ECHO funds one community well and constructed in addition another well. Nearly at the same site two other programmes drilled a borehole and introduced a new casing technique for wells. Both investments have been a waste of money, with the borehole now being used as a toilet, and the iron casing used as cover for the same toilet.

Effectiveness

Results attained

Contribution of results to socio economic reintegration

Provision of social services and water

The timely rehabilitation of water points and creation of additional water points by ECHO partners has been considered an absolute prerequisite for any development in other sectors and was therefore very appropriate. It fulfilled the condition for the return of refugees from exile.

The distances in the grazing zones could make it difficult to efficiently cover -against reasonable costs- maintenance and repair. The water points visited during the mission gave the impression that the further away from urban centres the less developed the system for maintenance and operation. The team found only one water point where the taps were sufficiently protected from encroachment by cattle.

The HIMO programme in Niger has been used for the construction of protection works against floods, the construction of social infrastructure at the new sites (several

applying 'en banco'¹⁰) and erosion control works. Although payment during the cash for work was often slightly lower than a day labourer's pay, it provided many families a source of income, while constructing dearly needed infrastructure. During the drought in 1997, which severely restricted any other source of income in livestock and crop production, it acted as a disaster mitigation tool. The HIMO programmes had in general a good mix of participants with returnees, local people, and ex combatants; contributing to a process of reconciliation among sub groups.

Self-sufficiency and access to income

The provision of food under the food for work programme in the PMN in Mali (ECHO I and II) had been timely and in the right quantity, while it has boosted morale and the commitment of the participants. Beneficiaries still referred to some staple food as being an 'ECHO brand'. They talked highly of the support, this being offset against the untimely provision under other food for work programmes, active in the same region.

The PMN programme and the agricultural production programmes in Air Region have given a reliable source of income to many farmers, assuring at least self-sufficiency. The right timing of the transition from a food for work programme (during the 1st phase) into cash for work programme (when local food production started under phase II) has been extremely important in order not to disturb local agricultural markets. The viability of many income generating activities in non-agricultural sectors remain however a concern. The same applies for the future of some new sites.

Although difficult to quantify the team is of the opinion that most of the programmes reached their target population with the different programmes. Some programmes managed to reach more persons than anticipated. The team only came across two examples where promises made in the past by an ECHO partner NGO were not fulfilled. It worked out however that the beneficiary groups at that time did not possess the right background for the training offered. The only question, which remained, was why this issue could only be resolved after one year.

Local administration in both countries was in general very content with the quality of project output and the performance of the NGOs. Projects have been needs oriented and most involved the local population throughout the project cycle, although participation was often (partly) paid for in the form of food or cash.

Effectiveness of modifications

Climatic conditions, like drought in 1997 and floods in 1999, forced programmes to adjust. Although programmes were designed for emergency, extremes of drought, which strike Mali and Niger almost every decade, are often difficult to tackle under ongoing programmes. The role that the HIMO could play in Niger in 1997 in mitigating such situation has already been highlighted. In Mali the PMN had introduced a demand driven approach, being fast and flexible in developing a solution to different priorities identified by the communities. The year 1997 was an example of how useful a bottom up approach can be. The harvest was severely affected by the drought and a food distribution was needed to carry the communities through to the next harvest, which proved to be after all a very good harvest.

¹⁰ En Banco is a construction technique for buildings without using timber or wooden poles.

Account taken of situation's evolution

The beneficiary group was using most structures constructed for social services at the time of evaluation. Some buildings however could not be used as a result of the damage caused by the heavy rain of last season, which particularly affected the roofing of some 'en banco' construction of tailoring shops. In some instances poor construction was the prime reason why a building *could* not be used like the case with one health centre.

It is doubtful whether some buildings like canteens, dormitories, health posts and veterinary posts will ever be used. Needs were apparently less than anticipated and / or operation budget was not made available by government.

All teachers very well received their teacher houses. No rural school funded under ECHO should have been operational without the immediate construction of accommodation for staff. The 'en banco' construction is equally appreciated, as it keeps the inside cool.

Most of the buildings for the income generating activities are being used. The viability of most of those activities in the new villages can be seriously questioned as a consequence of the limited market and the low purchasing capacity of the local population. The HIMO projects have in this regard given some boost to local purchasing capacity over the last two years, but have now all come to an end.

The irrigation projects, whether manually (Niger, Air Region) or pump operated (Mali), have all given a tremendous boost to the local economy. Although some garden projects had some losses of camels, due to illness, the distribution of draught animals can be considered a success. The same applies in general for the food stock banks, which had managed, in the majority of cases, to increase their stock over the last two years. Their viability however still needs to be tested in the next drought year to come to both Niger and Mali.

The principle of demanding cash contribution from the beneficiary in order to obtain assets for agricultural production has contributed to a sense of ownership among the beneficiaries. This principle was applied for the camels in the garden programmes in Air Region Niger and for the pumps in the Mali North programme, requesting 12,5 % in the camel distribution programme and 20 % for the pumps. In the majority of cases this return to the programme was often immediately reinvested in seeds and inputs for the next season.

Project Costs and level of achievement of project purpose

Local purchase of input

Local purchase of inputs to satisfy the needs of the beneficiaries proved to be very cost effective. An example of this was ECHO funding I and II of the PMN, which finance for the major part was used on local purchase and local transport of food for distribution to beneficiaries:

- An exemplary high percentage of the ECHO funds benefited directly the target group: 94 % of ECHO I funds and 81 % of ECHO II funds was either used on food or transport
- Use of local transport with donkeys and boats meant an investment in the local economy

Tenders

Little evidence could be found in files regarding the (local) tendering of equipment and supplies. There is an obligation for tendering for purchases above 35.000 Euro (see standard contract between partners and ECHO during 1997 – 1998 under article 11.4).

The absence of tender procedures existed while 46 income generating projects were established by COSPE at 8 new sites in Tahoua region in Niger, receiving inputs and equipment to an average value of 3.550 Euro per project, with a maximum of 13.000 Euro for one tailoring shop. Many food stock banks under the PU and ACF programmes received an initial stock of grain, with one programme of 11 banks distributing a value of over 110.000 Euro. Considerable quantities of tools and seeds have been distributed to over 1800 gardening groups. Many families in Mali received livestock in the form of goats and sheep, with each receiving one camel and one donkey. Cattle feeding programmes of ANS and VSF have been distributing hundreds of tonnes of fodder. A total of 450 camels in Niger have been distributed to gardens for watering purposes. Hundreds of wells, all requiring cement and rods have been rehabilitated by ACF/H, CICR and the PMN. Only the PMN programme had followed standard tender procedures for most of the capital-intensive requirements like purchase of pumps etc.

Partners need to be stricter on tender regulations for transparency and accountability reasons, with exceptions for not tendering explained in their narrative reports.

Echo flights

The provision of ECHO flights has not only been instrumental for many ECHO partners, but also to other donors, like embassies, in monitoring their programmes and their endeavour to achieve project purposes.

Factors of success and failure

There have been in nearly all programmes constraints, which have hampered the progress of the programme. Some of those constraints were within reach of the partner, other were beyond control of the partner.

Factors beyond control

The drought in 1997 has delayed progress in many programmes and even forced ECHO to finance mitigation measures in order to safeguard previous investments, like in the programme Mali North. Distribution programmes for livestock fodder are another example, where the social implications for many of ECHO target groups should have been severe if at least part of the herds could not have been rescued. Fodder distribution programmes were therefore socially appropriate and justifiable, but they did not change the attitude of the average cattle owner regarding off-take.

Several veterinary posts and health posts constructed are still not operational due to lack of qualified staff and an operational budget. This issue need to be resolved in due course otherwise the buildings will be susceptible to weathering and vandalism.

Factors within reach

Insufficient needs identification in some infrastructure projects is main reason for not attaining some envisaged results. At some primary schools the school buildings are used but the dormitories not. The school enrolment is mainly coming from the immediate surrounding of the village, while children from further away are not attending school. Reason for this phenomenon could be a lack of sensitisation among parents, as enrolment is offered for free. It could however be that boarding will cost some money, although most schools received also a basic stock of animals for feeding purposes under ECHO funding.

The PMN has given to many families a livelihood. Contributing factors to the success of this programme, and applying also to some other ECHO projects, are:

- Great will of local leaders and the population at large to achieve a peaceful settlement
- Determination of project staff to carry on with the programme, despite risks, which reassured the population, being a strong point of many ECHO partners
- Agreement by local population to integrate all social actors in the programme
- Flexibility and speed to adjust to circumstances and to anticipate on drawbacks

Efficiency

Partner's operational management and organisation

Competence of partners

The technical competence and qualification of the experts employed by the NGOs was in general good. Most experts possessed a good local knowledge of the area and they were target group oriented. Not all partners maintained regular contacts with local authorities, which found themselves sometimes a bit left out. The general opinion among authorities is one of satisfaction with the ECHO partners.

The high turn-over of expatriate personnel in many programmes of ECHO partners, which turn-over was often parallel to the timeframe of ECHO funding, was considered a negative point, effecting sometimes the smooth continuation of projects.

Planning of timetable

Time schedules were often too optimistic and as a consequence a considerable number of programmes had time overruns, particular in the water sector. ECHO had to award therefore no cost extensions, in order to have the partner completing the project. Reason for time overrun was partly logistical, like sheer distances to the project site causing delay in supplies etc; and the fact that beneficiary mobilisation and organisation took more time than anticipated.

HIMO works were not always employed at the right time resulting e.g. in a situation in 1998 where the soil conservation works had to be stopped because of the extreme rainfall in that year, destroying to a certain extent the work already completed.

Quality and quantity

In water projects

Although most of the works in water projects have been executed sub surface there was sufficient indication that the quality of work is up to standard. The ECHO programme has contributed its fair share in the development of water in both countries.

Of buildings

The quality of the buildings for social infrastructure ranges from excellent, like the health centres in Mali and the school buildings in Niger, to sometimes substandard for some health posts in Niger.

The quality of the buildings, built on a self-help approach by food stock banks or co-operative groups, was in general of reasonable standard. Some buildings, like dormitories and veterinary posts in Niger, were not used casting doubts on the need for such. Also some health centres in Mali seemed under-utilised.

In HIMO works

Erosion control works in river beds were generally of good quality, like in Azday, Niger. The quality of some HIMO projects in soil conservation was however substandard. The soil conservation works (semi dunes) had sometimes more the character of social employment projects. HIMO works however created much needed basic infrastructure and erosion control works.

ECHO partners in general delivered what they had promised, in the right quantities and at the right time is a view many times heard during discussions in the mission. There is general consensus among local authorities regarding ECHO's contribution to restoring normality in the North through its investment in basic infrastructure and water, and through provision of basic food stock.

Monitoring

Partners reported on progress according obligation in three monthly narrative reports. Some larger partners (UN) only provided general (monthly) country reports; in which ECHO contribution was sometimes difficult to retrieve. ECHO was not very strict on using standard guidelines for reporting, except for the financial reporting in the format. As a consequence the results presented were sometimes difficult to compare. Most reporting was done in a quantitative manner describing volume of inputs distributed. Only one partner, PMN, had executed an internal auto-evaluation. As a consequence there was only limited pro-active planning in the programmes.

Quality control

There is not much information in the files whether the water points and income generating projects are making sufficient reservation for major repairs and future replacements. No effort has been made by partners to precisely monitor the financial and economic state of projects, which are essential for the well being of the target group. Such effort could have also summarised in a structured manner the institutional memory accrued by the ECHO partners. This is all partly due the nature of ECHO funding, with projects often approved for only 6 – 8 months, limiting to a great extent the possibilities for monitoring of longer term progress.

Co-ordination in monitoring

Partners considered ECHO sometimes as being too strict on technical issues. It might well be that some ECHO correspondents felt the pressure to deliver within the short time frame of projects. As a consequence they tended to concentrate on technical progress and focus on technical details (does a nurse house need a kitchen?), rather than on overall policy and viability issues. Technicalities should be delegated to the partner, such based on mutual trust. The performance of the

correspondents in the water and rural development projects has however been rated from satisfactory to excellent.

Administrative management

Indirect costs

The indirect costs in emergency programmes, being costs for personnel, communication and transport, are normally a considerable part of total budget. Except for those partners, which had considerable co-funding possibilities, costs for personnel and local transport remained high throughout all ECHO programmes. Figures of 40 – 45 % for costs of personnel and transport, even up to 60 % in some projects, generates the question whether a percentage of only 40 – 60 % direct benefit to the population is acceptable.

Some issues have to be taken into consideration for the partners assessing this situation:

- Transport had often been hired in programmes, while distances to the project area were often huge
- Many projects concern small activities which need much interaction with the target group / beneficiaries
- Security problems forced some programmes to a temporary standstill
- Delays in execution of field work due to ambitious time schedules added often considerable to costs for personnel

Hiring of vehicles proved to be a good option for two reasons:

- ECHO funding for a short period of often 6 – 8 months did not guarantee optimal return on investment in the alternative case of buying vehicles
- Hiring vehicles leaves the risk of theft with the owner, which is often member of the local community bringing in an extra weight of social control

A negative point however is that it further enriched the already relatively well off members in a local community as they often possess means of transport.

The PMN had on the other hand very low indirect costs for personnel and transport, ranging from 8 % to 20 % of total budget, such as a result of considerable co-funding. Other partners with co-funding, like CICR, had indirect costs for personnel and transport of \pm 33 %, while HCR had around 35 % on average.

It is difficult to draw conclusions on these differences, as the context and volume of co-funding was also often unknown. Co-funding is however preferred both for reason of avoiding dependency and for increasing the percentage of direct benefit of ECHO funding to the target group.

Impact & strategic implications

Impact

Effects on reduction of human suffering and local population's income

The work intensive projects (HIMO), accommodating many unskilled labour, and the construction programmes had offered employment to many. This had a considerable

effect on purchasing capacity of many families as ECHO programmes were often the only source of income. Construction and conservation works employed often hundreds of local persons, among them frequently ex-combatants.

The work intensive approach of the HIMO had a good impact:

- a) It created the necessary infrastructure in the villages and protected valuable natural resources through protection works
- b) It provided a source of income for many in need of cash and without other sources of income
- c) It contributed to a process of reconciliation and the creation of a social tissue at local level
- d) It provided an important alternative for those ex-combatants who were easily tempted to resort to old habits or to armed banditry

The emphasis in the North on the redistribution of livestock as a main source of income might have led people to believe that livestock is still the only way for making a living. While this may be true in large areas of the North, there is only limited potential for such. Cattle farmers in places like Infen in Niger, where nowadays large herds can be found, still believe that further enlargement of their stock will be the optimal guarantee for potential misfortune in the future. Efforts of e.g. using surplus water for diversification of the daily diet through growing of tomatoes, onions etc. have not sufficiently been considered at the new sites. Families, who now again possess herds of cattle, often lack veterinary services needed for optimal economic use of cattle. Take-off rates remain lower than economically possible.

Farmers in the irrigation projects of the PMN expressed their satisfaction with the projects saying that they have now with irrigation an important additional source of income, as dry-land farming was before 1996 their only source of income. Many smallholder farmers in the Air region in Niger have developed a reliable source of income through irrigation and the food stock banks.

Dependency on humanitarian aid

An important spin off of several agricultural production projects was also the gain in confidence among the beneficiaries. When asked about their ideas for the years to come, the farmers in the PMN irrigation scheme of Doua in Attare replied that a school and a dispensary are now first priority. They did not refer to additional support of the PMN for these ideas, but pointed at the profit in their scheme as the guarantee for fulfilment of these future projects.

The distribution of food and non-food items for both human and livestock purposes did not inflict much distortion on local markets. Most commodities were sold at local market prices to the beneficiaries, while the costs for transport were borne by the partner programmes.

It might be that the overall ECHO intervention lasted too long, as development issues became more dominant over the last 1 - 2 years, with communities taking a leading role into their own development, demanding a different and longer term funding tool. In the absence of such tools ECHO has responded to its best capacity and in a flexible manner to this changing environment. The condition of an increasing and

active community contribution, either in cash or kind, during the implementation of the 2^e and 3^e phase has reduced dependency on outside sources.

Effects on environment

The grazing areas in the fast North of Mali and Niger can provide income for only a limited number of families due to ecological carrying capacity. The fact that ECHO through the rehabilitation of existing and construction of new water points has created (semi) permanent settling requires also potential for economic livelihood at these sites. There is a good reason why nomads have been tracking for centuries in these regions: it is a way to gain some economic benefit through a balanced use of fragile natural resources.

Future development programmes should be prudent creating more facilities around water points than ecological carrying capacity can sustain. Infrastructure not only attracts people, but also huge herds of cattle travelling with them (see also Annex 5 on water).

Some HIMO projects, like the river control works, will have a lasting positive effect on the environment, other, like the soil conservation works around villages, will only have a very limited effect. Such works are no solution to the cause of erosion (i.e. overgrazing and overuse), and are merely an effort to mitigate the environmental damage as a result of ecological pressure. There was a serious lack of adequate land use planning around these sites. The soil conservation in the valley of Aharamat and the semi dunes constructed around Infen village are examples of works with low impact. The DRA, partner of HCR, is now repeating the same works as has been done with ECHO finance, over a year ago. Part of this investment in turn has already been lost, after last season's extreme rainfall.

It is therefore likely that the construction of new villages will have a lasting negative effect on the natural resources in the immediate surrounding. Infen is an example with currently accommodating up to 3.000 persons with their animals, while it used to be a small village of around 1.000 persons, limited by water in the seasonal pool.

Access to resources

The river zones and inundated areas reflect an enormous economic potential. The dependency on favourable climatic circumstances could easily provoke conflicts regarding access to arable plots, as many farmers have started also dry land farming on traditional grazing land. Local control systems will be essential in future to regulate access to land.

Planning of water points nearly always assumed that a high quantity of water was best in a given situation. However an abundant availability of water does not encourage local control mechanism on the use of water. Village committees should control access for outsiders to a particular water point. Many local control systems both in Mali and Niger do not work properly and everybody can claim access to a (public) water point. An unsustainable mining of natural resources in the immediate surrounding could be a consequence.

Effects on local capacity

Emergency programmes are characterised by trying to reach out to the target group as fast as possible. Co-operation with local structures in 1996 and 1997 in Mali was therefore key to having some success or not. Most ECHO partners have therefore co-operated with local authorities, local leaders, local NGOs and informal structures, in order to implement their programmes. Both countries had however only a very

short history with regard to civil society, as in Mali everything was government controlled before 1991. With limited time on hand for investigation, quality of local networks, their political orientation, their relation to factions etc. must have been not always clear. The team could however not find indication for local distortion, through programmes being used by local partners for another agenda than a purely humanitarian one, although this might need further research. Among donors there is now much attention for institutional capacity within civil society in Mali.

Effect on social behaviour

The ECHO programme contributed to a fundamental change in the settlement patterns in Mali and Niger. Before 1990 the majority of families were (semi) nomads, now many families have built a (more or less) permanent house. Nomads are now involved in irrigation, which was unusual before. The coverage of the ECHO interventions has been reasonable with the programme working in both the arable areas and the grazing areas.

Perspectives and viability

Water

Paying for services like water is for many rural families still a new phenomenon. There is still insufficient discipline on paying for water. Sensitisation of the local population to pay will therefore be important. Most water points created under the ECHO programme have a water committee, which in theory will receive support for major repair from the regional office for hydraulics. The water committees had received a very basic training under the ECHO programme on how to operate and maintain the water point and received a basic package of maintenance tools.

It will to a large extent depend on the capability of a local water committee to sustain its water point in a rather autonomous manner. For the more traditional techniques applied (manually operated wells) this will not cause much problem. New technologies like wind and fuel operated systems will need continued training and supervision in maintenance and repair. The fact that there are no(t enough) specialists on regional level for problem shooting in these systems indicates very clearly the limitations of introducing new technology. UNDP in Mali has trained private entrepreneurs, which execute major repairs under contract with the regional office for hydraulics, while the PROZOPAS programme in Niger has introduced a regional maintenance scheme. Rigid cost recovery by water committees will be essential in order to pay for these services.

Basic Infrastructure

Infrastructure in education and health will have to be maintained from government budgets and local cost recovery schemes. Investment in infrastructure in Mali and Niger over the last 5 years by donors has created a burden for government's budget in the different sectors. Training and reinforcement of local structures (village committees, co-operatives, water committees etc.) will be key to sustaining such investment.

For the specific problems related to the health sector reference is made to the report on health.

Income generation

The PMN has introduced a very efficient maintenance scheme, with farmer groups signing maintenance contracts with a private enterprise in Diré operating up to 4

mobile teams. A visit of the team to the well-equipped workshop made quite an impression. Most agricultural programmes, initiated with ECHO funding, will depend on possibilities for additional training under future development programmes.

International NGOs, in partnership with local NGOs, could play an important role in this need. The European Union should therefore encourage this process by funding partners that have proved their worth during the ECHO period.

Opportunities to initiate further development operations

During the discussions with local authorities it became clear that their first concern is now to consolidate the investment done under the ECHO programme, rather than to venture immediately into new projects, unless clearly related to ECHO investment. There is an encouraging attitude among local authorities in the light of linking to development. There is also great concern in both countries that the momentum created with the ECHO programme will come to an abrupt standstill with the withdrawal of most ECHO partners at the same time. Local authorities fear a dangerous and unwanted gap on the road to recovery. This concern is also some indication of the level of sustainability attained. The fact that most ECHO partners relied for the major part on ECHO funding for their activities could well aggravate this situation.

Hopes are now being focussed on the development programmes of EU in order to continue the momentum created by ECHO.

Perspectives: Linking Rehabilitation and Development

The Microprojects Programme PMR

For linking rehabilitation with structural development in the sector of water and rural development the instrument of the Microprojects is considered in both countries an important tool. The strength of the PMR is that it builds upon projects identified by the population themselves, while the programme is reasonably fast, and deals directly with the target population who have to contribute considerably to their project. The Microprojects instrument can contribute to development at grass root level, one should not count on the programme in isolation (see also Annex 8).

In Niger the proposed Micro projects programme looks rather ambitious in its specific objectives, but deserves every support in a region where prospects for a sustainable livelihood are in general limited. While the Micro- projects is by nature no planning instrument for development there is urgent need for more integrated planning in the North of Niger. Planning should link all sectors while taking into account social, cultural, economic and political considerations of the target groups.

The 4th PMR in Mali is among others designed to offer possibilities for more structural development phase after the ECHO investments. Discussions with officers of the PMR programme however learned that the programme had to a certain extent given up on income generating activities. Viability of many income-generating projects funded under the first three PMR programmes was too much of a concern. New water points will be in future manually operated, because of the low viability of pump systems. This experience might make it difficult for some ECHO projects, like the windmills, to qualify for further support under the PMR. Training of local (water) committees will be an important component under the 4th phase.

Other EU instruments

In Niger the PROZOPAS programme has committed itself to organise further training for local water committees of ECHO projects and to be responsible for the major repairs based on a maintenance contract with the water committees.

Donor Initiatives

The GTZ programme for Niger North, started in November 1999, has a strong emphasis on facilitating local communities in their own development. The GTZ programme will invite international NGOs as partners in this programme and will make it conditional for them to form partnerships with a local NGO. Institutional capacity building and transfer of skills will be integral part of this co-operation. It is very likely that ECHO partners will be potential partners in this GTZ programme.

In Mali the PMN will concentrate in its current phase on the zones with high economic potential in the river zone. Reason is the potential of this area to even produce a harvest in times of drought. The objective is to proceed from a self-subsistence economy into a surplus economy. Processing of agricultural products (de-hulling, grinding) to create the required added value will have prior attention.

Overall objective is to reinvest the financial benefits from agricultural surplus as long as possible into the same region. De facto PMN has given up on efforts to achieve the same scale of economy in the grazing areas, where at best only a certain degree of self-sufficiency can be achieved.

The EU in Mali will have to develop a more decentralised approach with sufficient consideration for local authorities and local capacity in order to be able to play a leading role in linking rehabilitation with development.

Visibility

The visibility of ECHO as donor has been in general adequately cared for by the partner organisations. Although not always reflected on signboards of CICR and GTZ, it was often well known to the local population that ECHO was the source of funding. This fact was also due to the tireless efforts of the ECHO correspondents to liaise with the target groups and to adjust ECHO interventions to changing circumstances, if and when required.

Gender

There has been a balanced attention to gender in most of the programmes, taken into consideration also the social fabric of society. This is among others highlighted by the fact that of the income generating projects established under the COSPE programme 57 % were operated by women groups, with the remaining operated by male groups. There are however distinct women activities like weaving, restaurants and tailoring, while vendors and butcheries are mainly male activities. The team found in some instances women at strategic positions in food stock banks, like a (vice) president. The committees for the irrigation projects were on the other hand rather male dominated.

Security

Security has been an issue of concern throughout the programme. Cars of partners had been stolen and although the physical well-being of aid workers had never been

at stake, the psychological strain was often considerable. Much credit must therefore go to the partners, which continued to do their valuable job, despite a sometimes insecure environment. Local authorities did not always give the impression to do their level best in resolving the background of incidences, like theft and isolated cases of harassment.

Handbook

Since February 1999 there exists the handbook of VOICE on humanitarian safety and protection. Some of ECHO partners, like ACF/H, and MDM France, were involved in developing the handbook. The overall objective of the handbook is to develop a network in order 'to improve the security of humanitarian personnel, both international and national, and to raise awareness among humanitarian players through the appropriate rapid and up to date distribution of information and resources relating to security issues'. To this end NGOs in Mali and Niger were also asked to exchange information on security; to record, store and process information in a structural manner on humanitarian personnel security; and to propose appropriate recommendations for their area of intervention. A computerised model for recording has been distributed to some of the NGOs.

Reality however learned that, although the subject being very appropriate, NGOs regard the recording of information a labour intensive task and therefore the system not very efficient. A simpler model is therefore recommended.

2.5 Conclusions

Conclusions regarding ECHO's humanitarian assistance to both countries in 1996 - 1999

The funding of programmes by ECHO in Mali North and Niger North came at the time that both regions regained a certain level of stability, allowing the return and reintegration of refugees and displaced persons. ECHO filled with its presence partly the gap left by both governments, recovering from an unstable period. Restoring normality was the first thing to be done. As highlighted in the overall synthesis report the ECHO interventions were a direct reply to elements of emergency, which were a result of a period of rebellion and instability. However instability was not the only reason for the emergency situation. It is important to realise that both countries experienced already a period of about 20 years of structural emergency in the North due to unfavourable climatic conditions, which situation was severely compounded by instability. It was only around 1998 that a transition towards development could start in certain regions, thanks also to two consecutive years of good rainfall.

Conclusions regarding the ECHO interventions in the North of Mali and Niger

Several lessons were drawn after evaluating the different interventions in the water and rural development sector, determining their strong and weak points. The strong and weak points as conclusions can be grouped, according to the criteria of relevance; effectiveness; efficiency; co-ordination, coherence and complementarity; impact and strategic implications; visibility and some cross cutting issues like gender and security.

Strong points

Relevance

- The priority given to the water sector at the start of the interventions was very appropriate as there is no development in any other sector possible in both countries without creating water
- Social considerations, like the wish of refugees in exile have been taken into account in site planning, convincing many refugees to return
- A reasonable balance was attained in attention to both returning refugees, internally displaced persons and persons who stayed on during the upheaval
- The food for work programmes were in general appropriate at a time of shortage of food; food was distributed in the right quantities and food for work was boosting the morale and commitment of the population
- ECHO had a reasonable balance in attention to both the river areas and the grazing zones concerning water and rural development requirements

Effectiveness

- Partnership with local NGOs allowed the fragile civil society to gain experience in emergency and development work and created some capacity at local level

- The intensive work programmes (HIMO¹¹) were effective, as food distribution should have distorted local markets; and they were timely and provided a source of income to many families when other sources were still scarce or absent
- HIMO provided purchase capacity to local families at the time that a market for many income generating activities (co-operatives) was needed
- The local purchase of food, commodities, animals, as well as the hiring of local transport like boats and donkeys for transport, has given a welcome cash input in local economies and created a temporary source of employment for many
- Agricultural production projects have diversified the sources of income for the farmers, spreading risks
- Local authorities have developed, also through the contacts with ECHO correspondents, a very positive approach towards consolidation of investment with an emphasis on operation and maintenance requirements

Efficiency

- ECHO partners had in general a good feel for the local circumstances allowing them to continue with project implementation even during times of insecurity and instability
- Most ECHO partners managed to work closely with the local population during the identification and execution of the projects, laying the foundation for a sense of ownership for the output
- ECHO was flexible in adjusting the programmes where necessary, adding to overall impact of the programmes and creating a good image and relation with local authorities
- ECHO partner delivered in general what they had promised to the local communities
- Monitoring and reporting on quantities of input by partners was in general good

Co-ordination, coherence and complementarity

- There had been constructive consultations between the EU Delegation and ECHO on funding of the rehabilitation of existing infrastructure and the construction of new infrastructure in both water supply and irrigation projects

Impact and strategic implications

- HIMO works created necessary infrastructure, and it contributed to the process of pacification and provided a valuable alternative for ex-combatants
- The emphasis on agricultural production and storage of produce, after provision of emergency food supplies and water, gave a considerable boost to the local economy
- Food and fodder distribution programmes did not considerably disturb local markets

¹¹ HIMO stands for Haute Intensité de Main d'Oeuvre, a work intensive approach using cash for work

- The beneficiary contribution in cash demanded for a capital investment, like the case with water pumps and camels, created a feel of responsibility and ownership for assets among the beneficiaries
- The Programme Mali North (PMN) diversified the sources of income for many dry-land farmers, mitigating potential impact of drought in years to come (disaster preparedness)
- The PMN and the agricultural production programmes in Air Region in Niger gave farmers confidence in being able to take (part of) their future into their own hands

Visibility

- The visibility of ECHO as donor has in general been adequately cared for by the partner organisation

Gender

- There has been a balanced attention to gender in most of the programmes

Security

- ECHO partners often continued to do their valuable job, despite a sometimes insecure environment

Weak Points

Relevance

- Need identification was sometimes poorly executed, resulting in buildings not being used by the target group, and / or infrastructure being put in place without a firm commitment from government for the operation budget
- Market research regarding potential for income generating activities by co-operatives had often been lacking, resulting in some projects hardly or not being viable
- Ecological carrying capacity has not been sufficiently considered in the planning of sites, with number of persons often as guiding principle in the planning of water points rather than their number of cattle
- Although economic activities have been developed at many new sites, agricultural diversification, e.g. vegetable growing, was sometimes lacking
- No Logical Frameworks had been developed in order to arrive at the most optimal solution to problems identified. As a result monitoring was limited to quantities of inputs (efficiency level), while there was little consideration for effectiveness and the impact of output.

Effectiveness

- Insufficient attention for training in many cost recovery schemes and control systems (particularly at water points) led to sub standard operation
- ECHO`s restricted timeframe did not allow for funding of longer term training requirements, limiting local capacity for operation and maintenance of new technology, and affecting viability of economic activities
- Partnership between international and local NGOs / networks did not allow for transfer of knowledge, limiting local capacity for further training of beneficiary groups

- There was not always a good balance between the value of food distributed and value of the work executed in food for work programmes, adding to a feel of free hand-outs and dependency among the target group
- ECHO had difficulty to determine its cut off point in the PMN: criteria for an exit strategy had never been discussed, giving the partner the impression that ECHO had become a structural partner in development

Efficiency

- Tendering was seldom applied, despite contractual obligation, reducing transparency and to some extent accountability of money spent
- Most NGOs had high indirect costs for personnel and transport
- Lessons learned during the execution of programmes have not been systematically recorded into an institutional memory
- Capacity of local NGOs in both countries is still very weak, despite some efforts by ECHO partners to co-operate with local partners

Co-ordination, coherence and complementarity

- Although ECHO prefers to finance temporary needs of target groups (e.g. initial food and non food stocks) ECHO frequently ended up funding capital requirements in the PMN programme, being a major area of attention of KfW, one of the co-financers
- ECHO policy was not always clear for partners when to apply direct contracting and when to apply indirect contracting in a HCR/ECHO co-operation

Impact and strategic implications

- The dependency of some partners on ECHO funding was sometimes very obvious, limiting the continuation of momentum created
- Many ECHO partners lack an exit strategy in their project proposals, as a consequence ECHO intervention lasted too long, highlighted also by increasing demands for funding of institutional capacity
- Investment in infrastructure has created an operation and maintenance burden for both governments for which it has not sufficient budget
- The design of water points was based on the number of persons, rather than on ecological carrying capacity and livestock, creating in some instances severe pressure on natural resources

Visibility

- ECHO part in the co-funding of GTZ, UNHCR and CICR programmes was not very visible, with the extent of co-funding often not known to the correspondents

Security

- Local authorities did not always give the impression to do their level best in resolving the background of incidences
- NGOs regarded the recording of security information a labour intensive task, reducing the efficiency of the system proposed in the new handbook

2.6 Recommendations

The success of linking rehabilitation in water and rural development to a phase of development all revolves around a sufficient developed integrated planning, in addition to an active participation of the population. Training in order to create sufficient institutional capacity at local level (e.g. water committees, village committees) to manage in a sustainable manner investment is integral part of such planning and will need a long-term commitment. Those dynamics cannot be easily caught in restricted timeframes and limited emergency funding formats as the ECHO instrument.

However in the absence of sufficient feasible instruments, like DG Development resources, ECHO made it possible to guarantee in the North of both countries at least a minimum level of services in water and basic infrastructure to accommodate returning refugees and displaced persons. Access to some income had been developed in a kind of accelerated emergency to development concept. Experiences in both countries however learn that another instrument than ECHO should be developed to support, after the initial ECHO phase of emergency and rehabilitation, the vital link in the grey zone between relief and development.

There is thus an urgent need for more integrated planning in both the North of Niger and Mali, linking sectors while taking into account specific social, cultural, economic and political considerations of the target groups. The National Indicative Programmes of EU in both countries could play in this regard an important role in increasing effectiveness of the Microprojects instrument to further build upon ECHO investment in water and rural development in both countries.

2.7 Lessons Learned

Concerning ECHO strategy in similar interventions

Although emergency programmes often do not allow much time for proper needs assessment with an active beneficiary involvement, a situation of more structural emergency with development kind of questions should allow for more in-depth assessment involving beneficiaries.

The use of Logical Frameworks will improve ECHO's ability to assess applications for project extensions in the context of the original objectives. In addition, the encouragement of the development of applications for projects with a defined beginning, end and a set of objectives will also facilitate funding of a range of projects, rather than the provision of funding for 6 – 12 months only, a practice which is often regarded as unsatisfactory.

UNHCR is an interesting partner for ECHO at the start of an emergency, there where UNHCR has already an implementing capacity operational through its partners. Later in time, when ECHO has established good contacts with its own partners, this advantage becomes less relevant.

Funding from ECHO in larger projects should not count for more than 60 % of total finance for a project in order to reduce dependency and to create more scope for continuing momentum created.

Where applicable and appropriate, ECHO partners should be encouraged to form partnerships with local organisations already at the start of programmes, as to stimulate the development of local institutional capacity and to create a feasible handover strategy on the longer term.

Tendering procedures in water and rural development projects should as a matter of principle always be applied in order to better guarantee transparency and accountability.

On sector level

The percentage of community contribution in a water and rural development project is less important than the fact whether the local community participated to their best capabilities, in order to create a sufficient level of ownership for the output.

Water points, at which water is extracted manually or alternatively with draught power, do not need a yield above 3 cum per hour, while a limited yield will further restrict the attraction of larger livestock herds than ecological carrying capacity possibly can sustain.

Ecological carrying capacity and a technology within reach of the community should be overriding criteria for the rehabilitation or design of water points.

Agricultural production projects, initiated with ECHO funds, should as soon as possible continue with more development oriented sources of funding and credit, once a certain level of self sufficiency has been attained for the target group.

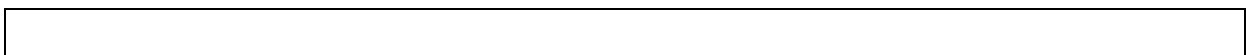
Concerning Commission strategy

Co-ordination between ECHO and the Delegation should as a matter of principle already be developed during the early phase of ECHO for water and rural development projects with a distinct development character, in order to avoid unclear division of responsibilities.

A Micro projects instrument to further build upon achievements of the ECHO investment in water and rural development will be much more effective with a solid integrated planning, creating links between sectors while taking into account social, cultural, economic and political considerations of the target groups.

The minimum requirement of 25 % contribution towards the capitalised value of the project for the Micro Projects Programme in both countries might be difficult to fulfil for some communities, while others will easily comply.

There is need to co-operate also closely with other donors and organisations, as funding sources will not suffice for exclusive reliance on Commission funding only during the process of linking rehabilitation with development.



Abbreviations

ACF/H	Action Contre la Faim / Accion Contra el Mambre - NGO
ACORD	Agency for co-operation and research in development - NGO
ANS	Action Nord-Sud NGO
CICR	Comité International de la Croix Rouge
COSPE	Italian NGO
CRB	Croix Rouge Belgique
CSA	Centre de Santé d'Arrondissement
CSCOM	Centre de Santé Communautaire
DGDEV	Directorate General Development European Commission
DNHE	Direction Nationale de l'Hydraulique et de l'Energie
ECHO	European Community Humanitarian Office
FCFA	Franc de la Communauté Financière Africaine
FED	Fonds Européen de Développement – European Development Fund
GTZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit GmbH – German Technical Co-operation
HCR	High Commission for Refugees of the United Nations
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
LVIA	Italian NGO
NGO	Non Governmental Organisation
NPV	Net Present Value
PAM	Programme Alimentaire Mondial, World Food Programme WFP
PAS	Poste Avancé de Santé
PIN	Plan Indicatif National - National Indicatif Programme EU
PIV	Périmètre irrigué Villageois
PMR	Projet Micro Realisations – Micro Projects
PNUD	Programme des Nations Unies pour le Développement
PROZOPAS	Programme de développement des Zones Pastorales (Niger)
PU	Première Urgence - French NGO
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
VSF	Vétérinaires sans Frontières

Terms of Reference



COMMISSION EUROPÉENNE
OFFICE D'AIDE HUMANITAIRE (ECHO)

Evaluation (ECHO 5)

TERMES DE RÉFÉRENCE

POUR L'ÉVALUATION DES ACTIONS HUMANITAIRES FINANCEES PAR ECHO

Au Nord-Niger et au Nord-Mali.

ECHO/EVA/ 210/ 1999/01010

1. OPÉRATIONS À EVALUER

Régions et pays : Nord-Mali et Nord-Niger.

Période couverte : 1998 et 1999

Secteurs et domaines à évaluer : Santé publique, hydraulique, développement rural ainsi que la stratégie à adopter par la Commission dans le cadre du lien entre l'urgence, la réhabilitation et le développement.

Décision(s) :

- ECHO/.../.../199/...montant deen 199. dont

1. INTRODUCTION

La rébellion touarègue a touché le Mali et le Niger à partir de 1991 bloquant tout accès aux zones de combat. Cette situation de guerre a rendu toute action d'assistance humanitaire pratiquement impossible. Par conséquent, l'intervention de ECHO n'a pu démarrer au Nord-Mali (régions de Tombouctou, de Gao et de Kidal) qu'à partir de février 1996 et au Nord-Niger (départements d'Agadez et de Tahoua) qu'en juillet 1997. L'action de ECHO s'est développée en plusieurs phases :

- Dans un premier temps (phase d'urgence), l'aide a principalement visé à assurer le retour et la réinstallation des réfugiés et déplacés internes sur leur site d'origine en viabilisant les sites et en fournissant des produits de première nécessité et de soins de base ;
- Dans la phase de consolidation de la réinstallation, l'aide visait, principalement, à diminuer la vulnérabilité des populations et à leur permettre d'accéder à des moyens de base pour développer leurs propres mécanismes de survie et redémarrer une vie socio-économique. Cela a conduit à la fourniture d'intrants de base, à favoriser l'accès à l'eau et au développement d'activités génératrices de revenu ;
- Lors de la dernière phase (phase de transition vers le développement), ECHO a essayé d'intégrer les objectifs des politiques sectorielles nationales (telles la santé et l'hydraulique). Durant cette phase de son intervention, ECHO a travaillé en étroite collaboration avec la Direction Générale Développement de la Commission (DG DEV) et avec les Etats membres de l'U.E. pour permettre d'assurer un continuum entre l'urgence, la réhabilitation et le développement.

Dans les deux pays, ECHO a quasiment été le seul instrument d'aide internationale présent pendant la phase critique de sortie de conflit et de consolidation de la paix. Les autorités nationales des deux pays ont officiellement reconnu la contribution importante de ECHO à la

stabilisation de la paix et au rapprochement inter-communautaire ainsi qu'à la mise en place des conditions propices à la relance du développement.

Par ailleurs, ECHO a toujours accordé beaucoup d'importance à l'efficacité de son aide dans ces régions et a fait effectuer deux évaluations par des experts indépendants ; l'une en 1996 au Nord-Mali et l'autre au Nord-Niger dans le cadre de l'évaluation prévue à l'article 20 du Règlement du Conseil concernant l'aide humanitaire.

2. RÔLE DU CONSULTANT

L'évaluation de l'aide humanitaire constitue une tâche très importante pour la Commission européenne non seulement en raison des sommes considérables consacrées à cette activité, mais également en raison du souci constant d'améliorer le travail humanitaire et d'utiliser au mieux les crédits qui lui sont consacrés.

Pendant le déroulement de la mission, tant sur le terrain que lors de la rédaction du rapport, le consultant devra faire preuve de bon sens et d'indépendance de jugement. Il fournira des réponses précises et directes à tous les points des termes de référence en évitant d'utiliser un langage théorique et académique.

3. BUTS DE L'ÉVALUATION

Les buts poursuivis par la présente évaluation sont les suivants et doivent être analysés, notamment, dans la perspective d'un arbitrage, parfois nécessaire, entre la logique technique et la logique politique:

- 4.1 Analyse de l'opportunité et du degré de réalisation des actions humanitaires financées par ECHO en faveur des populations bénéficiaires, conformément aux objectifs suivants : aide d'urgence à la réinstallation des populations rapatriées, appui au continuum pour dynamiser la relance du développement et soutien du processus de paix;
- 4.2 Analyse du degré d'accomplissement des objectifs poursuivis, de l'efficacité des moyens mis en œuvre et de l'évolution de la stratégie de ECHO dans la perspective de la transition de l'urgence vers la réhabilitation;
- 4.3 Impact de l'aide financée par ECHO en tenant compte de ce que certains partenaires ont reçu plusieurs financements ;
- 4.4 Analyse du rôle joué par ECHO dans le processus décisionnel (notamment le début de son intervention dans ces deux régions) ainsi que des autres activités dont les services de la Commission sont responsables ;
- 4.5 Analyse des moyens et des méthodes mis en œuvre par ECHO et ses partenaires mettre en place une stratégie de continuum entre l'urgence et le développement ;
- 4.6 Etablissement de recommandations précises et concrètes sur :
 - Le futur des financements de ECHO et la poursuite de l'aide humanitaire où sa présence serait encore nécessaire et les domaines où ECHO pourrait passer le relais à d'autres instruments ;
 - L'amélioration de l'efficacité des interventions futures en identifiant les « lessons learned » et les méthodes de faire qui pourraient être utilisables par ECHO.

4. OBJECTIFS SPECIFIQUES DE L'EVALUATION

Les objectifs spécifiques suivants s'appliquent à tous les secteurs évalués ainsi qu'au rapport de synthèse. Les consultants développeront les points ,ci-après, pour le secteur qui leur est attribué au point 8 ci-dessous.

- 5.1 Brève description des actions d'aide humanitaire et analyse de leur **contexte** : la situation politique et socio-économique, les besoins humanitaires et les capacités locales pour y répondre.
- L'analyse de la situation actuelle du pays, en termes politiques et socio-économiques, devra inclure une vue d'ensemble permettant d'y situer les interventions financées par ECHO. Cette analyse devra être tant quantitative que qualitative et contenir des informations sur différents secteurs de l'économie telles les politiques sociales et économiques en vigueur, les niveaux de revenus et leur répartition au sein de la population, politiques sanitaire et médicale, l'accès à la nourriture, etc.
 - La deuxième partie de l'analyse du contexte devra être consacrée à l'identification des groupes vulnérables et leur répartition dans le pays ainsi qu'à l'estimation des besoins par catégorie.
 - L'analyse devra aussi permettre d'apprécier la capacité des pouvoirs publics et de la population à faire face aux problèmes mis en évidence.
- 5.2 Analyse de la **pertinence** des objectifs de l'aide humanitaire, du choix des bénéficiaires et de la stratégie utilisée en fonction de l'évolution des besoins (transition de l'urgence vers la réhabilitation).
- 5.3 Examen de la **coordination** et de la **cohérence** de l'intervention de ECHO pour chacun des secteurs considérés avec :
- Les autres donateurs, les opérateurs sur le terrain ainsi que les stratégies et politiques des Gouvernements nationaux dans les régions concernées;
 - Les interventions d'autres services de la Commission (la DG DEV) dans la zone avec des projets similaires ou en relation avec les actions d'aide évaluées. Les projets identifiés seront décrits avec leur montant et les éléments de l'aide ;
- 5.4 Analyse de l'**efficacité** en termes quantitatifs et qualitatifs pour chacun des secteurs.
- 5.5 Le rapport **coût-efficacité** doit être mis en évidence sur base, notamment, des éléments quantitatifs tels que définis au point 5.4.
- 5.6 Analyse de l'**efficience** de la mise en œuvre des actions d'aide portant sur :
- La planification et la mobilisation de l'aide ;
 - La capacité opérationnelle des partenaires (en identifiant leurs points forts et leurs points faibles) ;
 - La stratégie déployée ;
 - Les éléments principaux de la mise en œuvre de l'aide tels que : personnel, logistique, respect des habitudes locales,
 - choix des bénéficiaires, etc. ;
 - La qualité et les quantités de marchandises et de services mis en œuvre ;
 - Les systèmes de contrôle et d'auto-évaluation mis en place par les partenaires.
- 5.7 Analyse de l'**impact** de l'aide. Cette analyse devrait inclure des contacts approfondis avec les bénéficiaires en vue d'analyser les éléments suivants :
- Contribution à la réduction des souffrances humaines ;
 - Création éventuelle de dépendance vis-à-vis de l'aide humanitaire et processus d'appropriation (« ownership ») par les populations locales et conséquences des programmes humanitaires sur les « capacity-building » locales;
 - Effets de l'aide humanitaire sur l'économie locale ;
 - Effets sur les revenus de la population locale ;
 - Effets sur la santé et les habitudes nutritionnelles ;
 - Effets des actions dans les secteurs hydraulique et développement rural sur l'environnement ;
- 5.8 Analyse de la **visibilité** de ECHO.

- 5.9 Analyse de l'intégration des questions de « **genre** » (analyse sociale, économique et culturelle de la situation des femmes et des hommes) dans les actions d'aide, compte tenu de la structure matriarcale des sociétés Touareg.
- 5.10 Analyse des mesures prises pour assurer la **sécurité du personnel humanitaire** tant expatrié que local : moyens de communication mis à leur disposition, mesures de protection spécifique, plan d'évacuation d'urgence.
- 5.11 Examen de la **viabilité** de l'aide financée par ECHO et notamment de l'opportunité de mettre en place des politiques de développement et/ou de coopération pouvant se substituer à l'aide humanitaire.
- 5.12 Sur base des résultats obtenus lors de la réalisation de la présente évaluation, le consultant formulera des **recommandations** opérationnelles sur les besoins de type humanitaire qui pourraient faire l'objet d'un financement communautaire (choix des actions à mener, approche à adopter, modes de suivi souhaitables pour les actions ECHO). Ces recommandations devraient concerner, également, les domaines où le relais, par d'autres services de la Commission, pourrait être pris.
- 5.13 Analyse de la méthode de programmation utilisée par ECHO dans l'élaboration de l'aide évaluée à faire figurer dans le rapport de synthèse.
- 5.14 Formulation des « **leçons apprises** » dans le cadre de cette évaluation. Les "leçons apprises" devront également porter sur le rôle joué par ECHO et les autres services de la Commission dans le processus décisionnel et de mise en œuvre des interventions d'aide.

MÉTHODE DE TRAVAIL

Pour l'accomplissement de sa tâche, le consultant utilisera l'information disponible à ECHO, auprès de ses correspondants sur le terrain, dans les autres services de la Commission, auprès de la Délégation de la Commission sur place, auprès des partenaires de ECHO au siège et sur le terrain, auprès des bénéficiaires de l'aide ainsi qu'auprès des autorités locales et des organisations internationales.

Le consultant analysera l'information récoltée et la synthétisera dans un rapport cohérent répondant aux objectifs de l'évaluation.

ETAPES DE LA MISE EN ŒUVRE

Briefing à ECHO avec le personnel concerné pendant 3 jours et mise à disposition de l'ensemble des documents nécessaires à l'évaluation ;

Briefing avec les délégations de la Commission à Niamey (Niger) et à Bamako (Mali);

Mission sur place : le consultant travaillera en étroite collaboration avec la délégation de la Commission sur place, le correspondant d'ECHO, avec les partenaires de ECHO, les autorités locales, les organisations internationales et d'autres donateurs ;

Le consultant consacrera le **premier jour de sa mission** sur place à des discussions préliminaires et préparatoires avec le correspondant de ECHO et les partenaires de ECHO sur place;

Le **dernier jour de la mission** sera consacré à une discussion avec le correspondant et les partenaires de ECHO sur les observations découlant de l'évaluation;

Le **projet de rapport** sera envoyé à l'unité « Evaluation » de ECHO à Bruxelles 8 jours avant sa présentation et sa discussion lors du débriefing ;

Debriefing de 2 jours à ECHO

Remise du **rapport final** qui prendra en compte les remarques éventuelles soulevées lors du débriefing.

Une **visite au siège de certains partenaires** sera effectuée selon les besoins avant ou après la mission sur le terrain.

CONSULTANTS

La présente évaluation sera réalisée par une équipe d'experts possédant une bonne expérience dans le domaine humanitaire et de son évaluation, et acceptant de travailler dans des zones à risques. Une solide expérience dans les domaines spécifiques de l'évaluation qui leur ont été confiés. Les membres de cette équipe d'experts sont responsables des secteurs indiqués ci-après :

Mr. Lionel SEYDOUX, chef d'équipe: Responsable de la coordination de l'évaluation, du rapport de synthèse et de la stratégie de ECHO dans la région.

Mr.:Ricardo SOLE Secteur santé publique.

Mr.Sjaak DE BOER. Secteurs hydraulique et développement rural

Messieurs SOLE et DE BOER analyseront aussi le travail fourni par certains partenaires de ECHO qui ont mis en œuvre l'aide humanitaire, tels : COSPE, Première urgence, Action contre la Faim (Espagne), GTZ, MDM (France), AMI (France), CICR, Croix-Rouge (Belgique).

CALENDRIER

L'évaluation aura une durée de 50 jours. Elle débutera à la date de signature du contrat et prendra fin le 30/04/2000 par la remise des rapports finaux.

RAPPORT

- L'évaluation donnera lieu à l'établissement de 3 rapports (1 par secteur et 1 rapport de synthèse et de stratégie), rédigés en français ou en anglais, d'une longueur maximum de 15 pages y compris le résumé de l'évaluation qui devra figurer en tête du rapport.
- Le rapport d'évaluation est un outil de travail extrêmement important pour ECHO. Le format de rapport, mentionné ci-dessous, sera donc strictement respecté.

Page de couverture

- Titre du rapport de l'évaluation :
 - « Pays, opération(s),secteur - partenaires - 199- » ;
 - « Pays, opération(s),secteur - partenaires - 199- » ;

- Période de l'évaluation ;
- Noms des évaluateurs ;
- Mention indiquant que le rapport a été établi à la demande de la Commission européenne, financé par celle-ci et que les commentaires s'y trouvant reflètent uniquement l'avis des consultants.

Table des matières

Résumé (voir formulaire en annexe).

- Opérations values (5 lignes max.)
- dates de l'évaluation:
- Rapport n°:
- Noms des consultants:
- But et méthodologie de l'évaluation (5 lignes max.) :
- Principales conclusions (+/- 25 lignes)
 - Pertinence
 - Efficacité
 - Efficience
 - Coordination, cohérence et complémentarité
 - Impact & implications stratégiques
 - Visibilité
 - Questions transversales
- RECOMMANDATIONS (+/- 20 lignes)
- Leçons apprises (+/- 10 lignes)

Le corps principal du rapport débutera par un point relatif à la méthodologie utilisée et sera structuré conformément aux objectifs spécifiques formulés au point 5 ci-dessus (maximum de 10 pages).

Annexes

- Liste des personnes interviewées et des sites visités ;
- Termes de référence ;
- Abréviations ;
- Carte géographique des lieux des opérations.
- Si le rapport contient des informations confidentielles émanant de parties autres que les services de la Commission, celles-ci figureront dans une annexe séparée.

Le rapport doit être écrit dans un langage non-académique et direct.

Chaque rapport sera établi en 20 exemplaires et remis à ECHO.

Le rapport devra être accompagné de son support informatique (sur disquette) sous le format Word 6.0 ou d'une version plus récente.

Places visited and Resource Persons encountered

Févr. Di 20	Bruxelles		
Lu 21	Bruxelles		M. Stenberg-Jensen Steffen, Chef d'unité Echo 1 (Afrique...), Mme; J. Coeffard, Chef d'unité Echo 5 (Evaluation) M Jens Moeler, DG VIII, responsable géographique Niger Mme Bravo; DG VIII, responsable géographique Mali
Ma 22	Bruxelles		Documentation
Me 23	Bruxelles		M. Hervé Delphin, Echo 1
Je 24	Bruxelles- Niamey	BRU CDG	CDG AF1777 1120 1230 NIM RK103 1345 1920
Ve 25	Niamey	800 1000 1600 1730	Briefing avec Frank Minjat, Expert Echo Mali-Niger Briefing avec Agnès Guillaud, Conseillère Economique et C. Rasmussen (en charge du dossier ONG et continuum) Haut Commissariat à la Restauration de la Paix: Lt. Colonel Garba Seyni Haut Commissaire, Gonda Sani, Secrétaire Général, Colonel Maï Manga Oumara, Chef d'Etat Major particulier; ancien préfet d'Agadez Oumarou Chipkaou, économiste
Sa 26	Niamey	1030 1500 1630 nuit	M. Mohamed Anako, ministre conseiller au Nord, ACF E, partenaire ECHO consultation dossiers et documents ECHO Hôtel Gawey
Di 27	Niamey Tahoua	0900 nuit	départ sur Tahoua en véhicule (ancien chauffeur ECHO) hôtel Amitié de Tahoua
Lu 28	Tahoua	0800 0930 1200 1530 1630 1800 nuit	Préfet (M. Maïga) et directeur Régional du Plan COSPE, partenaire ECHO APPEL-ZP, ONG locale partenaire (ex-combattants) PROZOPAS (Projet de la Zone Pastorale) UE. DRA (ONG) Financement HCR RDP (ONG) hôtel Amitié
Ma 29	Tahoua	0700 1200 nuit	départ terrain (véhicule) INFEN, site rapatriés (réalisations, conseil de village) Infen
Mars Me 1	Tegigalt	0600 0800 1400 nuit	départ (véhicule) Tchin Tabaraden Sous-Préfet (Capitaine Sanogo Mounkaïla) Antenne Projet FIDA (N'grade Goumeye, Pastoraliste) Téjigalt (réalisations, conseil de village) Tejigalt
Je 2	Agadez	0600 0900 1330 1200 1800 nuit	départ (véhicule) Tamaya (restaurant...) Agadez Préfet, Directeur Départemental du Plan. Réunion toutes ONG: Agadez
Ve 3	Agadez	0800 0800 0900 nuit	Direction de l'Agriculture Direction de la Santé départ (2 véhicules) Dabaga (Action contre la faim) protection de berges, jardins Abardok (Eireine) jardins; Tewart
Sa 4	Agadez	0800 1700 Nuit	visite Tewart (Première urgence) jardins, groupements féminin, banque céréalière. Agadez Première Urgence Agadez
Di 5	Agadez Niamey		Voiture Niamey (Gaweye)
Lu 6	Niamey		rédaction Niamey

Ma 7	Niamey	0830 GTZ Programme de soutien à la paix Niger-Nord. 1600 Rhissa Ag Boula, ministre du tourisme, ancien chef rebelle Rédaction,	
Me 8	Niamey	900 1000 Lt. Colonel Abdoul Casa, ancien préfet de Tahoua rédaction	Coopération française: M. Olivier Faugère, Conseiller, développement rural
Je 9	Niamey Bamako	1000 Henry Prankerd, Délégué de la commission Européenne <i>ad interim</i> 1030 Debriefing Rédaction 2010-2200 NIM BKO RK103 Hôtel Mandé Bamako	
Ve 10	Bamako	0800 Briefing (Yves Lecomte) 1130 Dr. Lob Ministère de la Santé publique 1500 Commissariat au Nord (M. Diagouraga ancien Commissaire, M. Aghatam et Hamzatta Moussa Diallo conseillers. 1630 Direction Nationale de la Santé Publique (M. Kane), et directeurs régionaux des trois régions du Nord	
Sa 11	Bamako	0800 Action Contre la Faim (Espagne) M. Thierry Metais 0930 AMI 1100 CICR 1500 MSF (Ricardo) 1630 MDM (Ricardo) 1500 Consultation documents (de Boer et Seydoux) 1900 Briefing (Geneviève Begkoyan)	
Di 12	Bamako	0900 Documentation 1200 Ibrahim ag Tilmi (USAID) 1700 Ibrahim Maïga, secrétaire technique de la Commission Paritaire pour le Nord (au Mandé) 1900 Mueller (Ancien AT PMNE) Seydoux, de Boer	
Lu 13	Bamako	0830 GTZ 1000 Banque, billets avion 1100 Attaher ag Iknane, Conseiller à la Présidence pour les affaires du Nord 1500 Mahamadou Tandia, HCR (Sjaak de Boer) 1600 PNUD: projet de Développement Intégré en Zone Lacustre (PDIZL) Tonka 1700 Thiollier, conseiller, Service de Coopération en charge de l'appui aux ONG, Ambassade de France 1900 Juillard Cellules d'Appui à la coordination des actions de développement, chargé de la région de Tombouctou.	
Ma 14	Bamako Gao	0700-1300 BKO Gao (Air Mali) 1500 Lt. Colonel B. Guindo Haut Commissaire et Koné Conseiller au Développement 1700 ACF soir Abacar Sidibé, PADL-Gao nuit Gao	
Me 15	Gao	Sjaak de Boer, Lionel Seydoux 0830 Dir. rég. hydraulique 1000 Terrain avec ACF (Hydraulique) Almoustarat, nuit Tchoukaye	Ricardo, 0800DRS 900 Terrain nuit Brousse
Je 16	Gao	0800 retour Gao par Almoustarat, In Ekker Zalabalabe nuit Gao	terrain nuit Gao
Ve 17	Gao	TABASKI Rédaction Suzanne Hoffsteiter (Ex chef de mission CICR)	

Sa 18	Gao	1100 Equipe mobile d'appui CD Gao soir André Marty IRAM, Abacar Sidibé, Directeur PADL Gao nuit Gao	
Di 19	Gao Goundam	Ricardo 0700-1000 Avion ASF Gao Goundam Contact MDM nuit Goundam	Sjaak, Seydoux 0700-1000 Avion ASF Gao Goundam Antenne GTZ Niafunké PDZL, BETCA Dari Attara soir Conseil de village nuit Attara
Lu 20	Goundam	Réalisation MDM (Tin Aïcha) nuit Tin Aïcha	Doua Attara Niafunké Diré (garage Bah) nuit Goundam
Ma 21	Goundam Tombouctou	vers Goundam Vers Tombouctou nuit Hôtel Bouctou Tombouctou	0800 Autorités de Goundam 0930 vers Tombouctou 1100 M. Adiawakoye 1500 Dédéou Traore nuit Hôtel Bouctou Tombouctou
Me 22	Tombouctou	0800 Colonel Mahamadou Maïga, Haut Commissaire 1000 PMR FED 1130 Action Nord Sud (ANS) 1500 CICR Ancien chef d'antenne Visite site de Assidi nuit Hôtel Buctu (Tombouctou)	
Je 23	Tombouctou Goundam	0600 Visite Mandiakoy (Ricardo, Sjaak) 1130 VSF (DGDEV depuis Juillet 1998); 1600 Route Vers Goundam nuit Goundam	
Ve 24	Goundam Bamako	0930-1100; Goundam - Bamako; Air Mali Rédaction nuit Grand Hôtel	
Sa 25	Bamako	Rédaction	
Di 26	Bamako	Rédaction	
Lu 27	Bamako	0800 Ambassade des Pays Bas (Sjaak) 1000 Dr. Lob 1000 DNPS 1400 OMS 1730 Debriefing à la délégation Fin de mission de terrain, dispersion équipe Bamako - Dakar - Las Palmas (Ricardo Sole)	
Ma 28	Bamako Paris	Rédaction 1500 Commissaire au Nord 2235-0605 BKO-CDG AF731	
Me 29	Paris	0850-1010 CDG-MPL AF7688 (Seydoux) ; Amsterdam (Sjaak de Boer)	
Avril 19		Debriefing	
Mai 15		Envoi rapport définitif	

Reference List

ECHO Evaluation Mali – Niger

1. Strategie Nationale de Developpement du Secteur de l'Alimentation en Eau potable et de l'Assainissement en Milieu Rural, Ministere du Developpement Rural et de l'Eau, Direction Nationale de l'Hydraulique et de l'Energie, Republique du Mali, December 1998.
2. Mise en Place du Fonds de l'Eau dans la Zone d'Intervention du Programme de Developpement Integre de la Zone Pastorale Nord (PROZOPAS), Etude de Faisibilité Best Consult, Niamey, Niger, July 1999
3. Rapport de Synthèse du Forum sur la Gestion des Stations de Pompage et la Mise en Place des fonds Sous-Regionaux de l'Eau, PROZOPAS – CAPB – AHAROG, Tahoua, Niger, 15 – 17 December 1999
4. Etude d'Inventaire Hydraulique dans les Regions du Nord Mali, Partie Socio-Economique, Commission des Communautés Européennes Mali – Republique du Mali, Direction Nationale de l'Hydarulique et de l'Energie, IRAM Paris, November 1998
5. Synthèse des Réalisations Accion contra el Hambre en Partenariat avec ECHO depuis 1996 au Mali, ACH, Mali, March 2000
6. Etude Hydraulique au Nord – Mali, UNIGEO - Roma , Commission Europeene, DG VIII, Developpement, August 1998
7. Engineering in Emergencies, IT Publications / RedR - ITDG, London 1997
8. Programme de Micro-Realisations Nord Niger, PIN 8ème FED, Rapport d'Instruction Version II, Delegation of the European Communities, Niamey, September 1999
9. Convention de Lomé IV, Cadre de la Coopération entre la République du Niger et la Communauté Economique Europeenne, Programme Indicatif National, 8eme FED 1995 – 2000, Niamey, 1995
10. Convention de Lomé IV, 'Programme Indicatif National et cadre de la Coopération entre la République du Mali et la Communauté Economique Europeenne', Bamako, 1991
11. Coopération entre l'Union Europeenne et la République du Niger, Rapport Annuel 1998, Niamey 1999
12. Rapport Synthetique d'Activites des Programmes Microrealisations FED au Mali 1988 – 1999, Republique du Mali – Delegation de la Commission Europeenne en Republique du Mali
13. Decision sur Autorisation Globale (DAG), 4th Microprojects Programme Mali, July 1999
14. Several briefing documents made available by ECHO

Technical Notes on Water Projects

Introduction

The physical circumstances in North Mali and North Niger are more or less similar, as both areas are situated in the Sahel and Sahara region. The possibilities and constraints concerning development of new or rehabilitation of existing water points are therefore more or less the same.

At the start of the ECHO programmes in 1996 in Mali, and 1997 in Niger, one could identify the following options in order to fulfil the demand for water in the rural areas for the returning or displaced population:

1. Rehabilitation of old water wells, constructed during the colonial time. Often wells with an oversize diameter, many in bad condition. Water yield often limited, but perennial
2. Rehabilitation of water wells equipped with casing (concrete rings), diameter 1.80 metre, of a more recent date than the first group, yield also often limited, but perennial
3. Construction of new wells with concrete ring casing. Often perennial yield guaranteed, if aquifer is found. Yield unknown beforehand
4. Rehabilitation or construction of shallow wells, fed by rainfall. Yield depending on annual rainfall, therefore yield not perennial and often unreliable
5. Drilling of new borehole up to a confined aquifer, combined with construction of a well (so called 'contre puit' water point). Perennial yield, but quantity beforehand unknown
6. Drilling of a deep borehole, and equipment with a pump unit, relying on fossil fuel or renewable energy, like solar power and wind. Yield beforehand unknown.
7. Repair of existing wind mill operated water points

Water points which rely on the phreatic surface, i.e. freely moving groundwater replenished by rainfall, are often within 20 metres of depth. When not replenished in times of prolonged droughts these wells will be dry within two years, making investments in these points rather unreliable. More perennial groundwater in both countries has often a piezometric surface (i.e. the level to which confined groundwater can rise) of 70 to 100 metres under surface.

The government of Mali had made provision of potable water a priority in its policy. Investments in water under emergency programmes from 1993 on, like the ECHO funded CICR, GTZ and ACF programmes, have contributed to coverage of around 50 % of total water demand in 1998 in the rural areas. The fact however that 27 % of the pump operated systems (representing around 10 % of all water points in Mali) are either in bad condition or do not function at all poses a serious problem for securing sufficient access to water.

The government in Niger through the EU funded PROZOPAS programme had initiated a water programme in the more permanent grazing areas of Tahoua, Agadez and Maradi. The objective of PROZOPAS was among others to improve the utilisation of grazing land through creation of additional water points, while introducing a sustainable management structure for operation and maintenance. Several partners of ECHO like COSPE and PU have in addition implemented water programmes in areas most stricken by drought in order to accommodate the return of refugees.

The compromise between preferred technical solutions in water and the wish to speed up the return of the refugees sometimes resulted in less than optimal solutions. An example is the Infen site in Tchín-Tabaraden - Niger, considered a risk by UNHCR regarding potential for ground water. Local leaders however preferred Infen, in order to speed up the return of refugees. The choice proved finally worth the risk, with over 3.000 persons, mostly refugees, now settled in this before 1990 sparsely populated area. The water supply at Infen (at around 6 cum per hour as opposed to a potential 30 - 40 cum for deep groundwater aquifers) is indeed sub standard, but still more than sufficient for human consumption. In the past it were seasonal shallow pools, which determined to a large extent the number of people. This forced many families to live a (semi) nomadic life.

Rehabilitation versus New

The commissioning of the UNIGEO report in 1998 by the EU Delegation in Mali became a turning point in the policy of ECHO regarding the creation of water points, particularly in the grazing areas.

ECHO's policy before the UNIGEO study, which was requested by ECHO as well, tended to focus on the creation of new water points. The report recommended rehabilitating existing water points rather than creating new water points in order to:

- Minimise disturbance of local social relations in the communities, as it was not always clear to outsiders who was eligible to use of and control over the water point
- Avoid an extra burden on available natural resources in the immediate surrounding of water points

However experience in Mali in rehabilitating existing wells learned that rehabilitation not always had the envisaged output: it often required more work than anticipated and yields had been sometimes disappointing, probably one main reason why the point could have been abandoned after all. ECHO partners opted therefore in some instances for creating a new well rather than rehabilitating one. Also the offices of the director of hydraulics opted for new water points if and when costs were comparable.

Most water projects funded under ECHO programmes in Niger concern the rehabilitation of existing water points, which is in line with the situation in the PROZOPAS programme where during the period 1995 –1997 only 15 % of water projects concerned the creation of new points¹².

¹² See 'Etude de Faisabilité' of Best Consult of July 1999 on the necessity of a regional water fund

Although the team could not precisely quantify the costs of rehabilitation versus construction of new water points most ECHO partners were of the opinion that construction of new water points could prove to be cheaper than rehabilitation of existing water points, taking into consideration also the yield secured.

Reinforcement of existing wells not seldom proved to be a dangerous work due to unstable subsurface soil layers, while in addition the yield was often disappointing (around 0,5 cubic metre per hour for 5 reinforced wells under the ACF/H programme in Mali). Reinforced wells in this programme had often a limited depth, around 20 metres. Rehabilitated wells were often deeper, with groundwater within reach of 60 – 70 metres, and had therefore a better yield (around 2 cubic metre per hour).

Wells are seldom constructed deeper than 80 metres, as respiration at this depth starts to become a problem for diggers. Boreholes in both countries often drain water from confined aquifers, situated at 200 up to 1000 meters below surface.

Criteria and Costs for New Water Points

The criteria, as proposed in ideal circumstances by the government of Mali for new water points under the ECHO programme, had been as follow (based on information from the regional office for hydraulics in Gao, Mali):

- No water point should already exist in the immediate neighbourhood of 10 – 15 kilometres for grazing areas, being the maximum radius for small livestock and cattle in a day
- There should be a shortfall of water in the area
- Natural resources in the neighbourhood must justify the creation of a water point
- Local population should be motivated to contribute and to manage their own water point
- Population has proven to be capable of managing and maintaining similar infrastructure (e.g. a health post, school etc.)

Boreholes are in fact the best guarantee for year round provision of water. Costs can however be enormous. The total investment for the water point at Infen in Niger with a borehole of 726 metres deep, and a yield of a disappointing 6 cubic metres per hour, equipped with a pump unit, water storage and distribution works, amounted to Euro 130.000,-. The pump and engine unit alone amounted to around Euro 48.000,-. Tegigalte in Niger with similar costs has fortunately more than sufficient water, with its yield restricted to 14 cum/hour.

Normally such stations can have a yield of 30 – 40 cubic metres per hour, which from a technical point of view justifies the investment.

All water points funded under the ECHO programme concern community owned points, no private points have been funded. The problem with many water points in both countries created in the past under donor funded government programmes is that by decree access became free for all, making it hard for the local population

around a water point to assert sufficient control with regard to maintenance and sustainable use.

There had been some concern within ECHO concerning the over-capacity of new water points created with ECHO funding in Mali. Some boreholes only used 30 – 45 % of maximum capacity, raising concern that the investment had been too high for actual water quantity produced. There are some reasons for under-utilisation:

- Although there are precise techniques available to indicate the presence of groundwater in deep aquifers, it still remains rather difficult to exactly quantify potential yield.
- Most yields are limited by the method of extraction, as often camels and / or cattle are used for extraction. One camel, used for water extraction at a well with a water table at 40 metres, will only be able to extract up to 500 litres per hour. Production at a water point using draught power will therefore very rarely exceed 2 – 3 cubic metres per hour. A good water point can however have a potential capacity of up to 10 – 20 cubic metres per hour.
- A certain over capacity could *make the difference* in most grazing areas between having some potential for linking relief with development or not. An over-capacity could be used in future for developing vegetable gardening to better balance a nutrition situation in an area; or be used to create economic activities for additional sources of income.

A well should have a minimum yield of at least 2 cubic metres per hour in order to be viable for either rehabilitation or construction (field information).

Analysis of an ECHO funded water programme

One of the water programmes executed with ECHO funding is the ACF/H water project in Mali, operational since 1996. ACF/H constructed among others new wells (9), rehabilitated (4) and / or reinforced (5) existing wells, equipped 2 boreholes with a so called 'contre puit', while drilling 3 additional boreholes. Harvesting of surface water through the construction of a dam proved to be feasible in only one case.

The characteristics of 22 of these water points are as follow¹³:

¹³ See also Synthèse des Réalisations Accion contra el Hambre en Partenariat avec ECHO depuis 1996 au Mali reference list 5

Type of water point and number	Average yield in cum / hour	Lowest yield in cum / hour	Highest yield in cum / hour	Average depth (m) and water level (m)	Number with yield > 2 cum / hour	Remarks
New water well (8)	1,06	0,05	10,7	16,2 - 9,78	1	Majority (6) has yield between 0.5 and 1,0 cum / hour
Rehabilitated well (4)	1,98	1,0	3,7	46,85 - 43,57	2	Most wells (3) around 40 metres deep
Reinforced well (5)	0,5	0,5	0,5	21,6 - 10,4	0	Upper soil layers around well have been reinforced
Contre Puit* (2)	3,0	3,0	3,0	50 (well) - 47,0 (1) and 0 (1)	2	Well has been constructed next to borehole *
Borehole (3)	6,0	0,0	12,0	106.3 - 29,0	2	One borehole proved to be a failure
Total number of water points with a minimum yield of 2 cum / hour:						7 (out of 22 water points)

* A 'contre puit' is a well that is fed via a small pipe by water from an adjacent borehole. This borehole is always much deeper than the well itself (= contre puit) and it contains water from a confined aquifer (i.e. groundwater which is under pressure). The water level in the borehole (= piezometric surface) can rise considerably through this pressure -sometimes hundreds of metres- whereby the required well depth can be limited up to just under the piezometric surface.

Water projects are often based on a daily water consumption of at least 15 litres per person per day, whereas an average family is supposed to have around 6 – 7 members, arriving at a daily consumption of around 100 litres per family. The water consumption per livestock unit (L.U.) is 40 litres per day, whereas one LU is equivalent to a camel or a bull.

It is interesting to see what percentage of total demand for water the ACF/H water points fulfilled. The ECHO partner had made an assessment of the demand per average family at a water point and the coverage of this demand through the water point¹⁴:

Background of demand of water and coverage:

¹⁴ A similar exercise was envisaged for water points funded under the CICR programme in Mali. Request for information from the HQ in Geneva did however not result in information to this end.

Type of water point and number	Water demand per average family in litres/day °	Water demand from average herd of cattle in litres per day	demand herd / demand of family for water	Coverage of total water demand by water point (%)	Remarks
New water well (8)	100	236,8	2,37	34,4	Only well with 3,9 cum/hr is sufficient
Rehabilitated well (4)	100	442,7	4,43	50,1	Only well with 3,7 cum/hr is sufficient
Reinforced well (4)	100	132,5	1,32	43,7	-
Contre Puit (2)	100	313,2	3,13	107,1	Both have yield of 3 cum / hour
Borehole (1)	100	304,6	3,04	90,0	Yield is 6 cum per hour

° It is assumed that there is not much difference in average family size and consumption per family at each water point. The fact that 17 out of the 19 communities at the water points are Tamaschek communities should support such assumption.

Most water points (i.e. 14 out of 18 sites where data could be retrieved) are servicing around 100 families each (600 - 700 persons), the remaining 4 sites ranging from 42 families up to 200 families. Design for water points is however often based on 250 persons per point in Niger up to 400 persons per point in Mali. Most water points have insufficient water to fulfil the total demand for human and livestock consumption (see 5th column) A direct relation between the number of families serviced and the yield of the water point could not be retrieved, while there exists on the other hand a distinct relation between the yield of the water point and the size of herd per family. All water points with a yield above 3 cubic metres of water per hour had a ratio in water demand for the herd / family demand of over 3,0. This is a clear indication that a water point created for human consumption attracts first and foremost also cattle travelling with them. This phenomenon is also described in the Best Consult study for the PROZOPAS programme in Niger, summarising three major developments:

- Concentration of large herds of cattle around new water points, particularly pump operated stations, causing havoc to natural resources and disputes among users
- No control on herds by cattle owners for prolonged periods of days
- Insufficient or a total absence of maintenance of water points by technical government departments

Planning should take such into consideration. Studies in both countries acknowledge that real needs, concerning water in the rural areas, are hardly identified.

Unit costs

The costs for construction of water points under the ECHO programmes have been reasonable in relation to secondary data found in reports of Government of Mali and other research data¹⁵: (all amounts expressed in local currency FCFA, with 656 FCFA = 1 Euro)

Traditional wells up to 7 metres without reinforcement	30.000 - 40.000
Wells with concrete reinforcement (rings etc) up to 8 – 10 metres	100.000 - 300.000
Modern wells reinforced up to 70 – 80 metres, at 200.000 FCFA/m	10.000.000 - 16.000.000
Boreholes without any equipment, 90 – 110 meter deep	7.000.000 - 9.000.000
Hand operated extraction (using animal traction)	225.000 - 410.000
Solar pump system	10.000.000 - 30.000.000
Submergence pump with generator, tank and distribution	30.000.000 - 35.000.000

ACF/H works with a unit cost for well digging of 200.000 FCFA per metre, while CICR works with unit costs between 350.000 – 500.000 FCFA per metre. This last figure includes all labour, material, transport and depreciation (excluded in the ACF/H figure). On average it will take 3 days to excavate one metre of well, with a diameter of 1.80 metres.

In order to make a solar energy system viable a water point should have at least a yield of 1 cubic metre per hour. Costs for a solar power system are considerable, particularly if one considers the price of two camels (maximum 500.000 CFA), which can basically do the same job as one solar system!

Community Contribution

The community contribution in the water projects has been at best reasonable and in some instances nearly nothing. There has not been a uniform approach among donor programmes with regard to contribution of the target group. Only overtime there was some harmonisation introduced due to co-ordination at regional level.

Examples of water well projects where the community participated, but did not contribute much in real terms, were the CICR water projects in the mid 1990s. These projects were clearly designed to reach out to the population with an essential service and to create an atmosphere of confidence among local communities. Deep wells like in Tchic Caye, Mali were rehabilitated with the population providing their labour in return for a considerably volume of food. Later it became possible to introduce a contribution in real terms, with the community providing unskilled labour, local materials like sand, gravel and water for the cement, and providing accommodation for the mason and drilling team, while taking care for the security at the construction site.

Reinforcement of existing water wells provided ample possibility for active participation of the beneficiary group : up to 75 % of the capitalised costs to reinforce

¹⁵ see reference list 1 4 and 5

the upper layers around water points is constituted by labour, which could be provided by the population. Rehabilitation of water points and the well of a contre puit gave similar possibilities. The drilling of a borehole gives however very limited scope for community participation, except for a contribution in cash.

The water component in the PMN programme, co-funded by ECHO and KfW (ECHO IV) had introduced the condition of a cash contribution from the local community of FCFA 50.000 (for manual pump) up to FCFA 70.000 (for solar system) at each (deep) well to be constructed under the programme.

The scope for beneficiary participation during construction and possibilities for sustainable operation and maintenance could be summarised as follow:

Type of water point	Scope for contribution in labour and material during construction	Possibility for local and sustainable O & M systems	Remarks
New water well	Considerable	Good	Technology well known to local population
Rehabilitated well	Considerable	Good	Technology well known to local population
Reinforced well	Considerable	Good	Technology well known to local population
Contre Puit	Considerable	Good (well) to limited (borehole)	Rather sophisticated construction required
Water point with wind mill	Limited	Limited	Wind technology is new and requires training
Borehole with pump	Very limited	Very limited	Sophisticated and new technology often poses operation problems

Payment for Water

In the PMN programme in Mali water is sold at water points for 10 FCFA per Jerry can (15 – 20 litres). In addition the local community will have to pay each month 25.000 – 30.000 FCFA to a maintenance and operation fund. This amount is allocated as follow with the balance deposited into a special account at the nearest bank:

- 9.000 FCFA will be used for maintenance by a regional operator
- 2.000 FCFA will be paid for salary of the operator

- 14.000 FCFA will be accrued in the bank for major repairs and future reservation

In Niger water rates were uniform for most water points and information retrieved by the team at several sites revealed that consumers pay for a Jerry can 5 FCFA; for a drum of 200 litres 50 FCFA, while rates for camels and cows were 15 FCFA per day. Small livestock was charged 2,5 FCFA per day. There was however indication that discipline on payment for water at several water points was rather low.

Only one of the 4 water taps for human consumption was functioning in the new village of Tegigalte in Niger. This situation could be explained by the fact that children went instead to collect water at the troughs during the hours of cattle watering. Few people had therefore an interest in the taps, in fact only those who found it too cumbersome to walk the distance to the cattle watering place. Livestock owners pay per head of cattle and not per quantity consumed, making the system liable to misuse. The existing water committee did not interfere, damaging own prospects to make their expensive -and delicate- pump system viable. Water points should at all times be fenced and controlled by the caretaker / manager. The team also found water sold on credit in Infen, making the whole system rather liable to fraud.

Systems for Operation and Maintenance

Insufficient attention to the installation of reliable operation and maintenance structures (local water committees, village committees etc) has been identified in both countries as an area of concern. Investment in training and local capacity building is required, as highlighted in studies recently undertaken in both countries. Demand for such had often been overlooked as a consequence of attention paid to investment in restoring sufficient yield in the rural areas after the droughts in the 70s and the 80s. The PROZOPAS programme in Niger proposed in 1999 the introduction of 4 regional funds to cover major repairs to which all water points should contribute with a yearly fee. It is too early to judge the viability of such fund. Several water points created under the ECHO funded programmes are however joining this scheme.

The wind mills in Gao rehabilitated under the ECHO funded LVIA programme will be a test case regarding the possibility for creating a certain level of self reliance among local water committees. The windmills were built in the early 90s by LVIA, already present in the area since 1988. Due to lack of maintenance during the period of rebellion and the deliberate damaging of the structures many windmills became defunct. ECHO agreed upon rehabilitation of 6 mills and replacement of one to a rural site. Condition for funding was that LVIA should finance the training of technicians and the local water committees. An application of LVIA for co-funding to this end was refused by ECHO.

LVIA had trained 3 technicians the committees and formed a partnership with a local NGO (Tassacht) to follow up on maintenance of the schemes. A local workshop in Gao is hopefully soon able to manufacture most of the spare-parts for the windmills. A service contract had been signed between the technicians and the water committees, stipulating conditions for maintenance including fees for such. Not all committees are operating accordingly as the team found two windmills (Tinauker and Tacharane) already broken down, needing spare-parts and repair. Three other windmills were found operating, among others the one in Enekar producing sufficient

water for the community. The fact however that ECHO was not willing to co-fund the training part makes it now hard for ECHO to comment on the situation.

ECHO water projects are therefore no exception to the average situation of weak operation and maintenance. Water schemes, like Infen and Tegigalte in Niger using a sophisticated technology, and the wind mills around Gao in Mali, will require a long term supervision in order to sustain their operational lifetime beyond 2 – 3 years. If such is not guaranteed then the investment could easily be lost.

Observations

The following observations can be made from a technical point of view:

- The ratio for the water demand by livestock divided by the demand of the owner family was 2,53; as an average for 21 sites in the ACF/H programme. This means that the demand for cattle by far outstrips the demand for water by human beings, highlighting the importance of planning based on livestock units rather than on number of persons.
- Boreholes equipped with pump systems are difficult to manage for the local population; can cause havoc to the environment because of cattle attracted, while prospects for sustainability remain weak.
- Although more limited in yield, water wells, whether new or rehabilitated, give better outlook for a sustainable use of natural resources and are relatively easy to manage.
- Water points with a yield of 3,0 cubic metre/hour are in general sufficient to cover the water demand. Boreholes nearly always fulfil this requirement, as well as some of the new and rehabilitated wells.
- A yield of 3 cum per hour suffice for those water points, where water is extracted manually or with draught power, as extraction with animals (camel, cow) has a maximum production of 500 litres per hour per unit, allowing 6 extraction units at the same time at a water point.

Water points situated far away from urban service centres should therefore have:

1. A source of energy, locally available and renewable: draught power or alternatively, wind energy or solar power
2. A technology which can easily be mastered by the local water committees
3. Having maintenance requirements that demand only minimum support from outside.

Condition 2 and 3 will limit the possibilities in many cases in fact to only draught power operated water points.

Technical Notes Basic Infrastructure

Introduction

Infrastructure has been built under ECHO funded programmes in order to accommodate the reintegration of returning refugees and displaced persons in both Mali and Niger. In Mali returning communities have often received support in construction of health centres or health posts; housing for medical personnel; veterinary posts; and stocking facilities for food and implements. In Niger the package went further with construction of schools with dormitory facilities; community centres; canteens etc.

In order to qualify the results in the ECHO funded programmes achievements in relation to the (unit) costs and the level of community participation in the construction basic infrastructure will be discussed in this annex.

MALI

In Mali most infrastructure for social services has been built based on a standard design, although there are many exceptions to this rule. All construction has been made in concrete and the quality is in general good. Partners of ECHO contracted often private companies to construct the building, whereas the local community contributed with unskilled labour, local materials, transport of the materials to the building site, and off loading where necessary. Food under a food for work programme was often distributed to the participants. In some instances the ECHO partner requested a financial contribution of the local community of FCFA 500.000, before construction could start. This approach was however no standard procedure.

The following information on some social infrastructure has been collected during visits (all construction in concrete):

Type of building	Size of building in m2	Price paid to contractor in FCFA	Unit price per square metre of building (*€)	Community contribution	Value of community contribution
Health Centre CSCOM - CICR	152 net	18.000.000	180	Some unskilled labour, water, transport, sand	Not quantified. Community received also food for work
Health Post PSA - CICR	100 net	9.250.000	141	Some unskilled labour, fence of compound + cash	500.000 CFA + value labour
House for nurse +	86	9.500.000	168	Some unskilled labour, water,	Not quantified. Community

toilet block ANS				transport, sand	received also food for work
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* As all buildings are single storey buildings, with more or less standard height of around 2,50 metres, it is possible to compare prices per square metre. Prices reflected in Euro per square metre are calculated with a rate of FCFA 656 per Euro.

NIGER

In Niger the investment in infrastructure has been considerable. COSPE constructed in Niger a considerable volume of infrastructure in (new) villages in the region of Tahoua: standard for each site was a classroom block, a toilet block, kitchen and storeroom, teachers houses, a health centre and a veterinary post. In addition dormitories, ateliers, workshops and restaurants have been built. Where possible construction has been made 'en banco' (without making use of wood), in order to save the scarcely available wood resources, or alternatively in concrete, where necessary. The construction programmes had all been completed at the time of visit. The average time for the construction per building was around 30 - 45 days. The quality of structures built by a partner ranges from excellent to sometimes substandard.

Although most structures have been built based on standardised designs there was no information available in the files regarding unit costs for such. All buildings for the social infrastructure have been built by the programme, with sometimes considerable contribution from the local community. A food for work component was often part of the standard package.

The buildings for the income generating activities have been constructed under a kind of self-help. The community contribution was in the form of unskilled labour, local building materials, production of clay bricks, and transport of water and sand. The value of the community contribution for a standard structure 'en banco' of 40 square metres is calculated at CFA 537.000 (around 820 Euro), including the roofing of the structure. Quality of buildings, built by the groups under a self-help approach, was of reasonable standard.

The construction costs for social infrastructure built by the partner COSPE in Niger are as follow:

Type of building	Size of building / unit in m2	Price for construction in FCFA	Unit price per square metre of building(*€)	community contribution	Value of community contribution
Classroom concrete (<i>en dur</i>)	70	3.575.200	77.8	Some unskilled labour, some transport and local materials	Not precisely quantified, but assessed at around 10 % of total costs
Dormitory concrete (<i>en dur</i>)	± 126	6.455.000	78.0	Some unskilled labour, some transport and local materials	Not precisely quantified, but assessed at around 10 % of total costs

Kitchen or storeroom (<i>en banco</i>)	44	1.521.900	52,7	Some unskilled labour, some transport and local materials	Not precisely quantified, but assessed at around 10 % of total costs
Health Post (<i>en banco</i>)	56	1.745.000	47,5	Some unskilled labour, some transport and local materials	Not precisely quantified, but assessed at around 10 % of total costs
Veterinary Post (<i>en banco</i>)	56	1.846.600	50,3	Some unskilled labour, some transport and local materials	Not precisely quantified, but assessed at around 10 % of total costs
Teachers House (<i>en banco</i>)	64	2.070.300	49,3	Some unskilled labour, some transport and local materials	Not precisely quantified, but assessed at around 10 % of total costs

* As all buildings are single storey buildings, with more or less standard height of around 2,50 metres, it is possible to compare prices per square metre. Prices reflected in Euro per square metre are calculated with a rate of FCFA 656 per Euro.

Discussion

It is interesting to note that there is a huge difference in costs per square metre for similar construction in concrete in Mali and Niger (around Euro 160 per M2 for Mali as opposed to around Euro 78 for Niger). All these structures have a concrete floor. A great part of the difference could be explained by the fact that in Niger the partner NGO has executed the construction, often with some subcontracting, while in Mali most construction had been contracted directly by the partner to local building companies.

The average costs of around Euro 50,- per m2 for construction *en banco* (without using any wood, neither cement) in Niger seems rather high in a country where the minimum wage for unskilled labour is around 1000 FCFA or 1,5 Euro per day. The fact that most projects were located in rather isolated places explained part the costs, while *en banco* structures still need iron doors and windows, which are not locally made.

While saving on woody biomass construction '*en banco*' demanded much water, around 0.58 up to 0.65 cubic metres for each square metre of construction. Construction '*en banco*' is well received by the population and all users of '*en banco*' structures, both in Niger and Mali, were positive with regard to the pleasant living conditions it provided.

In all projects the team visited in Mali and Niger there was no evidence of local tenders with at least three bids for the purchase of materials like building materials,

windows, doorframes and cement. In nearly all projects direct supply contracts with local suppliers have been awarded instead. The construction contracts in Mali for the health centres had often been awarded based on only two tenders for the work.

Community contribution

Many groups, like co-operatives and farmers groups, have built their own shop or storeroom, based on a kind of self help principle, whereby the programme provided the building materials and skilled labour.

Based on figures provided by ECHO partners the community contribution in kind in the construction of such workshop or storeroom should represent up to 40 % of the total capitalised value of the structure, the remaining being the value of programme contribution for windows, doors, cement and builder. This partition of costs falls well within the condition of the Microprojects Programme PMR in both countries, demanding a minimum contribution of 25 %. However no project managed to precisely specify this figure, despite the statements that local contributions have been increasing during the course of the ECHO funding in the period 1996 - 1999.

Use of Infrastructure

Some of the infrastructure is still not used, now over one year after completion. The two dormitories in Infen and Tegigalte in Niger are examples, as well as the health centre and veterinary post in Infen and the community hall in Tegigalte. The reason for not using facilities is basically twofold:

- Need assessment was not sufficiently executed. The dormitories were constructed anticipating a demand for boarding from children coming from the surrounding areas. However many families are not sending their children to school, although enrolment is free. Either children are involved in cattle herding or parents still do not see the importance of education for their children after years without a possibility of education. The livestock provided to the schools under the programme for the boarding facility is as a consequence used for other purposes.
- The government has no budget to staff the health posts and veterinary posts, neither does it have sufficient funds for operation and maintenance.

Technical notes on creation of income

Introduction

The ECHO programme in both countries can roughly be divided into three different interventions:

Intervention I:

The rehabilitation of sites and villages to accommodate the reintegration of returning refugees and displaced persons; such reintegration supported by the distribution of food and non food items, in most cases under a food / cash for work scheme

Intervention II:

The creation of and the support to income generating activities in order for the beneficiaries to become as soon as possible economically self reliant

Intervention III:

Facilitating the process of economic self reliance towards a phase of structural development, to be continued by other actors like DG Development

This annex will particularly look at intervention II, whereby income generating activities are put in place and a certain level of self reliance of the projects is envisaged in order to achieve a smooth transition towards structural development (Intervention III).

One of the main concerns of ECHO with regard to Mali and Niger is whether ECHO achieved, through sufficient foundation for self-reliance of the beneficiaries. In other words how viable are the economic activities started under ECHO?

For Mali the Programme Mali North of GTZ (PMN), including the irrigation schemes, will be subject of discussion, with some remarks on the support in the livestock sector. For Niger the co-operatives, which are operating shops, tailoring businesses, restaurants etc, and the different food stock banks and agricultural projects of COSPE, ACH and PU will be subject of discussion.

Most government officials and local leaders persistently pointed at the fact that creation of economic activities in the Northern regions of both Mali and Niger is extremely difficult. Such effort needs a long-term commitment from a donor with sufficient scope for training to create management capacity.

The climatic conditions, essential to develop economic activities, had deteriorated over the last decades. The debit of the river Niger declined over the last 70 years with at least 13 – 14 % in Northern Mali, while annual rainfall in both Niger and Mali declined considerably, with in some places drops of 30 – 35 % over the period over 1930 – 1990 (Tombouctou, Goundam, Gao).

The wish of (the government of both Mali and Niger for) many nomads to settle themselves more permanently was quite understandable. Water resources and grazing areas had become more and more scarce for livestock owners over the last decades. On the other hand one could question permanent settling of nomads in villages like Infen in Niger and Tchic Caye in Mali, both situated in rather drought stricken and remote areas.

Although the objective of financial self-reliance has always been an important objective for ECHO partners, the monitoring on performance of the businesses had been negligible. Except for the reporting over the last year in the PMN programme and some information on stock development of the food banks in Air region, the team could not find much information. Narrative reports of most NGOs were not very useful to precisely assess the performance of the income generating activities.

The team has therefore made a quantitative assessment of performance, where sufficient information could be collected, and has given further a marking on performance through a qualitative assessment.

Income generating projects in Niger

In Niger COSPE contributed with income generating activities to the development of 8 new sites for returning refugees, while ACF/H and PU developed several food banks and agricultural production projects in their project areas.

New sites had been supported with the construction of basic infrastructure, like schools, health facility, veterinary posts, all geared towards permanent settling of families. In order to create an economic livelihood many production projects have been financially supported through provision of an initial stock of seeds, farm inputs, equipment, food stock for the food banks, draught animals for water extraction and often also a cash donation for the first period of operation.

Income Generating Projects

Several income generating projects in the non-agricultural sector, like retail and manufacturing, tailoring, were found having a difficult time to survive. Most projects are now in a critical stage, one and a half year after becoming operational.

The tailoring shops, visited in among others Tegigalte and Infen, had only 2 – 3 sewing machines operational, out of the 10 being donated. The number of members seemed to be very high (examples of groups with 22 female members), limiting possibilities for viable operation, while creating unreasonable expectations for a livelihood. The finished stock of products on sale like clothes, was very limited in all three projects visited.

The retail shops visited were in general poorly stocked, and seemed to have a very low turnover. The co-operative groups, operating the shops, had basically been cashing in on the sale of their initial stock, granted with ECHO funds.

The Toumoust restaurant near Tamaya in Niger, received support for the building and further it received an initial cash input to start the business. The restaurant is beautifully built along the main road from Abalak and Agadez, but also seems to suffer from low clientele. A group of 35 women run the restaurant since October 1998, while they also operate an art shop. The fact that the chair lady of the co-operative recently disappeared with part of the cash created an extra set back.

Market potential at these new sites for tailoring projects and retail seemed to have been overestimated. Many families had at the end of the ECHO programme only limited sources of income with labour intensive work programmes all coming to an end.

Purchase power capacity of many of the group's clients was kept at a certain minimum level through the cash for work programmes. These labour intensive work schemes, were since 1997 operating in soil conservation and erosion control in the immediate surrounding of many sites. They have now come to an end and only some schemes, like the UNHCR funded DRA project, are continuing for a while. For most of the businesses in the new villages the outlook looks therefore grim, with only 10 – 15 % of families having cash on hand to buy something. These families concern mainly farmers with reasonable herds of cattle.

Also competition from other programmes was mentioned as reason for the low level of sales. An example was the food stock banks of other programmes (like the PROZOPAS programme in Niger), being in direct competition with the retail shops of some female co-operatives in the region of Tahoua.

Food Stock Banks

Most food stock banks seemed to do reasonable well. They managed to increase their stock of food, particularly through reinvestment of profit made on initial stock, which was provided with ECHO funds at cost price. The last two seasons with reasonable rainfall had been relatively good for most farmers, which led many farmers to produce a small surplus. Banks situated near urban centres, like those in Air region, managed to develop valuable business relations with the town of Agadez. The real test will be in a real dry year, when farmers have a shortfall, and will rely on the local stock of the bank in their village.

At least ECHO will then have created a hopefully sufficient level of food stocks at village level for disaster preparedness.

Income generating projects in Mali

PMN

The programme Mali North of GTZ (PMN) received 7 times funding under the ECHO programme. In the initial phase the programme started with food distribution, mainly on a food for work base, while rehabilitating the existing, but defunct, irrigation schemes along the river Niger between Attare and Dire. ECHO co-funded in total 19 irrigation schemes, which were all ready for operation at the time of the visit. Being in the dry season, only one scheme was active. An overview of the ECHO funding with the most important zones in the Programme Mali North:

Zone	financing	Period	Type of intervention	Remarks
Attare	ECHO III	15-06-97 until 30-08-98	Rehabilitation of those existing irrigation schemes vandalised in early 90s, total of 317 ha (III & V), extension in Attare with 180 ha (V)	11 Schemes populated by Touareg (5), Peulh(3), Songhoi(2), Bellah/Touareg (1)
Dire	ECHO III	15-06-97	Rehabilitation of existing	Total of 57 irrigation

	ECHO V	until 30-08-98 01-04-98 until 31-08-98	schemes (III & V), and extension of Dire with 120 hectare (V)	schemes, 40 % Touareg, 53 % Songhoi, 7 % Peulh
Goundam Douékiré	ECHO III ECHO V	15-06-97 until 30-08-98 01-04-98 until 31-08-98	Rehabilitation of existing schemes in an area where population is very poor	-
Tin-Telout	ECHO III ECHO V ECHO VI	15-06-97 until 30-08-98 01-04-98 until 31-08-98 15-09-98 until 31-08-99	Rehabilitation of existing ex- UNICEF schemes, vandalised in 1991	7 communities benefited from the rehabilitation of the schemes in this area
Attare, Dire, Tessakante	ECHO VII	01-04-99 until 31-10-99	Development of 400 ha of new irrigation schemes	

The main characteristics of the approach in the PMN programme were:

- The identification of the irrigation schemes to be developed or rehabilitated, including the sequence of rehabilitation, was always done with an active participation of community leaders and based on a consensus within the concerned communities
- The programme supports only community operated irrigation schemes, with farmers each owning an individual plot
- The execution of the rehabilitation and construction works is done by the target population themselves, using food for work. Farmers are assisted with tools like picks, hoes, wheelbarrow, spade, etc
- The size of the irrigation schemes are between 5 and 60 hectares, each hectare partitioned into equal parts for four farmers, allowing 0,25 hectare per household
- The size of the schemes are in accordance with the social boundaries of the village, so to have an appropriate management structure, while the soil should belong to the beneficiary community
- New schemes are preferably developed around existing schemes which have already accrued experience in irrigation
- The project input concern agricultural inputs (like gasoline, seeds, pesticides etc), studies, food for work, while motor pumps are provided at 80 % donation, requesting a contribution in cash from the beneficiaries of 20 %. Huge mechanised interventions are discouraged.
- Provision of finance occurs only once per scheme, in order to have the irrigation scheme starting without any debt, after which the scheme should be able to cover

all operation and maintenance costs and make reservation for future replacements. This approach is based on the philosophy that farmers should ideally start with no debt and if so, only with a debt which can be paid back within 2 years, in order not to discourage communities

The last objective, of farmers being self-reliant after one season of finance, proved to be ambitious, also due to climatic conditions. This is highlighted by the following example:

ECHO III in 1997 had as overall objective the enhancement of the agricultural production in irrigation, in order also to generate sufficient income among the farmers to cover for the farming inputs (seeds, pesticides, fuel etc), both for the 'contre saison' and 'grand saison'¹⁶, in 1998.

Despite the fact that ECHO III finally achieved more than its targeted production of 8.000 tonnes of paddy rice (8.925 tonnes, excluding 270 tonnes of Tessakante) there was some additional funding under ECHO V necessary during the course of ECHO III, among others for fuel and other farm inputs to allow for the final harvest.

The ECHO V proposal did not refer to the target of self-sufficiency set in ECHO III, neither did the correspondence between ECHO and GTZ refer to the set target. ECHO V only referred to a need for consolidation of the investment done under ECHO III and referred particularly to the very poor rains in 1997, affecting the start of ECHO III, which in itself made sense. The part of ECHO V, necessary to consolidate the effect of funding under ECHO III, should have been subject of a separate mid term review at the closure of ECHO III and V. ECHO III produced finally more rice than the food deficit in Mali for 1997 – 1998 (8.500 tonnes). In theory ECHO III alone reduced therefore the potential deficit in the country by half.

Viability at programme level

Whether production forecasts always necessitated continued financing through ECHO is a question ECHO should have raised during appraisal of the proposal for finance.

ECHO VII for example proposed to develop an additional 400 hectares with a forecasted rice production of 2.400 tonnes, resulting in 1.400 tonnes of de-hulled rice. Valued at 200.000 FCFA per tonne this generated, according to project document, a total of FCFA 280.000.000 or 'two third of total required investment' (quote). In fact this forecast reflected 85 % of total required ECHO finance of 500.000 Euro (ECHO/MLI/254/98/01011). With such brut return on investment a bank could have become interested to finance. Given the fact that KfW was already partner in the PMN, as a loan provider, ECHO should have raised the principle question whether a loan should have been more appropriate. The fact that ECHO was co-funding is not relevant here, the principal question is whether the additional funding required should have been either a grant (ECHO) or a loan (KfW).

The progress report in March 2000 for ECHO VII reflected a harvest of 1.684 tonne de-hulled rice for 1999. This represents a total value of FCFA 336.800.000 at a price of FCFA 200.000 per tonne (GTZ applied figure). If a sales price of FCFA 160.000¹⁷

¹⁶ This means the dry season and the rainy season. Most schemes only cultivate in the rainy season.

¹⁷ A price of 200.000 FCFA per tonne might be a bit optimistic as often a price of about 160.000 FCFA per tonne was mentioned during the field visits.

per tonne was taken into consideration then one arrived at a value of FCFA 269.440.000.

The net incremental benefit had been calculated, based on a 4-year depreciation period for both works and equipment¹⁸:

	at FCFA 200.000 / Tonne	at FCFA 160.000 Tonne
Value of harvest	336.800.000	269.440.000
Agricultural inputs	183.000.000	183.000.000
Depreciation of works	27.0000.000	27.0000.000
Depreciation of 16 pumps	30.000.000	30.000.000
Net incremental benefit	96.800.000	29.400.000

A discount rate of 5 % is chosen for the net present value (NPV) calculation, as the discount rate often applied in development projects and should have therefore been acceptable to KfW. Alternatively a discount rate of 15 % is applied, in order to judge whether the project could have sustained a situation where additional finance had to be borrowed at more commercial banking rates.

Assuming that the net incremental benefit will be the same over the 4 year period the NPV at 5 % and 15 % of ECHO VII financing arrives from the following equation:

NPV:

ECHO VII	Rice at 200.000 FCFA / tonne		Rice at 160.000 FCFA / tonne	
	NPV 5 %	NPV 15 %	NPV 5 %	NPV 15 %
Year 1	96.800.000	96.800.000	29.400.000	29.400.000
Year 2	92.190.500	84.173.900	28.000.000	25.565.200
Year 3	87.800.500	73.194.700	26.666.700	22.230.600
Year 4	83.619.500	63.647.600	25.396.800	19.331.000
Present value of returns	360.410.500	317.816.200	109.463.500	96.562.800
Investment ECHO VII * - /-	328.000.000	328.000.000	328.000.000	328.000.000
Net Present Value	32.410.500	- 10.183.800	- 218.536.500	- 231.437.200

* Finance of ECHO/MLI/254/98/01011 (ECHO VII) is Euro 500.000 at a rate of FCFA 656 per Euro

A positive NPV in an agricultural project after only 4 years is in general very good (see first column at 5 % interest rate). Most investment, like pumps, will however last longer than 4 years. With a 5-year depreciation period for the pumps the actual NPV at 15 % will also be positive, at FCFA 9.515.600. This should make it even interesting for commercial banks to have financed (part of) ECHO VII.

Although the predicted value for the harvest of 280.000.000 FCFA in the original forecast of GTZ should have given a negative NPV at 5 % interest rate, a more thorough financial assessment of the actual performance under previous ECHO

¹⁸ Depreciation period for pumps could also be 5 year making the picture even more favourable

financing (III, VI) should have formed the base for a decision on ECHO VII. Also the main objective of ECHO VII (quote) of '*consolidation of social cohesion and to initiate the development of irrigation at a large scale also in order to consolidate the actions ECHO III, V and VI in the river Niger area and to prepare the area for future funding under GTZ and EU funding*' pointed at development, rather than humanitarian aid interventions. ECHO should thus have questioned the financing of ECHO VII after all.

Development Costs

The PMN claimed that costs for developing new irrigation schemes under the PMN were considerably lower than those of a large scheme based on a contractor approach. (FCFA 1.500.000 / ha as opposed to FCFA 6 - 7.000.000 / ha). Costs for rehabilitation or construction of one hectare in the PMN were partly also community contribution. The value of unskilled labour necessary for one hectare to be rehabilitated amounts to 500 man-days in the PMN, such based on a work output of 0.6 cubic metres per person per day of terracing. Multiplied by 1000 FCFA a day for unskilled labour this represented already a value of 500.000 FCFA.

Contribution of beneficiaries in kind or cash in other schemes is much lower, increasing the overall costs of establishment and limiting to a great extent the sense of ownership of the scheme by the beneficiaries.

Although costs for both approaches could not be further quantified the equation for the NPV points at low development costs under the PMN programme.

At the time of proposing ECHO VII (making the total ECHO commitment 4,0 million Euro) the PMN had already invested DM 20,0 million (08/93 – 08/99) for the reinstallation of returning IDPs and 8,7 DM (KfW) for the reconstruction of infrastructure (09/96 – 08/99). ECHO funding constituted therefore around 21,5 % of total finance in the PMN.

Viability at smallholder's level

The financial viability of the scheme at farmer's level is calculated based on discussions with the farmers during the field visits.

The PMN donated all initial input in the programme, except for the pump unit for which the farmer's groups had to repay in advance between 20 and 30 % of the capital investment. Half of this obligation could be repaid after the first harvest. Most pumps cost between FCFA 5.000.000 (ECHO VI) up to FCFA 7.500.000 (ECHO VII), depending also on capacity required.

The calculation is based on a reservation for future replacements of the pumps at a nominal value of FCFA 5.000.000 per unit.

Recurrent Costs to Farmer

The recurrent costs for each farmer per year are calculated based on direct and indirect costs per hectare:

-Direct costs in FCFA per year per hectare of irrigation in the PMN scheme:

Operation costs for pump	Fuel 200 litre per hectare per year	
60.000		
Maintenance		30.000
Farm inputs	Seeds 40 kg per hectare at 250 CFA	10.000
	Fertiliser 200 kg net phosphate at 260 CFA / kg	52.000
Other inputs and costs		18.000

-Indirect Costs in FCFA per hectare:

Depreciation of pump based on 20 hectare and 5 year economic lifetime 50.000

Total recurrent costs per hectare for 4 farmers 220.000

Costs per farmer per year (costs of one hectare to be shared by 4 farmers) **55.000**

Gross Financial Return to Farmer

Harvest on average 5 to 6 tonnes per hectare (figure 1999 season)

Per farm of 0.25 hectare: 20 bags at 75 kg each gives 1500 kg

Price at time of harvest 70 – 80 CFA per kg

Price at time of start new season	130- 160 CFA per kg
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Total gross return (potential)	220.500
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Net Financial Return

From the 20 bags the farmer used for:

- Reservation to finance next season 5 bags x 75 kg x 147 CFA per kg **55.000**
- Own consumption: a minimum of 170 gram per person per day required
1 bag per month per family of six; demanding 12 bags **132.300**
- Leaves 2 –3 bags for sale at best price of 12.000 per bag

Maximum net financial return from sale of 2 – 3 bags per farmer is **33.200**

This is equal to 50,- Euro per year, at 656 FCFA per Euro.

In several places commercial farming groups have started de-hulling and milling enterprises, like in Attare. De-hulling is offered at a price of 1.000 CFA per bag of 75 kg.

The figures above applied for the normal irrigation season starting with planting in May – June and ending with the harvest in the period October until early December.

The normal season includes the rainy season, which lasts from July until September. One ECHO funded scheme however produced during the so called 'contre saison' from March until June. This season had lower yields as this concerned the dry season and had therefore higher recurrent costs in the form of fuel (300 litres per hectare as opposed to 180 – 200 litres for the normal season). The guarantee of a higher price at the time of harvest however compensated the two disadvantages to a large extent.

Net Financial Return to farmer in 'contre saison'

The net financial return for a farmer with 0.25 hectare and applying irrigation in the dry season (growing season from March until June) was as follow:

Harvest 15 bags of 75 kg in June, which is the time of the highest market price
 12.000 CFA per bag or 160 CFA per kg, so gross income is 180.000

From the 15 bags the farmer uses for:

- Reservation to finance next season 4,5 bags x 75 kg x 160 CFA per kg is 54.000
- Own consumption minimum at 170 gram per person per day required
 1 bag per month per family of six is 12 bags 132.300

Leaves 0 bags for sale

However :

Most farmers with rice cultivation had also sorghum based on dry land farming. They cultivated sorghum in the rainy season from July to September. This harvest could substitute their own consumption of rice, resulting in a surplus of rice for sale in a time when prices are highest. Many farmers had in addition income from fishery and livestock sales.

The viability of the schemes could be improved considerably if and when farmers manage to cultivate twice a year. This was said not to be possible for the time being as many farmers are still involved in the rehabilitation and construction of additional schemes, or in the enlargement of their own scheme. Another reason mentioned was that not many schemes were tempted to engage themselves in the 'contre saison', as there is considerable damage from birds in this season.

The main characteristics of income generating activities initiated under the ECHO funded programmes could be summarised as follow:

Activity financed under ECHO programme	Investment required to start business*	Competence required to operate business	Market potential for production output	Prospects regarding viability of business
Irrigation scheme PMN Mali	Medium	High	Medium to high	Good
Vegetable	Low to Medium	Medium	Medium to high	Reasonably

garden Air region Niger				good
Retail shop	Medium	Medium	Limited	Limited
Tailoring shop	Medium	Medium	Very limited	Very Limited
Food bank	Medium	Medium	High	Reasonably good
Restaurant	High	High	Reasonable	Limited

* An assessment has been made of the investment necessary per participant, assuming that each participant will represent a family.

Technical Notes on Microprojects in Mali - Niger

Niger

The EU Delegation in Niger has recently approved a Micro Project Programme (PMR)¹⁹ covering a 3-year period with a budget of 5 million Euros. The PMR is designed among others to further build upon the momentum created with the ECHO programme. This PMR is part of the National Indicative Programme 1995 – 2000 under Lomé IV²⁰ for Niger. Based on an analysis of constraints and possible solutions the programme has identified its overall objective as:

Sustainable improvement of the living conditions of the rural population, in order also to contribute to lasting peace in the region.

The specific objectives are therefore both the

1. increased viability and diversification of economic activities in the rural areas and
2. increased local institutional capacity, at project and local level, to actively participate in project cycle management

In order to arrive at these benefits for the target group the programme proposes the following activities:

- Development of economic activities (new innovations, commercialisation of production, support to income generating groups)
- Sustainable use of natural resources for commercial activities and reforestation
- Food security with staple food at affordable prices through support to food banks
- Development of education infrastructure and support to alphabetisation programmes
- Institutional capacity building at local level through active participation of target group in the project cycle

The proposal for the PMR in Niger is of high standard, using many elements of the logical framework approach, while identifying hypothesis to be fulfilled and indicators for measuring the progress on socio-economic and on management level.

Area of attention in this programme will therefore also be the ECHO projects, where many projects need a follow up, particularly in training and management of the income generating and water projects. The PMR in Niger will work in Agadez and Tahoua regions. The design of the PMR is based on priorities expressed by the target population, using the experience of the existing ECHO partners in the field. The PMR will only work with international NGOs as partner. Local NGOs, which could qualify for a co-operation with the programme, are scarce. Although the timing of the PMR is still appropriate some of the ECHO partners, like PU and ACF/H, fear that

¹⁹ Programme de Micro-Realisations Nord Niger, PIN, Rapport d'Instruction Version II, September 1999

²⁰ Convention de Lomé IV, Cadre de la Coopération entre la République du Niger et la Communauté Economique Européenne, Programme Indicatif National, 8eme FED 1995 – 2000

due to tender procedures the PMR will already be too late in order to avoid a gab this summer.

Possible projects for the PMR in Niger and identified during the evaluation could be among others the improvement of traditional wells in the Air region, which could basically be a continuation of initiatives of PU and ACF/H already undertaken under the ECHO programme. Another area of attention could be the commercial processing of fresh tomatoes in order to have more added value from agricultural production. The funding of pump operated water extraction from wells in Air Region should be approached with up-most care in order not to structurally lower the water table.

Although the PMR looks rather ambitious in its specific objectives the initiative deserves every support in a region where prospects for a sustainable livelihood are in general limited. While the Micro- projects is by nature no planning instrument for development there is urgent need for more integrated planning in the North of Niger. One important hypothesis of the proposed PMR in Niger is that there is sufficient adequate development planning in place, linking all sectors while taking into account social, cultural, economic and political considerations of the target groups. It is exactly this domain where the National Indicative Programme of the EU²¹ (with priority on food security / disaster preparedness and institutional capacity) should concentrate with its institutional support to government.

Mali

In Mali the National Indicative Programme for Lomé IV, signed in February 1991, had identified as main areas of attention the development of grass root initiatives, decentralised co-operation and support to the private sector²². Micro-projects had already been funded since 1988 in Mali, focussing among others on food security through irrigation works; development of water projects; infrastructure for education and health; access to rural settlements and small agricultural processing projects. Some developments could be identified in a decade of Microprojects in Mali (1988-1999)²³:

- The PMR in Mali has supported majors sectors like agriculture (river areas and water dams - 20 %²⁴); provision of water (wells and boreholes - 17 %); Infrastructure for education purposes - 11 % and development of wetland areas (for natural flooding of agricultural land - 10 %).
- Some activities like the improvement in access of isolated areas; sanitation; pump operated irrigation schemes and livestock projects received less attention (2 – 4 % each of total volume).

The first group received attention according the relative weight of priority expressed by the population and were at the same time also government priority.

The second group received less attention than demanded by the population. Pump operated irrigation schemes are considered by the PMR as being of utmost importance for Sahel countries. It was however also stated that these schemes need extensive training in operation and maintenance during a prolonged period. Funding of these schemes in the past, with a rather short funding period and limited possibility for training under PMR, had resulted in disappointing experiences. Reasons in other sub-sectors were the abundant attention by other donors (for sanitation) or the PMR hesitation in the

²¹ Coopération entre l'Union Européenne et la République du Niger, Rapport Annuel 1998, Niamey 1999

²² Convention de Lomé IV, 'Programme Indicatif National et cadre de la Coopération entre la République du Mali et la Communauté Economique Européenne' February 1991

²³ Rapport Synthétique d'Activités des Programmes Microrealisations FED au Mali 1988 – 1999, République du Mali – Delegation de la Commission Européenne en République du Mali

²⁴ The percentage reflects the volume of this sector on the total number of Micro projects

case of livestock projects. On the other hand the establishment of food stock banks had been particularly encouraged under the PMR programme in Mali.

The 4th phase of Microprojects started in September 1999 and will end in 2002. It has a total budget of 8 million Euros for the 4 regional offices in Kidal, Gao, Tombouctou and Mopti, concentrating its efforts to the poorest regions of Mali.

The 4th PMR in Mali has identified as general objective the improvement of the living conditions for the population in Mali North²⁵. The specific objective is to improve the access of the rural population to water sources, social services and economic opportunities. Water projects, environmental protection works, erosion control, wetland management for gravity irrigation, food stock centres and the construction of schools and health centres are among the activities envisaged.

The 4th PMR in Mali is among others designed to offer possibilities for the ECHO projects in their transition into a more structural development phase.

Discussions with officers of the PMR programme learned that the programme to a certain extent had given up on income generating activities. Viability of many income-generating projects funded under the first three PMR programmes was too much of a concern. Therefore all new water points will be manually operated. The PMR in Mali does not fund any solar or wind operated systems, let alone fuel operated systems. Reason again is the low viability of these operations. This experience might make it difficult for some ECHO projects to qualify for support under the PMR like the windmills.

Training of local (water) committees will be an important component under the 4th phase and budget reservation will be made for such in each project of concern. Partners for project implementation, training and monitoring could be either international NGOs, local or national NGOs. Local entrepreneurs could be contracted, both for works and supply contracts to projects.

The PMR in Mali could create the necessary link between rehabilitation in the ECHO programme and structural development based on the following conditions:

- The PMR should continue there where ECHO ended: priority should therefore be given to creating institutional capacity for the operation and maintenance to safeguard investment under the ECHO programme in water, health and income generating activities
- Specific attention should be given to self help projects targeting self reliance through soil conservation, reforestation and agricultural production

The PMR should be based on an integrated development plan, incorporating all priority areas of development in a balanced manner. This is the domain where the PIN could play an important role (see also the remarks for Niger on this issue).

Conclusions

The strength of the PMR is that it builds upon projects identified by the population themselves. The PMR is in addition reasonably fast, efficient and it deals directly with the target population. Other programmes like the PAM, with its food for work programme, have for example also managed to generate the participation of the local population, but the commitment often evaporated as soon as food distribution stopped. Many reforestation projects implemented in this way, even those funded under FED schemes, lacked the necessary commitment by the local population to maintain the works. It is clear that needs in those instances had not properly been identified with the local population.

It is for this reason that the PMR prefers to work with partners during the whole project cycle from identification to completion.

²⁵ See also the 'Decision sur Autorisation Globale (DAG)', 4th Microproject Programme Mali

There is urgent need for more integrated planning between the sectors in both the North of Niger and Mali, linking sectors while taking into account social, cultural, economic and political considerations of the target groups. The National Indicative Programmes of EU in both countries could play an important role in increasing effectiveness of the PMR in the task to further build upon ECHO investment in both countries.