

EVALUATION REPORT

Evaluation of ECHO's reaction to serious drought situations

By

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I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

a. Evaluated Action

GFE Consulting Worldwide undertook the evaluation of ECHO's response to serious drought conditions in three chosen areas, over a period of three years (2000 –2002).

b. Date of the Evaluation

The evaluation was carried out between August and October 2002. The following missions took place:

Afghanistan	August 2 nd to August 14 th 2002
Nicaragua	August 15 th to August 18 th , and August 25 th to August 26 th
Guatemala	August 18 th to August 20 th
Honduras	August 21 st to August 25 th
Kenya	September 19 th to September 24 th and October 1 st to October 3 rd
Ethiopia	September 25 th to September 30 th

c. Consultants

- Mr. Stephane PELLEGRINI, Team Leader and Logistics Expert (all countries)
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d. Purpose and Methodology

Purpose of the evaluation

- To assess ECHO's contribution as response to a variety of needs in the Horn of Africa region, in particular Kenya and Ethiopia, in Central America – Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua and in Afghanistan.
- To analyse the planning and implementation of ECHO's intervention and to analyse how they were integrated into local conditions and customs.
- To analyse the degree to which objectives were met.
- To assess the effectiveness of the means employed.
- To quantify the relevance and impact of ECHO's actions.
- To analyse the links between Emergency, Relief, Rehabilitation and Development in terms of sustainability.
- To examine the participation of the beneficiary population.
- To verify the visibility of ECHO.

Methodology of the evaluation

The evaluation started with a briefing session at ECHO, Brussels, where the purpose and objectives of the evaluation were discussed in detail. Access to relevant files and documentation was granted to the consultants and the visiting schedule was finalised.

The first mission was to Afghanistan and started with a briefing with ECHO TAs and the EC delegation in Kabul. Further meetings took place in Kabul, Herat, and Kandahar with ECHO partners, UN

agencies and other donors. Project locations were visited in the West and South, but visits were limited because of insecurity, transport constraints and limited time.

The mission to Central America started with a briefing with the EC Delegation and ECHO, followed by meetings with actors involved in the drought context in Managua, and afterwards in Guatemala and Honduras. Field visits took place in Guatemala, followed by visits to Honduras and Nicaragua. The mission ended with a debriefing with the ECHO TA in Nicaragua.

The mission to Africa started with a general meeting with ECHO's TA for Kenya and ECHO's TA for Water and Sanitation. The evaluation team held meetings in Nairobi with ECHO's partners, UN agencies, and Kenyan ministries. The evaluation team visited ECHO funded projects, and a debriefing meeting with ECHO's partners and all other actors in Kenya was organised, as well as a separate meeting with ECHO's Regional Co-ordinator, in order to exchange and discuss observations.

Because of constraints, the team was unable to follow the methodology applied in the other regions in Ethiopia. Meetings with major UN agencies, donors and line ministries, as well as the planned field visits, could not be organised. The evaluation team held separate meetings with ECHO's partners, WFP, UN Emergency Unit of Ethiopia and EC/Food Security Unit.

A debriefing was held at ECHO Brussels and the following reports were produced:

- Global report on ECHO's reaction to serious drought situations
- ECHO-funded relief programme in Afghanistan
- ECHO-funded relief programme in Nicaragua, Honduras and Guatemala
- ECHO-funded relief programme in Kenya and Ethiopia

e. **Main conclusions**

Relevance

The objectives and targeting were highly relevant to the design of ECHO's action. The overall strategy was appropriate for the drought response, but the methodology used was not coherent for the three regions.

- The overall **objective** of ECHO's action as response to drought has been similar for the three regions: the relief of human and livestock sufferings. The relief has been addressed through:
 - The provision of emergency assistance at an early stage, linked or not to existing food security programmes, to areas and communities most affected by drought in Afghanistan, Central America and Africa.
 - The provision of additional support in a second phase in order to prepare vulnerable communities for future drought in Central America and Africa.
 - The consolidation of the achievements at a last stage in Central America and Africa.
- The overall **targeting** of the beneficiaries in the design of ECHO's interventions has been tackled according to the assessed needs and according to the general and specific objectives of the interventions. The selection of the beneficiaries has therefore been well addressed, as follows:
 - The most vulnerable groups of the society: children below five years, pregnant and nursing mothers
 - The most vulnerable communities: the pastoralists with their livestock, the agro-pastoralists, farmers, Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and returnees
 - The most drought affected areas; corresponding with the agricultural areas of Afghanistan, the Central American Drought Corridor and the Somali regions of Kenya and Ethiopia

- ECHO's overall two-phases **strategy** for drought response has been similar for the three regions:
 - First phase: rapid and immediate reaction
 - Second phase: recovery, preparedness and prevention
- However, the strategy had to be adapted in Afghanistan given the regional political situation after September 11th 2001. In addition to the drought response strategy, an emergency strategy for the Afghan population affected by civil war and air strikes, has to be considered.
- The strategy of immediate reaction in order to reduce human and livestock suffering has been similar for the three regions, but specific with regard to each country in the elaboration of the methodology and implementation of the interventions:
 - The strategy and methodology in Central America have been designed in collaboration with and according to the national drought policies of Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua. The strategy was developed taking into account the **regional dimension** of the drought, whereas, although considered in Africa, the implementation of the intervention was adapted to the context of each country. The regional dimension is not valid for Afghanistan.
 - The drought interventions in Central America have also been fully **integrated in the on-going longer-term programmes** run by governmental structures, local and international NGOs. This was not the case in Africa where development projects were suddenly interrupted in order to be able to cope with the drought crisis. In the context of Afghanistan, the drought related interventions were interrupted after September 11th 2001. The activities were not within a specific drought related context, but rather the immediate response to arising needs, drought- as well as war related.
 - The strong **involvement of the communities** in the implementation of the project through Food For Work, Cash For Work and/or Foodac or community-based capacity building approaches, has been beneficial to the communities regarding preparedness for future droughts in Afghanistan, Central America and Africa.
 - The weakness in the African integrated approach as response to drought has been the little attention given to the **health, sanitation and hygiene** projects. Health issues were considered as structural problems, and therefore were considered to be more relevant in longer-term integrated strategies. This indeed is going beyond ECHO's proper mandate. However, it can be said that the chronic and remaining high global acute malnutrition rate in this region could be due to inappropriate management of health, sanitation and hygiene issues.
- The overall **budget** allocation has been divided accordingly to the specific context and priorities of each region.
 - Considering the considerable size and character of the emergency in Afghanistan, the combination of drought, war and air strike aftermaths, the budgets allocated to the respective sectors have been well adapted. Indeed, high malnutrition rates in the population, acute and severe shortage of drinking water and shelters (for drought related IDPs and returnees) were the priorities to be addressed according to needs of the population.

- Considering the specific regional problems and the numbers of beneficiaries in Central America, an appropriate budget was allocated to the priority sectors (nutrition, health and food security), responding to the high malnutrition in the infant population and reduced food security.
- As pastoralists have been the most affected community in the African context, the budgets primarily allocated to the nutrition/food aid, water (for both human and livestock consumption) and livestock sectors have been well adapted. Livestock is the main component of the food security and income generation in that community.

The table below gives an overview of the affected areas and the communities most hit by drought in terms of percentage of the total population per country and/or region:

Regions	Affected Areas in %	Population (x 1,000)					Cattle (x 1,000)	Budget in Million €
		Total (Nb.)	Affected (Nb.)	% of Total Population	Category	Beneficiaries (Nb.)		
Afghanistan	80	21,770 ¹	7,500	34.45 - 12.4	Farmers	2,700	2	113.043
				9.19	Pastoralists	2,000		
			1,200	4.84	IDPs	1,200		
			1,500	6.9	Returnees	1,500		
Central America	-	24,298	0.420	1.72	Farmers	0.420		4.3
Africa – Kenya (Ethiopia)	31.88	28,679	2,219 (4,000)	8	Pastoralists Agro-pastoralists	2,200 (4,000)	5, 249	24.411 ³

- **ECHO-partners** engaged in the response to the consequences of drought can be classified in the following groups:
 - Partners who are acting directly on the site, at community level;
 - Partners who give support to persons affected by the drought outside of their dwelling-place (e.g. IDPs) and thus mitigate the effects of the drought (and other additional factors causing the displacement);
 - Partners who provide or rehabilitate infrastructure for the emergency relief actions and thus enable or facilitate these actions.
- The partners working at community level essentially have to cope with the rehabilitation of the infrastructure in villages, either to make the villages habitable again (Afghanistan) or to give the communities the possibility of improving their living conditions, and thus prevent their emigration (Afghanistan, Central America and Africa). The target population was on the one hand the persons who remained in the villages or surroundings - the farmers and pastoralists communities -, and on the other hand the possible returnees from refugee camps or settlements within the country or abroad. The following interventions, separate or combined, were essential components of programmes and were therefore a good framework for the effect intended:
 - General food distribution as a survival assistance;
 - Feeding programmes (supplementary and/or therapeutic) when there was an increase in the malnutrition and mortality rates in the infant population;
 - Rehabilitation of water sources for safe drinking water (wells, springs, boreholes and installation of pumps);

¹ Statistics Division: United Nations Economical and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), figures for 2000

² The exact figures of livestock are not known

³ Total budget for Kenya and Ethiopia

- Provision of health services (vaccination, drug supplies and health care);
 - Rehabilitation or installation of channels, reservoirs for agricultural irrigation;
 - Provision of seeds, tools and fertilizers for seed multiplication
 - Distribution or de-stocking of livestock (mainly goats and sheep);
 - Provision of food, vaccination campaigns and water supply for the livestock;
 - Provision of shelters and Non-Food-Items for returnees.
- The second group of partners is giving support to persons affected by the drought outside of their dwelling-place. This means mainly Internally Displaced Persons (currently 1,2 million people according to UNHCR) who are living in camps in Afghanistan, and nomad population (about 2 million livestock raisers) who lost a big part of their traditional pasture land by drought and who are living in informal camps or settlements. The support consists of the provision of shelter, food and clothes, which means a huge challenge in logistics, finance and personnel, but has been realised satisfactorily.
- The third group of ECHO's partners gives a basis and framework to all operations described above by providing infrastructure for the emergency relief actions and thus enabling or facilitating the latter. This was particularly the case in Afghanistan. Their main activity was to assure security, which means the demining of the most important areas. This was carried out by several organisations funded by ECHO.

Effectiveness

- The **food aid** has been crucial for the survival of the targeted beneficiaries and the intended effect has been well achieved, particularly in Afghanistan.
- In Afghanistan, 50% of the daily ration was provided by WFP and the other 50% by ICRC. Free food distribution in the urban centres, IDPs-camps and remote rural areas, generally carried out by NGOs operational in the respective areas and in cooperation with WFP, have been successful and effective except for some breakdowns in the food pipeline. The operation suffered a harsh interruption of many activities after September 2001.
 - The Free Food Distribution was generally followed by Food For Work activities: rehabilitation of roads, dwellings, wells and irrigation systems, remunerated with rations of food for the population working in these projects. Another scheme of activity was the Food for Asset Creation (FOODAC), established by the WFP: it focused more on the assessed necessity of food than on the necessity of work. Both schemes are useful instruments in making food distribution productive, and the new FOODAC instrument allows an adaptation to respective social situations.
 - Unclear criteria for the targeting of the beneficiaries of the general food distribution (a targeted 75% of the population), pipeline shortfalls, delays in the distribution of WFP and sharing of the supplementary food (allocation by WFP) by the entire family (it is not used as a supplement but as a substitute to the normal diet) resulted in a reduced daily ration of the beneficiaries in Kenya.
- The **nutritional programmes** have in general been effective in terms of coverage of beneficiaries and areas. However, the Global Acute Malnutrition does remain high in certain regions of Africa. In the Kenyan context the above mentioned reasons as well as vitamin and mineral deficiencies, poor health services, unsteady medicine supply, water borne diseases, the morphological status of the Somalis (tall and thin) and the national political decision to establish settlements for pastoralist communities (as women are responsible for bringing goats and cattle for grazing, they are living in the settlements and are leaving the young children

behind) are possible reasons to explain the deterioration of the general health and nutrition status in the infant population

- The Nutritional programmes have been very effective in terms of prevention, as national and/or regional **nutritional protocols** have been, or are in the process of being, designed and elaborated in Central America and Africa. In Afghanistan, due to the fact that all government authorities/departments were destroyed, the international actors involved in nutritional programmes provided the different protocols currently used. A Nutritional Task Force has been recently organised in Kabul in order to establish a National Protocol.
- The **livestock** objectives in Africa have been largely attained and the quality of the services offered had a positive effect on the livestock. Cost-recovery activities have quickly been introduced and have been well accepted by the pastoralists.
- The implementation of the **water projects** has been very satisfactory in terms of drought recovery, use of appropriate local technology (in particular the “*Birkads*”, underground water tanks in Kenya and the “*Mecate Pump*” in Nicaragua) and coverage of targeted beneficiaries. The water management capacity of the Kenyan communities was enhanced, but remains the weakness of the water sector. The cost-recovery system of the water resources was introduced into the pastoralist community and appropriate capacity to manage the water resources was not available within that community. Training and capacity building was therefore difficult and slow.
- The **sanitation projects** have increased the awareness of and access to hygiene in Afghanistan, whereas in Africa these projects have been very weak in terms of quantity (only one NGO involved).
- **Food security** projects have been well tackled and effective:
 - The innovative fodder production projects have, over a very short period of time, been very effective in terms of strong community participation and area coverage.
 - The Food For Work activities focusing on agricultural inputs, water and sanitation and local infrastructures, have been appropriate, since resulting in an increased access to isolated areas and reduced rural migration.
- The support given to the set-up of **Early Warning Systems** in Central America and Africa has been very effective in terms of preparedness and prevention. Training and capacity building in early warning systems resulted in intensive participation of regional, national, district and local authorities in the process of and in drafting contingency plans. The conflict related emergency situation in Afghanistan did not permit the creation of a permanent National Early Warning System. However, the Afghan Information Management Service (AIMS) has been organised by UNOCHA and UNDP.
- The more activities of rehabilitation and/or development were planned and initiated by the NGOs, the more successful the intervention of the respective NGOs seems to be. The flowing transition from emergency relief to rehabilitation and development seems to be the appropriate means to show the population possibilities for self-sufficiency beyond the phase of external assistance.

Efficiency

- The package of the three groups of ECHO-partners formed a rational and useful compound with complementarity and synergy-effects in Afghanistan. It can be said that the combination of

the different types of implementing partners achieved to tackle the problems raised by drought at different levels.

- The rather high turnover of expatriate technical staff in Afghanistan, and in certain regions the understaffing, may have hampered the implementation of the projects during the emergency phase.
- ECHO's partners have involved all actors in the implementation of the project during the recovery phase (not relevant for/ not applicable to Afghanistan): communities, local district authorities and representatives of line ministries, as well as local NGOs.
- The different emergency relief operations required a strong **logistic capacity** that not many organisations can provide. The most important partner is WFP, who possesses the logistic and financial capacities to import and distribute food in the quantities necessary for regional requirements. ICRC was the other partner of ECHO with a big logistic capacity (Afghanistan and Ethiopia). WFP, other UN agencies (with ECHO support) and ECHO-Flight also provided the transport capacity for the staff to travel in the difficult conditions. Without this logistic support, most parts of the countries would be completely inaccessible. The fact that ICRC is still active in Afghanistan and Ethiopia demonstrates that the period of conflict is not yet considered over.
- In Afghanistan, cases were reported where quantities of food delivered by WFP were less than the contracted ones; the reasons were shortages in WFP's pipeline due to funding, logistic or others aspects on which WFP is depending. For the NGOs, it was a challenge and they had to be very flexible to compensate such differences, particularly because the very limited possibilities of local purchase due to scarce local surplus production.
- As can be judged from the limited observations made during the field visits, the majority of the projects have been suitable in terms of quality with regard to using appropriate technologies, innovative approaches and addressing needs.
- The **monitoring** has been excellent and efficient in Central America and Kenya. In the specific context of Afghanistan - on-going civil war, high level of insecurity, government archives destroyed, high number of International Organisations acting during the last emergency crisis, etc.-, monitoring has been difficult. Moreover, collection of data and analysis were not standardised, which further complicated monitoring.

Impact

- Improvement of food **security** in the households, through the implementation of agricultural and livestock coping mechanisms and income generating activities, allowed the communities to be better prepared for new drought crises. This resulted also in a reduced rural exodus and increased access to remote and isolated communities.
- The **creative approaches**, such as the set up of fodder farms, sun-dried meat production and de-stocking of small ruminants during drought, had a positive impact on the communities. The introduction of **innovative and appropriate technologies** and the enhanced community ownership of water, agricultural and livestock projects have therefore resulted in an increased self-sufficiency of the communities and sustainability of the projects.

- ECHO's global nutrition, health and water interventions have improved the **health status** and the medical coverage of the populations and seem to have resulted in a reduced crude and infant mortality rate.
- The increased access to and storage capacity of **water sources**, the introduction of community-based management of water resources, combined with appropriate veterinary services offered, resulted in a veterinary health significantly improved in Africa.
- The NGOs do not have real opportunities to consolidate their emergency and recovery response to drought in all regions, as there is no appropriate and comprehensive donor response for future and longer-term programmes. Moreover, the European Commission tools/departments are not always accessible to NGOs or specifically represented in the countries.

Crosscutting issues

- In the three regions, the majority of NGOs were implementing long-term projects before the drought. During the drought interventions, although most of the ECHO-funded emergency relief projects included elements tending to a longer-term process and the willingness of NGOs to invest in longer-term activities, they did not really have good opportunities to consolidate their emergency and recovery response to drought, as there was not an appropriate donor strategy for future and longer-term programmes.
- The **collaboration and coordination** between the European Commission tools/departments (EC/DEV, EC/Food Security Unit, ECHO and its project Disaster Preparedness – DIPECHO) is weak in Afghanistan and Africa, whereas it is appropriate in Central America. The EC instruments are not always accessible to NGOs, therefore putting the achievements and the LRRD initiatives at risk.
- ECHO's partners have respected the gender aspect in the design and implementation of the projects.
- Major donors are present in the three regions and have participated in general meetings organised by different bodies involved in the drought management and recovery. But a common donors' approach and strategy has not been established in the three regions.

f. Recommendations

Relevance

- The design and carrying out by a multi-agency group of an in-depth **multi-sectoral evaluation** country wise (not specifically related to drought) could give a clearer view of the overall needs of the communities. ECHO and its partners could focus on their specific mandates, share the results and when needed recommend long-term development agencies on possible actions to be taken.
- Health services and water availability for human consumption, in terms of quality and quantity, remains an important **health issue** particularly in Africa. In future drought responses, the health component should receive more specific attention.
- Increase the **collaboration** between the departments and instruments of the European Commission, such as the Food Security Unit and ECHO, through regular meetings and sharing

information on progress made in the implementation of the projects, in order to better define and organise the hand-over process of long-term projects, such as livestock. This recommendation concerns particularly Africa and Afghanistan.

- Elaborate a **regional approach** of the programmes as response to drought in Africa, including Kenya, Ethiopia, Somalia and Sudan.
- It is recommended that ECHO should be present in Ethiopia, as the general drought issues (chronic drought emergencies) are similar to those in Kenya. In addition, Ethiopia faces a situation of real insecurity and ethnic fragility.
- The structure of the Red Cross, regardless of the nation involved, is very well suited for operations of the type ECHO is engaged in. The Red Cross is represented everywhere in the countries, has a disciplined and centralised organisation and is always emergency-oriented, with nation-wide Early Warning Systems, and is generally also well equipped. So it seems advisable for ECHO to study the possibility of using the Red Cross structures for cooperation in own emergency operations.
- ECHO in Afghanistan should set-up a **standard methodology of targeting** beneficiaries in order to avoid disparity between NGOs and populations receiving support.
- Afghanistan is still a country where humanitarian emergency interventions are needed. This situation is linked to on-going drought and civil conflict conditions. The major needs are reconstruction and resettlement. ECHO should therefore focus its actions on food security, health and rehabilitation, and develop a strategy integrated in the mid- and long-term perspective for Afghanistan.
- In the specific long-term emergency context of Afghanistan, it is extremely important to have a very good understanding of the **social and cultural aspect** of the Afghan society. Therefore the implementing partners should have significant experiences in the country and region.
- In future drought-conflict emergency situations it is advisable to organise a **task force** group within the European Commission with representatives of the different departments.
- At the beginning of very large emergency operations, such as in Afghanistan, increasing the number of ECHO representatives has to be considered in order to enhance the coordination between ECHO and its partners and to better cover the country.

Effectiveness

- An example of a sound **concept of a project** seems to be the combination of a two phases-approach:
 - In an early stage, the provision of fortified supplementary food, safe drinking water and appropriate health care to the most vulnerable families;
 - In the second stage, the control and improvement of the water quality through the installation of filters, pumps and latrines, distribution of disinfectants, the rehabilitation of wells and installation of micro-irrigation systems; and
 - Improvement of the supply of animal protein to the communities by the introduction of sun-dried meat and where possible the breeding of fish.

The nutritional problems of the communities would be tackled from different sides. Point two and three initiate a flowing transition from emergency relief to rehabilitation or even development, meeting the requirements of LRRD.

- When a new and unknown fertilizer, proposed with a new variety of wheat or other agricultural products, is to be introduced into a region, an explicit instruction should be given to the population about the correct use of it, previous to the distribution (specific recommendations for Afghanistan).
- Related to the normal economy of livestock raisers, who barter or sell their products on markets in order to purchase other food commodities, it would be more appropriate to give cash instead of food aid to these communities: cash for work or cash for asset creation could be considered.
- In order to avoid market distortions and negative effects upon the incentives for future food production, a strict **timing for food distribution** should be observed, which means stopping the distribution in periods of harvest.
- Concerning the crucial issue of provision of water, be it for human and livestock consumption or for irrigation of cultivated land, hardly known techniques such as underground water tanks (Africa) or the “*Mecate Pump*” (Nicaragua) could be introduced in other regions, e.g. Afghanistan.
- Beyond the rehabilitation of water sources (wells, channels, boreholes, springs), the introduction and development of new systems of water management and water detection should be considered. These activities go beyond the capacities of NGOs, but technical experts could be involved for example in the development, construction and distribution of pumps able to cope with a depth of more than 50 meters (main problem in Africa and Afghanistan).
- The filters for wasted water (gravel, sand and charcoal – ACSUR in Central America) could be an interesting principle for the re-utilisation of wasted water for micro-irrigation.
- It is important to increase the awareness of the populations on the issue of drought response. The populations are often still not used to save water and to handle it economically. Booklets and/ or curricula, to be used during workshops and/or community sensitisation sessions, could be developed. Issues such as possible long-term climate changes with subsequent droughts and better water management could be worked out. This would better prepare the population for future drought situations.

Efficiency

- In Afghanistan some cases of discrepancies between the assessments of WFP and NGOs were reported. These cases should be observed in an objective manner and valid conclusions should be elaborated.
- As the possibility of capacity building with counterparts is limited in Afghanistan and Ethiopia, due to the mostly only formal existence of the latter, contacts with the competent authorities should be maintained with the purpose to involve them more and more into the fieldwork currently carried out by NGOs.
- In a critical situation such as the one that occurred in Afghanistan after September 11th 2001, **high turn over of expatriate staff** should be avoided: understanding of the Afghan context and society is important for an appropriate continuation and follow-up of the activities.

- A method should be considered to avoid or mitigate the consequences of food shortages in WFP's pipeline that is sometimes jeopardising the implementation of projects, such as Food for Work and Food for Assets Creation. The set-up of an early warning information and communication system about "shortfalls" to be addressed to implementing agencies, or alternative contracts with other suppliers could be envisaged.
- In contexts where drought is not generalised, ECHO's interventions should be differentiated and concentrated in the affected micro-regions. ECHO's intervention in Central America is a good example for future "pocket" drought crisis. NGOs are also better adapted and more efficient than WFP for the implementation of smaller-scale projects.
- NGOs are often realising the activities that should normally be addressed by national services, mainly Public Health and Technical Assistance in agriculture. Therefore it is advisable to NGOs to show "visibility" towards the local and regional institutions and authorities, with the purpose of "reminding" these organisations that the presence and involvement of NGOs should only be transitory.

Impact

- In the specific context of north and northeastern Kenya and southeastern Ethiopia, which are regions geographically semi- and arid, politically neglected, with ethnical tensions and chronically poor, severe drought periods are only exacerbating the existing global acute malnutrition rates and health status of the communities. Therefore, it is advisable to enhance a **multi-sectoral approach** in drought emergency projects by integrating multi-sectoral small-scale projects into ongoing longer-term programmes and structures run by ECHO partners and local NGOs. An integrated approach may be more effective in terms of impact and long-term sustainability of the projects.
- As there is sufficient food available on the markets of Central America, but access to food is limited for a great part of the population by lack of purchasing power, it seems to be evident that the **local purchase of food commodities** would be the best alternative. The local purchase generally has positive effects for the respective economy, avoiding disincentives to the local food production, and also shortens the transport and renders the food supply more economical.
- The combination of food assistance and the implementation of useful and needed activities in the rehabilitation of infrastructures (e.g. water and irrigation systems or roads), in other words the realisation of the concept of **Food For Work**, is a good means to prevent the attitude of relying on assistance among the population. Food For Work is furthermore useful as a means of temporal job creation that does not disturb the local economy.
- An important issue for a sustainable development would be the introduction of more drought-resistant crops instead of, or in addition to, the traditional maize, millet and beans. For example, peanuts could be planted amidst old cactuses and completely dry maize fields in the provinces of Chiquimula, Guatemala. Peanuts could serve as a cash crop, whose proceeds enable the purchase of other food commodities by the communities.

Crosscutting issues

- In Afghanistan, the activity of emancipating work with **women** groups should be concentrated in areas where quicker results and higher probability of durability are to be expected, that means in urban areas and their surroundings. Although in the short term the results will probably be

very limited due to tradition, every success could serve as an example for Afghan women elsewhere.

g. Lessons learned

❖ **Afghanistan**

- In the specific long-term emergency context with war and drought issues it is extremely important to have a very good understanding of the social and cultural aspects of the Afghan society. The implementing partners should therefore have significant **experiences in the country** and region.
- In the current Afghan context, **women** should receive particular attention especially in rural areas.
- As **water** is the absolute bottleneck for rural production, be it agricultural or livestock, the efficient use of existing water resources and the rehabilitation of all existing systems is a very important issue. But beyond this, new resources and methods of water management are components that should be tackled nation-wide, involving experts and technical experts who disseminate their knowledge throughout the projects of the implementing partners.
- In regions or in communities where livestock-raising is the major economic activity, cash programmes would fit better than Food For Work or FOODAC programmes, be it as **cash for work or cash for asset** creation, in order to maintain a maximum of habitual life conditions of the population. Moreover, if there is a certain quantity of national food production on the market, it will strengthen the local food production and give incentives for further production.
- Assistance to agricultural production is not only a contribution to food security; it also prevents farmers to shift to poppy production, which is considered the most profitable cash crop.
- Most of the projects at the community level contain elements of longer-term involvement. The implementing NGOs are generally willing to and capable of realising these activities, which fit perfectly with the ECHO-concept of LRRD. But the implementation of such projects, with flowing transition from relief emergency to rehabilitation and development, requires more time than the ECHO-funding generally allows. So it seems to be advisable to extend the funding in cases where this seems to have a positive perspective.
- The financial and administrative structure of ECHO, as part of the European Delegation, is well adapted to provide a quick and significant support in an emergency context like Afghanistan. Better results could be achieved with more staff and institutional coordination between EC departments.

❖ **Central America**

- Although Central America is described as a homogeneous region, strict national particularities and seclusion can be observed. Special efforts have to be made in order to diffuse successful inventions and technologies, as for example the mecate pump.
- An important issue for a sustainable development would be the introduction of more drought-resistant crops instead of or in addition to the traditional maize, millet and beans.

- The - not really dramatic - **demographic pressure** in the three countries (population growth of slightly above 3% p. a.) leads to the expansion of settlements and to the cultivation of soils which are not favourable for cultivation and where failure and bad harvests, particularly when maize and beans are sowed, are rather probable. This is one more argument for the introduction of more drought-resistant crops instead of or in addition to the traditional maize, millet and beans.
- The **coffee** should not only be seen as a product for the (world-) market. First of all, coffee is often also cultivated in micro-plantations for small-scale production, partly for self-consumption, which saves money, and partly to be sold on the local market. Secondly, the coffee shrubs are generally grown "in the shadow", which means under trees which protect the soil from the drying sun. The coffee plantation is a method to preserve the ecological equilibrium. Coffee plantations transformed into maize fields turned out to dry within one season, because the trees had been cut and the soil had no more protection.
- There seems to be evidence that the level of the **surface water** that feeds particularly the wells and springs in the country, has been falling during the last years. But as the deep ground water level still seems not to be affected, the possibility of drilling deeper wells in the countryside could be considered, be it for drinking water or irrigation, if the conditions are favourable and a significant effect is to be expected.

❖ **Africa**

- Kenya and Ethiopia, and more specifically the semi- and arid regions, have experienced several and repeatedly longer severe drought periods. For both countries, chronic poverty, political negligence and ethnical tension have hampered the development of these regions. Severe drought periods have only exacerbated the existing poor health and malnutrition status of the communities. The integration of multi-sectoral projects into ongoing longer-term programmes and structures would have been more effective in terms of impact and long-term sustainability of the projects. It would also have avoided the "zip" situation – being in and out of the region-, of NGOs involved specifically in emergency.
- Dry Supplementary Feeding programmes, as response to moderate global acute malnutrition may not be the most appropriate in pastoral communities. Dry rations are not used as supplement but as a substitute to the normal diet and are shared by the entire family.

The table below gives an **overview**⁴ of the results obtained in respect to the objectives and strategy elaborated by ECHO.

SECTORS	AFGANISTAN		CENTRAL AMERICA		AFRICA	
	Results	Problems Suggestions	Results	Problems Suggestions	Results	Problems Suggestions
NUTRITION						
General Food Distribution	Good	WFP pipeline breakdown Support to NGO pipeline	Appropriate	Support to on-going food security projects	Not appropriate	Kenya: Ta Pipelini General Fo
Feeding Programmes (Dry Supplementary & Therapeutic)	Good ⁵		Very Good	The F100 and F75 are expensive products To be replaced by local commodities	Good	WFP: targ NGO's: Overall W Selection
Food For Work (FFW) Cash for Work (CFW) Food For Asset Creation (FOODAC)	Appropriate	(FFW & FOODAC) Creates dependency Organise step by step cash for work	Very Good	(FFW and CFW) Increase CFW to increase income		
Survey VAM	confusing	Need more coordination, standardisation and centralisation Establish co-ordinating body	Good	Lack of regional standardised criteria Set-up of regional standardised criteria	Very Good Survey ev
HEALTH						
Provision of Emergency Health kits or drugs	Not enough		Good		Poor	Coverag Increase He
Vaccination					Poor	Between 30 Increase cov
Mobile Clinic for IDPs	Very Good					
Medical Care	Good in the IDP Camps.	Not enough in rural and urban areas	Very Good			
WATER						
Storage					Very Good	Exp
Rehabilitation Water resources	Good	Need more investment in irrigation system	Very Good ⁶		Very Good	
SANITATION						
Latrines	Very good for IDPs	Not enough in community Increase sanitation projects	Very Good		Very Poor	Valid for A Increase sa
Wash rooms	Idem		Very good			
Hygiene Education	Good	Included more the gender issues, women organisations	Very Good		Poor	Increase Hy
LIVESTOCK						
Vaccination & treatment					Very Good	
Provision of Health Kits					Very Good	
De-stocking					Very Good	
Fodder supply						
De-silting - rehabilitation water points					Very Good	
AGRICULTURE						
Irrigation System	Very Good					
Seeds and Fertilizers	Very Good					
TRANSPORT COMMUNICATION						

⁴ Where no figure is mentioned, there is either no project or there was no data available. More details in the Country Reports

⁵ Visited only Feeding Centres in IDP camps

⁶ Technology transfer

	Air transport	Good	Very expensive Find alternatives such as private company			
	Rehabilitation of Roads	Not enough	Need huge infrastructure	Very Good		
	PROTECTION					
	Shelter and Housing					
	Mine Clearance	Good	Need more intervention ⁷			
	NUTRITION					
	Survey & Surveillance	Not well adapted	Lack of coordination Set-up coordination body	Very Good Set-up of regional standardised criteria	Very Good
	HEALTH					
	Health Education			Very Good		Poor He Increase He
	Training of CHWs ⁸			Very Good		
	WATER					
	Underground Tanks					Very Good
	Cost-recovery system	Good in town To be developed in the field and isolated communities			Rather Good Enhance C
	SANITATION					
	Latrines					Poor
	Hygiene Education					Poor
	LIVESTOCK					
	Construction Additional Pans					Very Good
	Training of CAHWs ⁹					Very Good
	Cost-recovery system					Very Good
	FOOD SECURITY					
	Fodder Production			Good Can be extended to farm	Very Good
	Dried Meat Production					Good
	Irrigation System	Very Good				(Good) ¹⁰
	Seeds	Very Good				
	Small farm animals			Very Good		
	CAPACITY BUILDING					
	Water Sources Management Committees			Very Good		Good
	PREVENTION					
	Early Warning System					Very Good
						(Positive

⁷ It is understood that Mine clearance has been taken over by DG RELEX.

⁸ CHWs: Community Health Workers

⁹ CAHWs: Community Animal Health Workers

¹⁰ It is put in brackets as the project in Ethiopia was not visited; results considered according to ECHO TA report.