



Synthesis of findings on ECHO's Policy of treating affected populations without regards to preconceived categories, specifically IDPs, Refugees and Returnees and Local Population, based on reviews in Sudan, Angola and Afghanistan.

Version 1.00 of 28 Jan 04

This report was requested by and prepared with financial assistance from ECHO. The views expressed herein are those of the consultants and do not represent any official view of ECHO

Independent review by John Cosgrave
Channel Research Limited
10 rue Baron de Xavier, B-1380 Lasne, Belgium
Tel: +32 2 633 6529 Fax: +32 2 633 3092
<http://www.channelresearch.com>

1 Executive summary

This synthesis report was commissioned by ECHO to consider the findings of three ECHO evaluations in Sudan, Angola, and Afghanistan¹. The theme of the synthesis was the findings by the evaluation teams on ECHO policy of providing assistance according to need rather than according to a *preconceived category* such as refugee, internally displaced, or returnee.

ECHO in principle aims at addressing humanitarian needs of affected populations regardless of whether they have been forcibly displaced, let alone whether that displacement has taken place across international boundaries. ECHO's financing is thus based on the assessment of needs in the field rather than on preconceived categories². (Terms of Reference for the Afghanistan Evaluation)

The present ECHO policy of targeting on basis of need will generally lead to assistance being targeted to *preconceived categories* where these are the groups in greatest need and targeting by category allows for efficient distribution. ECHO should restate its policy around the positive aspect of targeting on the basis of need, as targeting by a particular category makes sense when the members of that category are those most in need.

This is particularly the case as members of vulnerable social categories often show themselves more likely to be affected by the current ECHO cross-cutting themes³ than non members of the category. This is particularly the case in the cross-cutting theme of protection for the categories of refugees, internally displaced, or returnees.

In Angola, almost all ECHO partners opted to channel initial funding requests for work in *newly accessible areas* to OCHA's Emergency Response Fund. Many then got follow up funding from ECHO. Implementing partners opted to do this because the OCHA fund was more flexible and much faster than ECHO⁴. ECHO should experiment with a flexible and fast funding mechanism in a country where there is a rapidly changing environment and a consequent need for such funding.

Project quality was an issue in a number of the projects evaluated. ECHO provides little formal written guidance for Technical Assistants or partners. This increases the management load for Technical Assistants as they have to devise policies based on their own knowledge and experience. It also increases the risk of poor performance by partners.

LRRD in the Commission at present tends to concentrate on links between ECHO and other Commission services. However, these services may be working in different sectors,

¹ Comments from ECHO on an earlier draft have contributed to the material in this report.

² However, while Article 1 of Regulation 1257/96 states "The Community's humanitarian aid shall comprise assistance, relief and protection operations on a non-discriminatory basis to help people in third countries, particularly the most vulnerable among them..." there is no reference here to *preconceived categories*, nor does the term appear in the Echo Strategy for 2003 or other bases for ECHO intervention.

³ Gender, human rights, protection, child-related issues, disaster preparedness, and the linking of relief with rehabilitation and development (LRRD).

⁴ ECHO has greatly improved the timeliness of contracts in 2003 with the fastest being issued only 14 days after the funding request. The OCHA fund was said to have made grants generally within one week of the requests, but this claim was not tested by either the ECHO or Danida evaluation teams.

different geographic areas, or with different partners from ECHO. Linking relief to rehabilitation and development is more likely to be effective when Member States aid departments and other development donors are included as well as the other Commission services. However, even this approach is limited as some of the sectors, areas, or partners that fall within ECHO's programme will not fall within the scope of the development donors active in a country.

The current narrow focus of the ECHO evaluation, while meeting the legal requirement, may be losing the opportunity to learn broader lessons on humanitarian assistance. ECHO is considering increasing the scope of evaluations and has also undertaken a number of good initiatives, such as the field testing of new criteria for evaluation of humanitarian action. Joint evaluation efforts, where ECHO works together with a number of other donors to study a particular topic, offer increased opportunities for improving the quality of humanitarian assistance.

The methodology used for this report consisted of reading the evaluations and a series of background documents, the most important of which are listed in the bibliography on page 17. This report had also benefited from detailed comments made by ECHO on an earlier draft. Some specific issues were investigated with web searches. Statistics from the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD/DAC) online databases were analysed. The dtSearch Desktop data mining tool was used to find references to specific topics within the specific reference set assembled for this study as well as within the author's broader reference set.

Appendices present the background to the synthesis, a very brief summary of the evaluations and a brief bibliography.

2 Main Conclusions

2.1 Preconceived categories and need

ECHO in principle aims at addressing humanitarian needs of affected populations regardless of whether they have been forcibly displaced, let alone whether that displacement has taken place across international boundaries. ECHO's financing is thus based on the assessment of needs in the field rather than on preconceived categories¹. (Terms of Reference for the Afghanistan Evaluation)

ECHO's policy is in line with humanitarian principles. The Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Relief² is widely taken to be a broad definition of how agencies can comply with humanitarian principles. Principle 2 of the code specifies that aid should be given on the basis of need³.

Code of Conduct: Principle 2: Aid is given regardless of the race, creed or nationality of the recipients and without adverse distinction of any kind.

Aid priorities are calculated on the basis of need alone. Wherever possible, we will base the provision of relief aid upon a thorough assessment of the needs of the disaster victims and the local capacities already in place to meet those needs. Within the entirety of our programmes, we will reflect considerations of proportionality. Human suffering must be alleviated whenever it is found; life is as precious in one part of a country as another. Thus, our provision of aid will reflect the degree of suffering it seeks to alleviate. In implementing this approach, we recognise the crucial role played by women in disaster prone communities and will ensure that this role is supported, not diminished, by our aid programmes. The implementation of such a universal, impartial and independent policy, can only be effective if we and our partners have access to the necessary resources to provide for such equitable relief, and have equal access to all disaster victims.

However, even within this principle one can note that a particular category is singled out for special attention, that of *women in disaster prone communities*. The emphasis on this category has come about because of past lessons from emergencies where the needs of women have been overlooked, or their role been marginalised.

Categories are widely used in humanitarian assistance to label groups with special needs. In humanitarian assistance, categorisation can be made on the basis of:

- Displacement status, (refugee, Internally Displaced Person (IDP), resettled, returnee, temporarily resettled etc.)
- Personal attributes (gender, age, or disability).
- Health status (HIV status).
- Occupation (farmer, fisherman, employee).

¹ However, while Article 1 of Regulation 1257/96 states "The Community's humanitarian aid shall comprise assistance, relief and protection operations on a non-discriminatory basis to help people in third countries, particularly the most vulnerable among them..." there is no reference here to *preconceived categories*, nor does the term appear in the Echo Strategy for 2003 or other bases for ECHO intervention.

² SCHR, 1994

³ This emphasis of providing assistance on the basis of need is also reiterated in Principles of Good Donorship (Stockholm Conference, 2003). This included as principle six: "*Allocate humanitarian funding in proportion to needs and on the basis of needs assessments.*"

- Geographical (ECHO sometimes restricts assistance to the parts of a country considered to be the worst affected.)
- Wealth (poorest of the poor, poor put viable etc.)

Some categories have much stronger links to need, but are never the sole indicator. After a few years of displacement IDPs may, with access to land, be in no worse situation than the majority of the host community. The Angola evaluation found that membership of a particular category was not always a good indicator of need. The matrix below shows the linkage between ECHO’s current cross cutting themes¹ and different social categories².

Social categories and ECHO's cross cutting themes.

The degree to which cross cutting themes are more likely to affect members of a social category than those who are not members:

- + Somewhat more
- ++ Significantly more
- +++ Very much more

	<i>Social Category</i>												
	Refugees	Returnees	Internally displaced	Widows	Single Young Women	Single Young Men	Female headed households	Children	Disabled	Occupation	Geographical location	Low wealth	Poor Health Status
<i>Child-related issues</i>	+	+	+	++			+++	+++	+			+	+
<i>Gender</i>	++	+	+	+++	+++	+	+++	++	+	++		++	++
<i>Protection</i>	+++	++	+++	++	++	+	++	++	++	+	+	+	+
<i>Human Rights</i>	+++	++	++	+	+		+	+	+	+	+	+	++
<i>LRRD</i>	+	+++	++	++			++	++		++	++	++	+
<i>Disaster Preparedness</i>			+		+		+	+	++	+	+++	++	+

At first glance it may seem surprising that there is so much linkage between the cross cutting themes and the social categories, but it is merely so because the social categories used are all indicators of one type of vulnerability or another.

Categories are widely used because they are useful. Targeting a particular category of beneficiary for assistance means that programmes can avoid *means testing* individual households for eligibility for assistance³ and simply supply aid to all of those in the category. Using categories means that the needs of special groups are not overlooked, as some of these groups may have limited power.

The first three of the social categories, refugees, returnees, and the internally displaced are *preconceived categories* with a significant global caseload. The Global IDP project estimates that there were some 25 million IDPs in the world at the end of 2002 and the US Committee for Refugees estimates there were then some 13 million refugees and

¹ Cross cutting themes as identified in the ECHO Aid Strategy for 2003.

² For example: child related issues are of more concern to refugees etc because displaced populations often have reduced numbers of adult males and increased numbers of women and children.

³ This *means testing* can be done through community structures such as village relief committees, but these are open to abuse if not very well briefed and managed. The Afghanistan evaluation raised concern about whether some partners had properly selected beneficiaries for some projects. The Angola report suggests that in future, as whole populations no longer need NFIs that NFIs should be based on household level needs assessment.

asylum seekers. The number of IDPs had stabilised in 2002, due no doubt to the start of return in Angola. At a combined caseload of 38 million, these categories are lower than the high point of 42 million in 1994, but higher than the 1997 low of 31 million. The growth in the total since 1997 has largely been in the numbers of IDPs.

Alone among the three reports, the Afghanistan Evaluation found that “*ECHO interventions have, in fact, targeted Preconceived Categories of beneficiary (such as Refugees, Drought IDPs, Conflict IDPs and Returnees) but such specific targeting has been found to be quite justified as a means of reaching the greatest number*”¹.

However the Sudan evaluation, while stating that ECHO did not target preconceived categories, went on to say that the Non Food Items (NFI) distributed were distributed to IDPs alone, and that this was appropriate and should continue. NFIs accounted for 17% of the programme in Sudan.

In Angola, while the evaluation recommended that ECHO continue the policy of not targeting preconceived categories, it pointed out that much of the assistance had been delivered to categories of beneficiaries such as IDPs.

The important aspect here is that assistance is targeted on the basis of need. Need is ideally identified through assessment, but based on experience of previous emergencies with similar populations the level of initial needs can be estimated. One of the needs of displaced population is for protection.

The Sudan evaluation found that the displaced were in no greater need of protection than resident populations. This is not always the case. Local populations may have better access to some form of political representation which they can use to limit abuses. Refugees and IDPs may not have such access. The Danida Angola report found that ICRC was playing a special role in the protection of some classes of IDPs in Angola, and UNHCR plays a similar role with Refugees. The Afghanistan evaluation found that the ECHO funded interventions of ICRC, UNHCR, and others were “*low-key but with a high impact*”.

The Sudan evaluation found the quality of needs assessment was variable with some excellent needs assessments by partners in the health sector in government controlled areas. In southern Sudan, assessments were more rudimentary, or projects were based on estimates rather than needs assessments. The Afghanistan evaluation found examples of good needs assessment. In Angola the report suggested that previous blanket coverage be replaced by careful needs assessment as it was no longer appropriate to assist the whole category of people (although it was recognised that it had been appropriate in the past).

Conclusion: The present ECHO policy of targeting on basis of need will usually lead to assistance being targeted to preconceived categories where these are the groups in greatest need and targeting by category allows for efficient distribution.

Conclusion: It is appropriate to target assistance to a specific category, on the basis of assessments or prima facie evidence, that the category of person is more in need than persons outside that category, or that they are as needy as categories that are already being assisted, where such broad targeting leads to greater efficiency that would come from household level targeting.

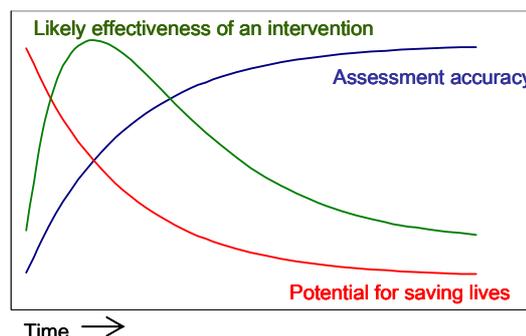
Conclusion: The special needs of some preconceived categories for protection may make it appropriate for ECHO to continue to fund organisations providing protection to one preconceived category or another.

¹ The Afghanistan evaluation paid the most attention to this topic with 24 references to preconceived categories in their report versus 6 for the Angola report and 2 references for the Sudan report.

2.2 Timeliness of assistance to those in need

The Afghanistan evaluation noted a few scattered timeliness issues, but included these under a discussion of efficiency rather than effectiveness. ECHO partners in Angola noted that ECHO was generally faster than other funding mechanisms. The Angola evaluation noted that the timeliness of the processing of funding requests to ECHO significantly improved by 2003¹.

Timeliness is important in emergencies where there is either a rapid onset, or sudden access to previously inaccessible populations because there is greater potential for saving lives at the start of rapid onset emergencies².



Prior to 2003³, ECHO partners in Angola made use of OCHA's Emergency Response Fund for funding interventions in newly accessible areas⁴. Decisions on disbursement of this special OCHA fund for Angola were generally made within a week of application. After initial funding from OCHA for a particular newly accessible area, many NGOs then applied to ECHO for follow-on funding.

Clearly, this rapid timescale for the OCHA fund suggests that proposals must have been somewhat rudimentary. However, OCHA's network of provincial advisors put it in a good position to judge whether applicants were likely to be able to effectively carry out the proposed work.

The populations in the newly accessible areas were the neediest in terms of humanitarian assistance. If these populations had been refugees or IDPs arriving at serviced locations they would more readily have received assistance. Refugees could expect to be assisted by UNHCR. IDPs arriving at locations with existing IDP populations could expect to be served with them. The groups in Angola that were newly accessible to humanitarian assistance were not a *preconceived category* and therefore lost out. ECHO did assist these groups, but generally not in the first phase.

Conclusion: OCHA's locally administered Emergency Response Fund played a key role in acute humanitarian assistance in Angola, and led to ECHO being the follow-on funder rather than the primary one.

¹ The fastest approval took only 14 days, a feat of efficiency given the thoroughness of the approvals process.

² Timeliness is also important in ensuring that actions are undertaken when they are most appropriate. In the rapidly changing context of many emergencies, delays may lead to assistance being inappropriate when it is eventually delivered.

³ The initial calculations by the Angola evaluation team gave an average of four and a half months between funding requests and the issue of contracts for 2002. By 2003, the Desk note that only one contract took more than 60 days (due to inaction by the NGO requesting funding) and that over half the contracts were issued within 28 days of the request.

⁴ Newly accessible areas were areas that had previously been cut off from humanitarian assistance by the security situation. They were generally the areas where the deepest humanitarian needs were found.

2.3 Quality issues

The Afghanistan evaluation found that “*ECHO has contributed to the preservation of and sustenance of the lives of a very substantial number of people affected by displacement and drought in Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iran.*” However, the effectiveness of some interventions was limited by the technical competence of partners. The Sudan evaluation found that while ECHO funded activities were a clear benefit to partners, there was inadequate supervision of projects by partners leading to quality issues. The Danida evaluation in Angola also noted occasional instances of poor quality due to lack of competence in some sectors.

The supply and distribution of Non Food Items (NFI) were a significant part of ECHO’s programme in Angola and Sudan¹. These were far less important in Afghanistan².

One issue identified by the ECHO 2000³ evaluation in Angola was the variable quality of NFI. This was also a problem identified by the ECHO and Danida evaluations in 2003. Part of the problem was the lack of specification⁴. The issue was not commented on in either the Afghanistan or Sudan evaluations⁵. This is a particular issue as refugees are likely to receive reasonable quality NFI because of the standards set for these by UNHCR.

Both the Sudan and Afghanistan reports favoured increasing ECHO’s capacity for technical supervision as a means of guaranteeing minimum standards by partners. The Afghanistan report notes that the present assumption that NGOs are equal and expert partners is not always justified as problems with recruitment mean that NGO staff are not always sufficiently experienced and high turnover rates limit institutional learning.

A further issue here is the lack of ECHO policies. ECHO appears to have no formal written policy on issues such as gender. Written policies and guidelines have the advantage of formalising the learning of an institution. The process of developing policies itself may lead to increased thinking within an organisation about its overall purpose and what it is trying to achieve. One would expect a major donor like ECHO to have clearly enunciated policies on topics such as:

- Gender (ECHO developed papers some time ago but has no formal policy)
- Disability
- Elderly
- Protection
- HIV/AIDS (ECHO 1 has a paper but this has not yet been published)
- Sustainability
- Human Rights (A paper was produced in 1999)

¹ In Sudan, NFIs accounted for 20% of the expenditure and in Angola, expenditure on NFIs rose from 17% to 24% of the funded interventions from 2002 to 2003 (the data for 2003 covered only the projects funded by the time of the evaluation).

² Less than 2% of beneficiaries in Afghanistan received non food items.

³ Schild 2000

⁴ Schild (2000) recommended that “*In co-ordination with the NGOs and international organisations as UNHCR, ECHO should agree on a general specification of the items to be distributed and quality of all items subsumed under NFI.*” Cosgrave (2003) noted that “*Several non food-items seen were of poor quality. If agencies had used standard specifications such as those published by UNHCR, this issue would not have arisen.*”

⁵ The Sudan evaluation did note that: “*The proposals seen were very poor in term of identifying the exact number of beneficiaries to receive NFIs.*” (Lothe, P (2003):4). It hardly seems likely that agencies with such a basic flaw in their proposals were very professional in their procurement of NFI.

- Sexual and Gender Based Violence
- Beneficiary participation

While other Commission services have policies for at least some of these issues, the context in which ECHO works is different and the policies may need to be correspondingly different. It should be noted that an inclusive facilitated process for formulating policy often has a far bigger impact than simply employing someone to produce a policy paper.

ECHO requires that NGOs and IOs comply with international standards, but does not seem to have standards for items like NFI, a very frequent component of emergency programmes. Finally, ECHO seems to have no written standards for the level of service provision by implementing partners¹.

While ECHO Technical Assistants have to be qualified and have appropriate experience, no one person can be expected to be an expert in all areas. Guidelines allow the distillation of institutional learning and reduce the risks of Technical Assistants reinventing the wheel.

Conclusion: ECHO provides little formal written guidance for Technical Assistants or partners. This increases the management load for Technical Assistants and increases the risk of poor performance by partners.

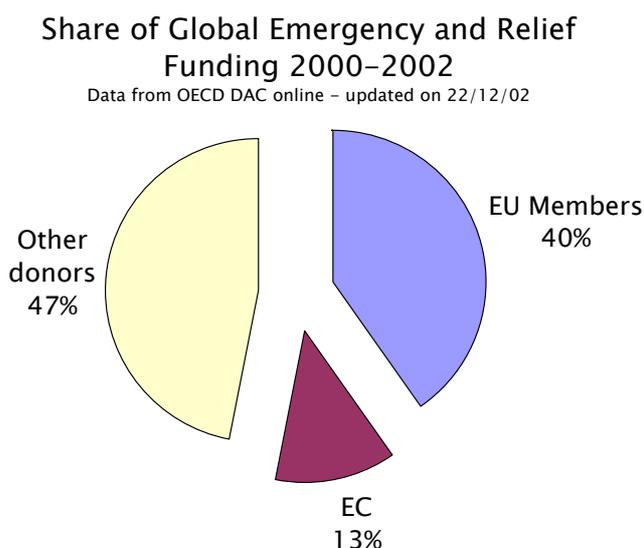
2.4 Complementarity

Complementarity here refers to the way in which ECHO funded activities fit into the activities supported by other Commission services as well as by other donors. The Afghanistan evaluation team examined complementarity in relation to other donors, whereas the Angola team concentrate on complementarity with other Commission services.

The OECD DAS statistics show that, for 2000 to 2002, the Commission and the Member States were responsible for more than half of the overall global funding for emergencies. They also provide about half of the global Overseas Development Assistance.

The linkage between emergency projects and longer term service delivery is a particular aspect of complementarity. This is referred to as Linking Relief to Rehabilitation and Development (LRRD).

LRRD is a very important issue for IDPs and other *preconceived categories* in the post conflict environment as it may take several years before they are economically self-sufficient. Some emergency intervention projects such as NFI have no direct longer term equivalent². Others such as the provision of health, water, and other services naturally lead into more sustainable services in the longer term. These particular types of project should be the primary target for linking relief to development.



¹ ECHO supports the NOHA, as well as a number of training initiatives.

² One could argue that the longer term *indirect* equivalent of such services is the combination of developing household incomes and market access.

One of the problems facing the linkage of ECHO supported projects to other Commission services is that the ECHO supported projects and the other Commission services (or other development donors) may not share service sectors, geographical areas, or partners. This means that there may be limited scope for the transfer of support for projects from ECHO to the other Commission services or other donors. This was the case in Angola and in Afghanistan.

LRRD is of particular importance for IDPs in the return phase as emergency assistance should link into longer term sustainable services. However, the other Commission services are only one set of players in funding longer term development. There are also the development organisations of individual Member States and others, as well as the UN and intergovernmental organisations.

At present LRRD within the Commission concentrates on linking ECHO funding to other Commission services and budget mechanisms. There may be many other sources of funding.

Conclusion: Linking relief to rehabilitation and development is more likely to be effective when Member States aid departments and other humanitarian and development donors are included as well as the other Commission services.

LRRD is only one aspect where complementarity comes into play. One constraint of the three ECHO evaluations examined was that they dealt almost exclusively with ECHO funded interventions. While this meets the legal requirements of ECHO evaluations¹, it may not be the most efficient approach for the European taxpayer.

EU taxpayers support:

- The work of ECHO through the national contributions to the EU budget.
- The work of other Commission services through contributions to the EU budget.
- The work of the aid organs of Member States through their national taxes.
- The efforts of NGOs and faith based organisations directly through individual donations or via grants paid from their taxes.
- The efforts of the UN, IGOs etc, either through individual donations or via grants passed from Member States or the Commission.

Clearly from the point of view of the EU taxpayer, ECHO evaluations should, while concentrating on the ECHO funded activities, also look at the broader picture of humanitarian assistance, i.e. coverage of humanitarian needs by all actors, in the counties where ECHO is operational.

Conclusion: The current narrow focus of ECHO evaluations, while meeting the legal requirement, may be losing the opportunity to learn broader lessons on humanitarian assistance.

Such an approach would mean that evaluation teams would be welcome to comment on the activities of other donors where such activities were felt to have a useful lesson for ECHO². The narrow focus is changing somewhat. The terms of reference for the Afghanistan evaluation gave lesson learning priority over accountability. ECHO is at

¹ Article 18.1 of the Council Regulation (EC) No 1257/96 of 20 June 1996 concerning humanitarian aid states that: *The Commission shall regularly assess humanitarian aid operations financed by the Community in order to establish whether they have achieved their objectives and to produce guidelines for improving the effectiveness of subsequent operations.*

² One example of this could have been a more detailed examination of the way in which OCHA's Emergency Response Fund operated in Angola.

present working to introduce the use of other contractual tools that would permit evaluations to be carried out over longer time periods and in greater depth¹.

A number of different donors are carrying out evaluations around the IDP theme. This approach promises to inform discussion around the issue of IDPS. The joint or multi-donor evaluation model whereby evaluations are carried out of the activities of a number of donors either as a single evaluation or a series of evaluations with similar terms of reference is a particularly promising approach as it:

- Allows for the comparison of a number of different approaches.
- Encourages interchange between donors.
- Promotes an intensity focus on topics that would not be possible for one donor alone.
- May allow a more cost effective approach to evaluations with costs being shared between donors.
- Provides greater opportunities for learning.

The last of these is particularly important.

Conclusion: Joint evaluation efforts, where ECHO participates together with a number of other donors, offer a number of advantages for the improvement of humanitarian assistance.

¹ ECHO's evaluation in Zimbabwe is being used as a pilot exercise by ALNAP (Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance in Humanitarian Assistance) to test the updated EHA (Evaluation of Humanitarian Action) criteria that it has produced.

3 Recommendations

Based on the conclusions noted above the reviewer makes the following recommendations:

1. *ECHO should state its policy simply as that of targeting on the basis of need without any reference to preconceived categories.*

The precise manner in which assistance is targeted will depend on the circumstances.

2. *ECHO should, together with the other Commission services examine ways in which small projects might be rapidly approved in-country to increase ECHO's flexibility to respond to rapidly changing emergencies.*

This recommendation does not suggest that all of the present safeguards be abandoned, but it might be useful to have an experiment with some form of rapid funding mechanism in one country where there is a very dynamic situation and the need for small amounts of rapid funding. ECHO might consider a closer examination of the OCHA Emergency Response Fund in Angola as a model of whether such an approach would be valid and how it could operate.

3. *ECHO should develop a series of policy guidelines for use by Technical Assistants and ECHO partners.*

It might be possible to develop these by basing them on the guidelines developed by other Commission services or other donors. However, a facilitated consultative process for development is likely to bring the largest benefit.

4. *ECHO should adopt a series of specifications for frequently used relief materials.*

ECHO could determine that materials meeting e.g. UNHCR specifications would be deemed to comply with ECHO's quality standards. One example of the way in which ECHO already does this is through the requirement for WHO or ISO certification of medicines and medical equipment.

5. *ECHO together with other donors should monitor compliance by implementing partners with established service delivery standards.*

This would imply that evaluation terms of reference include verification of compliance with such standards. ECHO could again determine that the standards developed by the Sphere Project, by other Major Donors, or even by specialist NGOs were deemed to comply with ECHO's requirements.

6. *ECHO should, together with other Commission services and other donors, consider how LRRD could be broadened to incorporate other development funders.*

7. *ECHO should change the standard evaluation terms of reference to specifically include complementarity with: (i) other Commission services; (ii) Member States; (iii) other major donors.*

8. *ECHO should change the standard evaluation terms of reference to specify that evaluation teams attempt to identify broader lessons for the humanitarian assistance community as well as specifically looking at ECHO funded interventions.*

9. *The evaluation terms of reference could include a requirement that teams devote at least 5% or 10% of their effort to identifying broader lessons. ECHO should engage in further joint efforts on evaluation.*

These evaluations could take the form of multi-donor evaluations looking at the actions funded by a number of donors in a single crisis, or a series of evaluations around a common central theme. For ECHO, joint evaluations have a significant overhead with the need for specific legal agreements and separate reporting on the use of evaluation funds. Joint efforts on evaluation, like ECHO's participation in the series of studies on IDPs are far less complex administratively than joint evaluations with other donors.

Appendix 1: Background

A group of donors (Denmark, Sweden, the Netherlands and ECHO¹) responded to a request by the EU's Humanitarian Aid Committee (HAC) and decided to conduct a number of evaluations of humanitarian assistance with special focus on internally displaced people (IDPs). The overall plan was to conduct a range of evaluations, some in cooperation and some done individually by each organisation.

The ECHO evaluation Unit had already planned to carry out evaluations in three countries where ECHO provide a large amount of assistance to the internally displaced: Sudan, Angola, and Afghanistan².

<i>Country</i>	<i>Estimated IDP numbers</i>	<i>Date estimate</i>	<i>of Rank now</i>	<i>Rank in May 02</i>
Sudan	4,000,000	Nov. 2003	1	2
<i>DRC</i>	3,044,000	Aug. 2003	2	3
<i>Colombia</i>	2,900,000 since '85	Apr-03	3	4
<i>Uganda</i>	1,239,682	Nov. 2003	4	
<i>Iraq</i>	1,100,000	May-03	5	10
<i>Turkey</i>	1,000,000	Mar-02	6	7
Angola	900,000	Nov. 2003	7	1
<i>Myanmar (Burma)</i>	600,000-1,000,000	Jun-03	8	8
<i>India</i>	650,000	May-02	9	
<i>Sri Lanka</i>	613,000	Sept. 2003	10	9
<i>Indonesia</i>	580,000-600,000	Nov. 2003	11	5
<i>Azerbaijan</i>	570,000	Dec. 2002	12	
<i>Côte d'Ivoire</i>	500,000-600,000	Nov. 2003	13	
<i>Burundi</i>	525,000	Mar-03	14	
<i>Liberia</i>	500,000	Nov. 2003	15	
Afghanistan	220,000-600,000	Jun-03	16	6
<i>Russian Federation</i>	366,000	Jan. 2003	17	
<i>Kenya</i>	350,000	Jan. 2003	18	
<i>Somalia</i>	350,000	Nov. 2003	19	
<i>Syrian Arab Republic</i>	200,000-500,000	2002	20	

In addition to these three evaluations, ECHO commissioned this synthesis report to specifically examine the impact of ECHO's policy of not targeting preconceived categories such as refugees, IDPs, or returnees.

¹ Other donors have since shown interest.

² *Angola and Sudan were top of the league table for IDPs in May 2002. Funding for Afghanistan represented 12% of ECHO's global budget in 2002. Both Angola and Afghanistan saw significant falls in the numbers of IDPs, with Angola falling from 1st to 7th place and Afghanistan from 6th to 16th place.*

Appendix 2: The evaluations

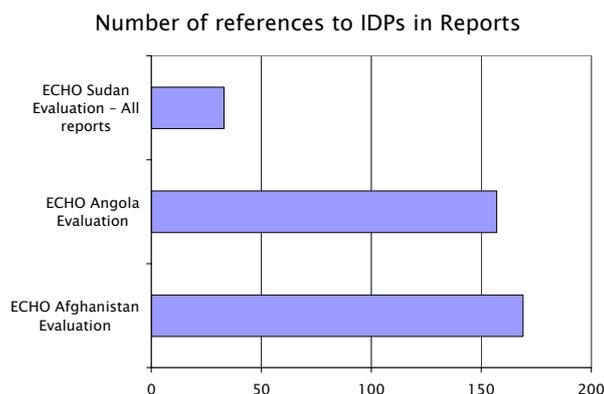
The Sudan evaluation was carried out between April and July 2003 and is presented as a series of four separate reports¹. The Angola evaluation² was executed between June and July 2003, and the Afghanistan evaluation³ took place between September and November 2003. The latter two evaluations were eventually presented as single volume reports.

Partly because of the focus on EU funded project referred to above, Danida undertook an evaluation specifically of the IDP issues in Angola⁴ concurrent with the ECHO evaluation and in cooperation with the ECHO evaluation team.

The displaced were a very important caseload for ECHO, either when directly targeted, or as the most vulnerable members of communities. However not all of the three evaluations gave equal emphasis to the displaced in their final reports. The increasing emphasis on the IDP aspects can be seen in the frequency of references to IDPs and displaced in the three reports.

One difficulty facing the preparation of a synthesis of the evaluations is that the context is very different in the three countries. Both Angola and Afghanistan have seen large levels of return, but Sudan has not. This has large implications for the programming in the three countries with an emphasis on maintenance in Sudan and on rehabilitation in Afghanistan and Angola.

One obstacle for the evaluation teams was that the Framework for a Common Approach to Evaluating Assistance to IDPs was only available to the last of the evaluation teams. This framework was developed by Danida as part of its contribution to the joint donor effort to investigate the situation of IDPs.



3.1.1 COHERENCE

The evaluations found that ECHO funded interventions were coherent with the legal basis established by Council Regulation (EC) No 1257/96 of 20 June 1996.

3.1.2 RELEVANCE

The evaluation teams found that the ECHO funded interventions were relevant to the needs of the beneficiaries. The Afghanistan evaluation went so far as to say that: “...*the selection of interventions by ECHO since mid-2002 has been masterful in terms of a balanced approach to the requirements of geographic spread, sectoral exigencies and vulnerable target populations.*”

¹ All reports are listed in the bibliography: Schuftan C, Van der Veen A, and Lothe P. (2003); Schuftan C. (2003); Van der Veen A. (2003); and Lothe P. (2003).

² van der Heide A, Smith R, Scheuermann P. (2003)

³ Wilding J, Davis A, and Nam S. (2003)

⁴ Cosgrave J. (2003)

3.1.3 EFFECTIVENESS

The effectiveness of ECHO funded activities was more variable. Although finding that the activities were effective, two concerns were raised:

- Timeliness
- Quality

3.1.4 IMPACT

The evaluation teams identified many positive impacts of the ECHO funded interventions. All three found that impact was difficult to quantify due to the lack of baseline data. However, all gave examples of positive impact of the interventions funded. No direct negative impacts were identified, except for Pakistan, where the impact was an indirect consequence of the return of refugees to Afghanistan.

3.1.5 EFFICIENCY

The evaluations found wide variations in partner efficiency. The Afghanistan evaluation in particular gave detailed comments on their perception of the efficiency of different projects. The Danida Angola evaluation noted that it was difficult to measure efficiency in general as:

- The overall outputs are not clearly measured.
- It is not always clear what inputs contributed to what outputs.
- It is unclear how much of the outputs are due to inputs and how much are due to other factors.

Appendix 3: Bibliography

- Buchanan Smith M, Rudge P, and Telford J (2003) *Framework for a Common Approach to Evaluating Assistance to IDPs*, Danida, Copenhagen.
- Cosgrave J, (2003) *Evaluation of the situation of the displaced and returned in Angola with an emphasis on Danida-funded interventions from 1999 to 2003*. Danida, Copenhagen.
- ECHO (2003) *ECHO Aid Strategy 2003*, European Commission, Brussels.
- GIDPP (2003) *A Global Overview of Internal Displacement by the end of 2002*. Global IPD project, Oslo.
- Lothe, P (2003) *Evaluation of ECHO's 1999 to 2002 funded Actions in Sudan: Water and Sanitation, Food Security and Non Food Items Distributions*. ECHO Evaluation Unit, Brussels.
- Schild G. (2000) *Evaluation of ECHO's Global Plan 2000 - Angola: Sector: Emergency Relief (Non-Food Items)*. ECHO evaluation Unit, Brussels
- Schuftan C, (2003) *Evaluation of ECHO's 1999 to 2002 funded Actions in Sudan: Global Plans Report*. ECHO Evaluation Unit, Brussels.
- Schuftan C, Van der Veen A, Lothe, P (2003) *Evaluation of ECHO's 1999 to 2002 funded Actions in Sudan: Synthesis Report*. ECHO Evaluation Unit, Brussels.
- Steering Committee for Humanitarian Response (1994) *Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Relief*. SCHR, Geneva.
- Stockholm Conference (2003) *Principles and Good Practice of Humanitarian Donorship Endorsed in Stockholm, 17 June 2003*. International Meeting on Good Humanitarian Donorship, Stockholm.
- USCR (2003) *World Refugee Survey 2003*. US Committee for Refugees, Washington.
- van der Heide A, Smith R, Scheuermann P, (2003) *Evaluation of ECHO's Global Humanitarian Plans in Angola, particularly with regard to treatment of IDPs and Assessment of ECHO's future strategy in Angola*. ECHO Evaluation Unit, Brussels.
- Van der Veen A, (2003) *Evaluation of ECHO's 1999 to 2002 funded Actions in Sudan: Technical Health and Nutrition Report*. ECHO Evaluation Unit, Brussels.
- Wilding J, Davis A, and Nam S. (2003) *Evaluation of ECHO's Humanitarian Intervention Plans in Afghanistan (Including the actions financed in Iran and Pakistan under the plan and Assessment of ECHO's Future Strategy in Afghanistan with reference to actions in Iran and Pakistan- Draft Report of 14/11/2003*. ECHO Evaluation Unit, Brussels.