



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR HUMANITARIAN AID - ECHO

HUMANITARIAN AID
for
Internally displaced people, refugees and other vulnerable
groups
in
COLOMBIA AND NEIGHBOURING COUNTRIES
GLOBAL PLAN 2005

Humanitarian Aid Committee
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Explanatory memorandum

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The long lasting conflict in Colombia continued to cause significant levels of forced displacement in 2004. Official government figures show a continuing reduction in the numbers of IDPs, down from 219,431 in 2003 to 124,411 in the first 11 months of 2004, but reliable independent figures show an increasing trend, to 205,504 in only the first 9 months of the year (which at the same rate would give a figure of 270,000 for the whole year). This discrepancy can be accounted for by the time lag before complete government figures can be compiled, and to the fact that many IDPs are afraid to register and many displacements occurred in zones where government institutions are not present to register them. Since 1985 over 3 million Colombians have been displaced from their homes, the highest figure in the world outside Africa.

The army has been able to secure the major urban areas and major roads in most of the country, but the security situation in the rural areas, especially in the South, has deteriorated significantly, causing widespread displacement. The much heralded demobilisation of the paramilitary groups has begun to take place, but so far it has tended to create more insecurity and displacements.

The conflict is having an increasing effect on surrounding countries, with a dramatic increase in the number of Colombians crossing over into Ecuador and Venezuela. Over 350,000 Colombians are now living in Ecuador, with over 30,000 seeking asylum there in 2004. Over 4,500 sought asylum in Venezuela last year, and there are now 130,000 Colombians living there.

There is continuing concern over the phenomenon of besieged or blockaded communities as part of the armed groups' war strategy. Children are still being recruited by the armed groups, with over 14,000 involved, from age 12 upwards.

ECHO's strategy for 2005 builds on those of previous years, the principal objective being to provide the necessary protection, assistance and relief to people affected by the internal conflict in Colombia and to cope with the consequences of population movements inside and outside Colombian borders.

Assistance to IDPs will remain a primary focus, particularly during the first 12 months after displacement and especially in the rural areas, where state institutions are generally not present. There will be continuing support for ICRC's humanitarian programme in Colombia, both the emergency assistance immediately after displacement and the activities under the organisation's protection mandate. For the first time there will be a specific objective aimed at children and young people affected by displacement, violence and recruitment by the armed groups, reflecting the strategic horizontal priority of ECHO towards children.

In view of the regional dimension of the crisis, assistance to refugees in neighbouring countries is included in the 2005 Global Plan, with this being extended to Venezuela as well as Ecuador. Support will also be given to OCHA as it seeks to expand its role in Colombia and fulfil its mandate to improve coordination and information exchange between humanitarian organisations. Finally there is a component to allow for the maintenance of a technical assistance capability in Bogota.

It is estimated that, under the Global Plan at least 130,000 people will receive emergency assistance immediately after displacement and about 60,000 IDPs and other vulnerable people will see their living conditions improved. Also, around 70,000 refugees in Ecuador and Venezuela will benefit from ECHO's intervention.

The present Global Plan proposes humanitarian operations for a total amount of EUR 12 million. Each will have an average duration of 12 months within an 18 month period.

2. CONTEXT AND SITUATION

2.1. General Context

Colombia has an estimated population of 44 million, making it the third most populous country in Latin America, with 76% of its population living in urban areas. Although it is rich in natural resources, with fertile agricultural land, energy resources (oil, natural gas and coal) and minerals, much of its wealth has been squandered in a debilitating 40-year long internal armed conflict. As this has intensified in recent years, the gains made in reducing poverty have been eroded, so that the country has dropped from 53rd to 73rd in the UNDP Human Development Index in just 6 years (1998-2004).

The internal conflict involves the Colombian army and three irregular armed groups, all of whom are included on the US list of international terrorist organisations: the FARC (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia) and ELN (National Liberation Army) guerrilla organisations, plus various paramilitary groups, most of whom come together under the banner of the United Self-Defence Forces of Colombia (AUC). All groups regularly commit violations of International Humanitarian Law, usually with impunity. The conflict is largely self-financing, through the proceeds of cocaine production, kidnapping, extortion, oil revenues and other business activities, and is compounded by social inequality, corruption, political weakness, violence and drug trafficking. In recent years large amounts of US military aid, in excess of \$500 million per year, have been injected into the country in an attempt to strengthen the army and expand the territory controlled by the government, but little progress has been made in bringing the conflict to an end.

The theatres of conflict are complex and constantly changing, and each new attempt by one group to gain control of territory, towns, roads or rivers causes a new group of civilians to be displaced from their homes. In the past 20 years 3,100,000 people have been displaced in this way, the highest figure in the world outside Africa¹. Many Colombians have chosen to leave their country, so that now 10% of the population – over 4 million people – is living abroad². There have been steadily increasing flows of refugees in recent years into the neighbouring countries of Ecuador, Venezuela and Panama. Over 350,000 Colombians are now estimated to be living, legally or illegally, in Ecuador and 130,000 in Venezuela.

2.2. Current Situation

The present government, which took office in August 2002 under President Álvaro Uribe Vélez, has adopted a very different policy from its predecessor, which had engaged in lengthy and ultimately fruitless peace negotiations with FARC. President Uribe has opened peace negotiations with a large group of the paramilitaries, is exploring the possibility of peace talks with ELN through the mediation of Mexico, and has conducted an offensive against FARC. The army has managed to secure the major towns and roads in most of the country, often with assistance from the paramilitaries, but FARC has retained control of much of the surrounding countryside, especially the more remote and mountainous regions. This creates a highly unstable, tense situation, with the threat of more displacements at any time. In late 2003 AUC began a process of demobilisation, under the supervision of a mission from the Organisation of American States. To date 2,624 combatants from five of the AUC structures have been demobilised³ but local populations often do not trust the demobilised combatants to cease their intimidatory activities, nor do they have confidence in the capacity of the army to prevent the guerrillas from retaking areas where AUC has demobilised. This only creates further insecurity and displacements.

¹ Source: Global IDP project: <http://www.idpproject.org>

² Source: IOM Press Briefing Notes, 19 November 2004, <http://www.iom.int/en/news/pbn191104.shtml>

³ In Catatumbo, Urabá, Valle and Cundinamarca. Also, 3,000 spontaneous demobilisations are said to have taken place. Estimates of the total strength of the AUC groups range between 8,000 and 16,000

Throughout 2004 the army has intensified its *Plan Patriota* offensive in the South of the country, attempting to regain control of rural areas which have been a traditional FARC stronghold. As a result large parts of the southern departments of Caquetá, Putumayo and Guaviare have become inaccessible to humanitarian organisations. Some communities in the conflict zones are deliberately blockaded and isolated by groups involved in the conflict, and there have been substantial population displacements from these rural areas to the relatively safe urban centres and across the border into Ecuador. Displacement is further increased by aerial fumigation operations, which aim to destroy coca plants but are often much more indiscriminating. Although the situation in these southern departments is the most dramatic, similar problems of conflict, violence and displacement are being experienced in many other parts of the country, particularly in Norte de Santander (Catatumbo), La Guajira, Cesar, Southern Cordoba, Eastern Antioquia, Chocó, Montes de Maria, Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta, Casanare and Arauca.

3. IDENTIFICATION AND ASSESSMENT OF HUMANITARIAN NEEDS

The table below gives the most up-to-date available figures for IDPs in Colombia. There was a considerable decline in IDP numbers in 2003 and the RSS (government) figures indicate a continuance of this trend. However, CODHES figures show the number of IDPs to be on the increase again, with almost as many in the first nine months of 2004 as in the whole of the previous year. This discrepancy can be accounted for by the time lag for complete government figures to be compiled, by the fear of registering on the part of many IDPs, and by the fact that many displacements have taken place in more remote rural areas – driven by the events outlined above – where RSS is not operative.

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
CODHES ⁴	317,375	341,925	412,553	207,607	205,504 (Sept)
RSS ⁵	329,981	373,663	422,957	219,431	124,411 (Nov)
ICRC ⁶				110,031	65,909 (Nov)

Six population groups are principally affected:

- i. **Displaced populations** – many of these are displaced to unstable, insecure situations and will have already been displaced more than once.
- ii. **Host communities** – a large part of the displacement takes place in zones which are remote and economically marginalised. Many host communities are already living at little more than subsistence level and are ill equipped to cope with an influx of IDPs.
- iii. **Returnees** – for the past year the government has been strongly promoting the return of IDPs to their places of origin, but humanitarian organisations are hesitant about this process, fearing that they go back to unstable, dangerous situations where they are not yet able to carry on their normal occupations to support themselves. In general only the indigenous populations return en masse of their own volition to their home regions.

⁴ Consultoría para los Derechos Humanos y el Desplazamiento, a Colombian NGO monitoring displacement and the observance of human rights in the country

⁵ Red de Solidaridad Social, the Colombian government institution with responsibility for internal displacement

⁶ International Committee of the Red Cross. Note that ICRC figures refer only to those IDPs which they assisted

- iv. **Isolated and blocked communities** – these are a deliberate war strategy of the groups involved in the conflict. It is estimated that 131 municipalities – 12% of the total in the country – have been affected in this way over the past two years⁷. These are primarily in Eastern Antioquia, Chocó, Norte de Santander Bolivar and Cesar.
- v. **Populations affected by the presence of illicit crops and fumigation operations** – illicit crops, mostly coca, are grown in 26 of Colombia's 32 departments. Their presence causes conflicts between the armed groups and fumigation creates displacement from rural areas.
- vi. **Colombian refugees and asylum seekers** – Ecuador is the main receiving country, due to its proximity to the serious conflicts in the South of Colombia, but substantial numbers are also crossing to Venezuela and, to a lesser extent, Panama. The problem in Ecuador reached such a level that the presidents of the two countries came to an agreement in April 2004 designed to stem the flow of Colombian asylum seekers⁸.

3.1. Number of Colombian refugees, per country⁹

Country	2001	2002	2003	2004
Ecuador	1,616	3,122	6,248	8,000 (Jan-Nov)
Venezuela	21	21	21	179 (Jan-Sept)
Panama	881	989	860	Not available

3.2. Number of Colombians applying for asylum, per country¹⁰

Country	2001	2002	2003	2004 (Jan-Sept)
Ecuador	3,286	6,732	11,388	28,293
Venezuela	205	705	1,345	3,396
Panama	74	118	18	N/A

Among these population groups, **children** are particularly vulnerable. Domestic violence and sexual abuse is all too common in Colombia, reflecting the violence of the past four decades which has permeated many parts of society. An estimated 2 million children are abused each year, 850,000 of them severely, and 36% of children suffer from some form of abuse¹¹. Children and young people are also vulnerable to being recruited by the armed groups, all the more so if they are uneducated, illiterate and unable to find gainful employment. Human Rights Watch estimates that over 7,400 children, from age 12 upwards, have been recruited by the illegal armed groups to bearing arms, and there is an equivalent number serving in support roles.

The basic humanitarian needs which these populations face are exacerbated by a number of **threats** which impinge upon them and which humanitarian organisations need to take into account in their response:

⁷ Source: CODHES

⁸ All Colombians seeking refugee status in Ecuador are now required to produce a *Certificado de pasado judicial*, ostensibly to demonstrate that they have no links with the illegal armed groups. The certificate shows that the bearer has no previous criminal record, but can take up to two weeks to obtain.

⁹ Source: UNHCR: <http://www.acnur.org>

¹⁰ Source: UNHCR: <http://www.acnur.org>

¹¹ Source: UNICEF: <http://www.unicef.org.co/08-malt>

- ***Lack of visibility of the humanitarian crisis*** – many of the most serious problems occur in remote areas which are difficult to access. Reporting in the Colombian press is limited and in the foreign press there is little interest in the ongoing situation, except in Spain.
- ***Access restrictions for humanitarian organisations*** – this can take the form of exclusion from active conflict situations; attacks on and abduction of humanitarian teams (as happened in 2004 in Cauca and Caquetá); confiscation of equipment; ‘advice’ by armed groups to withdraw from certain areas; communities deliberately isolated; legal restrictions (communications, imports, taxes).
- ***Involvement of civilian populations in the armed conflict*** – support for all of the armed groups has drastically declined in recent years, particularly as they have become more involved in drug trafficking. Communities are dragged into the conflict, for example, when armed groups force them to provide food and lodging. They then lay themselves open to reprisals or attack by the opposing armed group on the principle that ‘the friend of my enemy is my enemy’.
- ***Anti-personnel mines*** – All armed groups have set landmines and, according to Landmine Monitor, 579 of the 1,097 municipalities in Colombia are affected by them. Government reports show 401 people to have been injured by mines in 2004, with a 480% increase in landmine incidents between 2001 and 2004¹².
- ***Increasing involvement of the armed groups in government institutions*** – this is most flagrant in the more remote areas, where the municipality is often little more than an extension of one of the armed groups.
- ***Stigmatisation of leaders of civil society*** – these are often a prime target for kidnapping and assassination, especially if they are perceived as resisting the dominant armed group.
- ***Absence of state institutions*** – the Colombian Red Cross estimates that 6,000,000 Colombians are living in zones where there is very little or no presence of the Colombian state.
- ***Vulnerability to natural disasters*** – SNPAD¹³ states that 14,000,000 Colombians are living in zones at risk from natural disasters, principally flooding, landslides, volcanic eruptions and earthquakes.

The following ***basic humanitarian needs*** exist as a consequence of the violence, conflict and displacement:

- ***Food and nutritional support*** – this is crucial in the first three months after displacement, with IDPs often coming from a situation of chronic malnutrition¹⁴, with few possessions and very little money to buy food. After the initial relief phase, coping mechanisms may start to kick in and many begin to develop some capacity for self-sufficiency. The most vulnerable, however, do not build such capacities in a short timeframe and in an environment often completely new to them: for example, peasant farmers who have been able to eke a subsistence living from the land have great difficulty in surviving when they are displaced (as they often are) to a new, unfamiliar urban environment. Blockaded and isolated communities also have to live in a highly insecure food environment.

¹² Source: Observatorio de Minas Antipersonales – the national mine action authority established by the Office of the Vice-President of Colombia

¹³ Sistema Nacional en Prevención y Atención a los Desastres

¹⁴ See figures for malnutrition levels in Annex 1

- ***Non-food and hygiene items*** – IDPs have usually had to leave their homes in a hurry and in the immediate period after displacement they often lack even the basic necessities of life, such as soap, toilet paper, cooking equipment, water containers and mosquito nets.
- ***Basic health services*** – there is a state health service in Colombia, but violence, especially in the more remote areas, has often put an end to the presence of government medical personnel. Even where health services are available, they are often seriously over-stretched and IDPs and vulnerable people may well not have access to free health care.
- ***Shelter*** – IDPs will often be drawn to *invasiones*, shanty towns set up on the outskirts of towns with or without the agreement of the landowner and then subsequently more or less legalised (the issue of securing satisfactory legal land tenure is a constant problem). These can grow up very quickly: for example, Cazuca, on the outskirts of Bogota, has mushroomed from zero to 350,000 people in just three years. Many IDPs live for months under plastic sheeting or cardboard, which offers little protection against the extreme heat of the low-lying areas of Colombia or the cold of the higher ground (often at more than 3,000 metres altitude).
- ***Water and sanitation*** – there is almost always a total lack of infrastructure in the *invasiones* and clean water and adequate sanitation are a priority.
- ***Psychosocial support*** – many IDPs have witnessed appalling violence: murder of family members and friends, bomb attacks, massacres – and it is this which often finally pushes them to leave their homes. This support helps them to get over the trauma of their past experiences and begin to get back to a level of normality in their daily life.
- ***Informal education*** – many children have been displaced several times and consequently have dropped out of school. State schools refuse to accept them back because they do not have a certain minimum level for their age. Informal education helps to bring them up to this minimum level and to reintegrate them into the state education system wherever possible. In this way they are much less vulnerable to recruitment by the armed groups.
- ***Protection*** – In an environment where vulnerability is often the result of serious human rights violations, the construction of a protective environment by means of assistance, access to information and awareness raising is essential. This includes the kind of protection support offered under the mandates of ICRC and UNHCR, which is essential for improving compliance with IHL and respect of refugees' rights.

Colombian *refugees and asylum seekers* arriving in a new country require assistance in knowing their rights and in applying for refugee status, protection from predatory groups (both Colombian ones, linked to the illegal armed groups, and those from their host country), aid in integrating into the new country, as well as help with much the same basic humanitarian needs as the IDPs.

4. PROPOSED ECHO STRATEGY

4.1. Coherence with ECHO's overall strategic priorities

In relation to ECHO's commitment to intervene in the *areas of greatest humanitarian need*, Colombia is No. 35 out of 135 countries evaluated, just one place below those countries in the 'High' category. The fact that it is not even higher in the list reflects the relatively advanced economic and social development of the country in relation to many other countries where ECHO traditionally intervenes. However, the affluence of major cities such as Bogota, Medellin and Cali masks enormous pockets of serious humanitarian need, mostly in the more remote rural areas, but even on the outskirts of those cities. There is little or no presence of state institutions in the places

of greatest need, on account of the violence and conflict, and the state is unable or unwilling to intervene in those humanitarian situations.

In ECHO's ranking Colombia is only one point below the level at which it would be regarded as a *forgotten crisis*. Certainly the country receives a large amount of attention from the US and is often spoken about in the media, but usually in the context of drug control and violence. The issues of displacement and humanitarian need are rarely raised, except in the Spanish press. Relatively few other donors are active in the country.

LRRD works well in Colombia, with excellent links between the Delegation and the ECHO office in Bogota, to ensure complementarity and coordination between ECHO-funded projects and those of the "uprooted peoples" budget line, the administration of the latter now having been completely devolved to Bogota. Where the EU uprooted peoples budget line is operative, ECHO will generally intervene during the period of displacement up to 12 months, looking to hand over to the other EU programme for longer term support.

IDPs usually have to settle on the least desirable land in an area, and often this is the land most prone to natural disasters. Partners are therefore required to take these risks into account when formulating proposals and to include appropriate *disaster preparedness* components in their projects. There is also coordination between the Global Plan and the projects funded in Colombia under the DIPECHO Andean Community programme.

Children under 18 represent 48% of the IDPs in Colombia. ECHO projects pay special attention to this vulnerable group, helping with their nutritional, psychosocial and educational needs through children's canteens, specially designated recreational activities and informal schooling respectively. Particular focus in this Global Plan is given to projects which will prevent the recruitment of children by the armed groups, by equipping them with the necessarily skills such as reading, writing and basic vocational training.

Access to **water** is not a particular problem in Colombia, but the water available to IDPs is often of very poor quality, especially in the *invasiones*, where there is very little infrastructure. Partners are required to include specific water quality indicators in their project proposals.

4.2. Impact of previous humanitarian response

Mid-term reviews of the 2004 Global Plan have not yet been completed and final results will only be fully available in September 2005. However, based on the interim reports which have been received, together with site visits and informal contacts, the following results for 2004 can be indicated:

- *Specific objective 1: Short term humanitarian assistance and protection.* Up to 30 November 2004 ICRC, supported by ECHO, has given emergency assistance to 65,909 recent displaced people, including food kits of 2,100 Kcal/person-day equivalent, hygiene kits, kitchen kits and household kits.
- *Specific objective 2: Post-emergency assistance.* Living conditions for around 63,000 IDPs and other vulnerable groups have been improved, through: nutritional supplements, distribution of non-food items, access to primary health care, improved shelter, access to safe drinking water and excrement disposal systems, education and recreational activities for children, psychosocial assistance and community strengthening.
- *Specific objective 3: Coordination.* OCHA has continued to issue monthly reports on the Colombian humanitarian crisis based on information gathered through the Humanitarian Situation Room¹⁵.

¹⁵ These are published on www.reliefweb.org.

- *Specific objective 4: Refugee protection.* UNCHR Ecuador has continued to protect Colombian refugees in Ecuador by providing them with emergency assistance to cover basic food, nutrition, shelter, health, water and sanitation and education needs; and also by training institutions involved in the reception, registration, documentation, assistance and integration of refugees.

By the nature of their interventions, ECHO partners are dealing with a new group of IDPs each year, often in new areas, since the geographical displacement patterns cannot be predicted in advance. However, based on the experience of previous years, the following small changes will be introduced:

- More emphasis will be given to short-term psychosocial support, especially for children, as this has been shown to be extremely effective in helping IDPs adapt quickly to their new situation.
- More effort will be directed towards protecting IDPs and other vulnerable populations within Colombia and to providing an integrated response, enabling coping mechanisms to be strengthened and hastening the process towards ultimate self-sufficiency.
- The support of Colombian refugees in neighbouring countries will be extended to Venezuela, with the situation in other countries being kept under review.
- Costs will be carefully scrutinised to ensure a certain level of maximum costs per beneficiary, based on the nature of the assistance and the accessibility of the populations to whom it is given.
- A particular focus will be given to projects which specifically protect children and prevent their recruitment by the illegal armed groups.

4.3. Coordination with activities of other donors and institutions

Until now RSS has not played the central coordinating role attributed to it under Colombian law, nor will it be able to do so until it is operative in a more extensive part of the country. Following the visit to Colombia of the Under Secretary-General in June 2004, the role of OCHA is to be strengthened, with a network of provincial offices to be established. ECHO will actively consider supporting these and aims to continue its sponsoring of the humanitarian situation room, which can be a valuable coordinating instrument.

As stated above, there is excellent cooperation between ECHO and the EU Delegation in Bogota in relation to the uprooted peoples budget line, and ECHO also seeks synergy with other EU funded programmes such as the Peace Laboratories, the human rights programme and the support given to the Land Mines Observatory. The 2005 programme for the uprooted peoples budget line is currently being prepared, with the following main components:

- Support for UNHCR for protection, strengthening of state response, legal awareness and community organisation for IDPs (€1.9 million) for 2006 and 2007
- Support for UNICEF for protection, prevention of recruitment of child soldiers and assistance to families (€1.9 million) for 2005 and 2006
- Support for RSS for a strengthening of the state response and regional PIUs (programas de atención únicos) (€6 million)
- Work Programme, managed by the Commission, for the social and economic rehabilitation of IDPs (including LRRD), reinsertion of former child soldiers and adult former combatants, via a call for proposal in the second semester of 2005 (€10.2 millions).

There is ongoing liaison in Bogota with USAID and BPRM, the other major humanitarian donors in Colombia, and there are regular meetings with Member States. Coordination at field level with ECHO partners is good, with the ECHO office in Bogota organising regular meetings and occasional specific sectoral seminars.

4.4. Risk assessment and assumptions

The main risk in Colombia arises from the very difficult security situation. Despite the lack of respect for IHL, especially by the irregular armed groups, ECHO partners have been able up to now to implement their humanitarian operations as planned, with only a few exceptions. Some departments such as Caquetá, Putumayo and Guaviare have large parts where access is not possible because of active, ongoing conflict; and by their very nature these are among the regions where displacement is most significant. There is no guarantee that attitudes to humanitarian access will not change in future, particularly as the conflict between the army and FARC intensifies. Humanitarian organisations may feel it necessary to withdraw from certain areas from time to time, for example, if staff are abducted or caught up in fighting. However, any restrictions or withdrawals are more likely to occur on an ad hoc than on a generalised basis.

It is assumed that the uprooted peoples budget line will take over some ECHO projects with medium term objectives.

It is assumed that RSS¹⁶ will continue to provide assistance to IDPs in departmental capitals and beyond, considering that its budget has been increased substantially in 2005.

4.5. ECHO Strategy

ECHO's strategy for 2005 does not differ substantially from previous years. As stated above, the conflict did not diminish in 2004, the number of IDPs increased and the number of people affected by the conflict rose. Since the rural areas affected by the conflict still receive relatively little, if any, attention from Colombian state institutions and other donors, ECHO's interventions will continue to have a particular focus on these areas, without excluding the possibility of assistance in certain of the most vulnerable and neglected urban areas.

Priority regions will be Caquetá, Putumayo, Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta, Norte de Santander (Catatumbo), Meta (former FARC safe haven area), Nariño, Eastern Antioquia, Cesar, Chocó (but not Urabá), Magdalena Medio and Montes de María. Additionally, assistance will be provided to Colombian refugees in neighbouring countries, particularly Ecuador and Venezuela.

It is estimated that at least 130,000 people will receive emergency assistance immediately after displacement and about 60,000 affected people will see their living conditions improved. Additionally, around 70,000 refugees and asylum seekers in Ecuador and Venezuela will benefit from ECHO's intervention.

Principal objective: To provide the necessary protection, assistance and relief to people affected by the internal conflict in Colombia and to cope with the consequences of population movements inside and outside Colombian borders

Specific objectives

1. To improve the living conditions and to promote the social integration of IDPs and other vulnerable groups affected by conflict and violence in the regions most affected by displacement
2. To provide emergency assistance immediately after displacement, to offer protection and basic health care for vulnerable populations and to ensure improved levels of compliance with IHL
3. To prevent the recruitment of children and young people by armed groups through support, protection and their reintegration into the state education system

¹⁶ There is an agreement between RSS and ICRC by which RSS provides emergency assistance to new individual IDPs, while the ICRC assists cases of massive displacement (more than 50 people at a time) plus individual cases where it has an office and the RSS has insufficient capacity.

4. To improve the levels of protection and social integration of refugees in Ecuador and Venezuela, and in other countries if required, and to provide humanitarian assistance to asylum seekers in need in these countries

5. To improve the coordination and quality of humanitarian assistance by increasing the exchange of information between humanitarian organisations

6. To maintain a technical assistance capacity in the field, to assess needs, appraise project proposals and to coordinate and monitor the implementation of operations

Components

Specific Objective 1

- Water and sanitation assistance
- Provision or improvement of shelter
- Health assistance
- Psychosocial support
- Community canteens
- Food distribution
- Livelihood support
- Strengthening of community and civil society organisations, together with advocacy

Specific Objective 2

- Material assistance to IDPs (primarily during the 3 first months after displacement), blocked communities and others living in conflict zones: food, non-food items and livelihood support
- Protection activities
 - Visits and selective assistance to vulnerable detainees
 - Dialogue with government bodies and armed groups
 - Support for families of detainees and hostages
 - Activities to deter the recruitment of minors by armed groups
 - Enhancing respect of IHL
 - Implementation of safeguard measures for civilians in need of protection
 - Activities in favour of missing persons and their families
- Nutritional survey for IDPs (with WFP)

Specific Objective 3

- Informal education, to reintegrate vulnerable children into the state education system
- Psychosocial support
- Nutritional support
- Protection and social integration

Specific Objective 4

- Legal assistance, protection and advice to Colombian asylum seekers
- Support for registration and social integration of Colombian refugees
- Emergency assistance for newly arrived asylum seekers and their host communities
- Support for durable solutions for asylum seekers and their host communities

Specific Objective 5

- Collection, analysis and diffusion of information on the humanitarian situation in Colombia
- Support for UNOCHA departmental offices
- Facilitation of information exchange between national and international humanitarian agencies

Specific Objective 6

In order to maximise the impact of the humanitarian aid for the victims, the Commission decides

[ECHO/-SM/BUD/2005/01000](#)

to maintain an ECHO support office located at Bogota. This office will appraise project proposals, co-ordinate and monitor the implementation of humanitarian operations financed by the Commission. The office provides technical assistance capacity and necessary logistics for the good achievement of its tasks.

4.6. Duration

The duration for the implementation of this decision will be 18 months starting from 1 January 2005. Humanitarian operations funded by this decision must be implemented within this period. Most operations will start at the beginning of April 2005 and will have a one-year duration, but some flexibility is needed to allow operations to be extended for a short period if this is required as a result of unforeseen circumstances in the field. Since it is planned to support on a multi-donor basis UNHCR programmes in Ecuador and Venezuela and the ICRC programme in Colombia, all of which have a one year programming cycle based on the calendar year, there must be the opportunity for projects to begin on 1 January 2005.

If the implementation of the actions envisaged in this decision is suspended due to *force majeure*, or any comparable circumstance, the period of suspension will not be taken into account for the calculation of the duration of the humanitarian aid operations.

Depending on the evolution of the situation in the field, the Commission reserves the right to terminate the agreements signed with the implementing humanitarian organisations where the suspension of activities is for a period of more than one third of the total planned duration of the action. In this respect, the procedures established in the general conditions of the specific agreement will be applied.

4.7. Amount of Decision and strategic programming matrix

4.7.1. *Total amount of the Decision: EUR 12,000,000*

4.7.2. STRATEGIC PROGRAMMING MATRIX FOR THE GLOBAL PLAN

Principal Objective	<i>To provide the necessary protection, assistance and relief to people affected by the internal conflict in Colombia and to cope with the consequences of population movements inside and outside Colombian borders</i>				
Specific objectives	Allocated amount EUR	Geographical area of operation	Activities proposed	Expected outputs / indicators	Potential partners
Specific objective 1: To improve the living conditions and to promote the social integration of IDPs and other vulnerable groups affected by conflict and violence in the regions most affected by displacement	4,600,000	Colombia, and in particular Caquetá, Putumayo, Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta, Norte de Santander, Meta , Nariño, Oriente Antioqueño, Cesar, Chocó, Magdalena Medio and Montes de María	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water and sanitation assistance • Provision or improvement of shelter • Health assistance • Psychosocial support • Community canteens • Food distribution • Livelihood support • Strengthening of community and civil society organisations, together with advocacy 	Around 35,000 IDPs and other vulnerable groups have adequate living conditions through at least one of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The affected populations have access to adequate daily food in terms of quality and quantity ▪ Targeted beneficiaries have adequate shelter (4m² per person) ▪ Targeted beneficiaries have access to water in sufficient quality and quantity for consumption, hygiene and domestic purposes (minimum 25 litres per day per person). ▪ Targeted beneficiaries practice safe excrement disposal and improve their hygiene conditions. ▪ The most vulnerable (IDPs or blocked communities) are assisted in livelihood coping mechanisms ▪ Affected populations and especially vulnerable people in isolated/blocked areas who have no access to public health services due to the conflict, have access to primary health care. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ACH- ESP - ALISEI - ANNF - CARITAS - ESP - CISP - CROIX-ROUGE - ESP - CROIX-ROUGE - FRA - CROIX-ROUGE - NLD - HILFSWERK AUSTRIA - MDM - FRA - MOVIMONDO - MPDL - OXFAM - UK - SI - UN - WFP-B - WHO - OMS

<p>Specific objective 2: To provide emergency assistance immediately after displacement, to offer protection and basic health care for vulnerable populations and to ensure improved levels of compliance with IHL</p>	<p>3,500,000</p>	<p>Colombia</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Material assistance to IDPs (primarily during the 3 first months after displacement), blocked communities and others living in conflict zones: food, non-food items and livelihood support • Protection activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Visits and selective assistance to vulnerable detainees ○ Dialogue with government bodies and armed groups ○ Support for families of detainees and hostages; ○ Activities to deter the recruitment of minors by armed groups ○ Enhancing respect of IHL ○ Implementation of safeguard measures for civilians in need of protection ○ Activities in favour of missing persons and their families • Nutritional survey for IDPs (with WFP) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The most urgent needs of 130,000 IDPs in terms of food and non-food assistance are met for 3 months (6 months for female-headed households) following forced displacement. ▪ 4,000 people living in ‘priority’ zones affected by the conflict and 2,500 IDPs have their social and economic situation improved through agricultural projects and thus avoid displacement ▪ Detainees of concern to ICRC (held by government and the armed groups) and hostages are better treated in accordance with IHL (approx. 7,000) – confidential results ▪ The number of people under 18 recruited by armed groups decreases – confidential results ▪ All combatants are made aware of the difference between participants and non participants in the conflict – confidential results ▪ The families of persons reported missing have been informed of their fate and whereabouts, and the number of disappearances has diminished 	<p>- CROIX-ROUGE - CICR- ICRC -CH - OXFAM - UK</p>
<p>Specific objective 3: To prevent the recruitment of children and young people by armed groups through support, protection and their reintegration into the state education system</p>	<p>750,000</p>	<p>Colombia, in particular Caquetá, Meta, Cundinamarca</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informal education, to reintegrate vulnerable children into the state education system • Psychosocial support • Nutritional support • Protection and social integration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 2,500 IDP children that had dropped out of school are reintegrated in the formal schooling system and receive a daily nutritional complement ▪ 800 IDP children are enabled to overcome trauma through psychosocial support ▪ 650 families are able to function with less likelihood of domestic violence ▪ 75 families receive livelihood support 	<p>- DIAKONIE - SAVE THE CHILDREN - UK</p>

Specific objective 4: To improve the levels of protection and social integration of refugees in Ecuador and Venezuela, and in other countries if required, and to provide humanitarian assistance to asylum seekers in need in these countries	2,200,000	Neighbouring countries to Colombia, in particular Ecuador and Venezuela	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legal assistance, protection and advice to Colombian asylum seekers • Support for registration and social integration of Colombian refugees • Emergency assistance for newly arrived asylum seekers and their host communities • Support for durable solutions for asylum seekers and their host communities 	70,000 refugees and asylum seekers have their rights better respected (including socio-economic rights); are made better aware of their options; and supported to enable the development of durable solutions or voluntary return	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ALISEI - CISP - UN - UNHCR - BEL - WHO - OMS
Specific objective 5: To improve the coordination and quality of humanitarian assistance by increasing the exchange of information between humanitarian organisations	300,000	Colombia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collection, analysis and diffusion of information on the humanitarian situation in Colombia • Support for UNOCHA departmental offices • Facilitation of information exchange between national and international humanitarian agencies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Monthly reports on the humanitarian situation in Colombia formulated and distributed ▪ Information disseminated monthly through the OCHA web page (www.reliefweb.int) ▪ Humanitarian reports issued for each Colombian Department where UNOCHA is present on the ground ▪ Maintenance of the database of humanitarian assistance and organisations in Colombia. ▪ Improved dialogue between national and international agencies to ensure respect of humanitarian principles and to advocate for improved access 	- UN - UNOCHA
Specific objective 6: To maintain a technical assistance capacity in the field, to assess needs, appraise project proposals and to coordinate and monitor the implementation of operations	150,000	Bogota			
Risk assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Irregular armed groups may prevent access to target populations and their actions may force humanitarian organisations to withdraw from certain areas</i> ▪ <i>A worsening of the security situation, locally or more extensively, could delay the implementation of activities</i> 				
Assumptions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>It is assumed that the EU uprooted peoples budget line will take over some ECHO projects with medium term objectives</i> ▪ <i>It is assumed that the Colombian government, through RSS, will continue to provide assistance to IDPs in departmental capitals and beyond</i> 				
Reserve	500,000				
Total cost	12,000,000				

5. EVALUATION

Under article 18 of Council Regulation (EC) No.1257/96 of 20 June 1996 concerning humanitarian aid the Commission is required to "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." These evaluations are structured and organised in overarching and cross cutting issues forming part of ECHO's Annual Strategy such as child-related issues, the security of relief workers, respect for human rights, gender. Each year, an indicative Evaluation Programme is established after a consultative process. This programme is flexible and can be adapted to include evaluations not foreseen in the initial programme, in response to particular events or changing circumstances. More information can be obtained at:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/echo/evaluation/index_en.htm.

6. BUDGET IMPACT ARTICLE 23 02 01

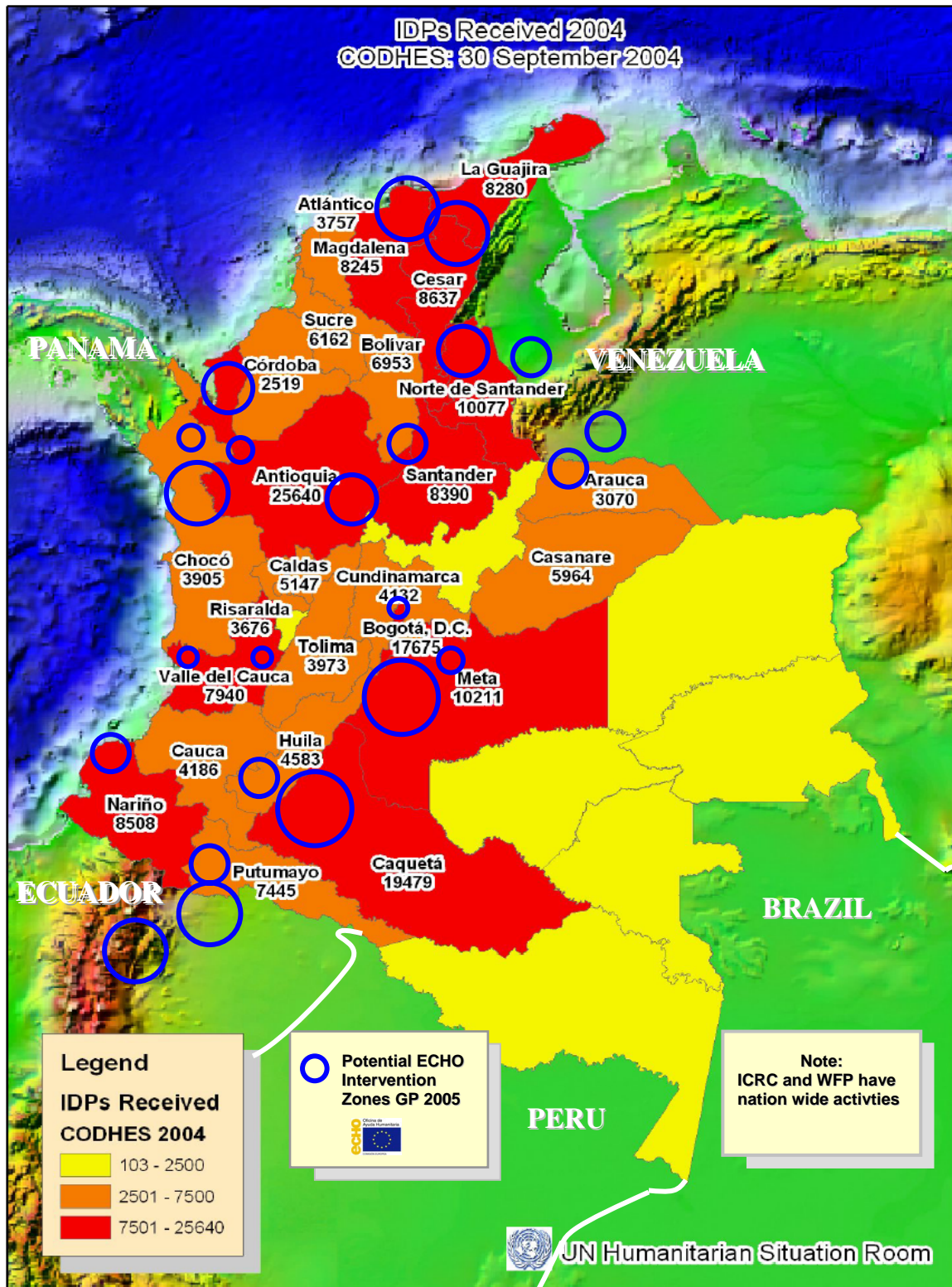
Budget impact article 23 02 01	
	CE (in EUR)
Initial Available Appropriations for 2005	476.500.000
Supplementary Budgets	
Transfers	
Total available appropriations	476.500.000
Total executed to date (as at 11/1/2005)	179.810.370
Available remaining	296.689.630
Total amount of the Decision	12,000,000

7. ANNEXES

Annex 1. Statistics and data on humanitarian situation

		Source
General		
Total population,2003	44,222,000	UNICEF 2003
Mortality U5 (per 1,000)	21	UNICEF 2003
% of population urbanized, 2003	76	
Nutrition		
% of children born underweight	9	UNICEF/WHO 2003
% Global malnutrition (<-2ZS)	8	UNICEF/WHO 2003
% Acute malnutrition (< -2ZS)	1	UNICEF/WHO 2003
% Chronic malnutrition (< -2ZS)	14	UNICEF/WHO 2003
% of under-fives suffering from underweight (moderate and severe)	7	UNICEF/WHO 2003
Health		
% using improved water facilities (total)	92	UNICEF/WHO 2003
% using improved water facilities (urban)	99	UNICEF/WHO 2003
% using improved water facilities (rural)	71	UNICEF/WHO 2003
% using improved sanitation facilities (total)	86	UNICEF/WHO 2003
% using improved sanitation facilities (urban)	96	UNICEF/WHO 2003
% using improved sanitation facilities (rural)	54	UNICEF/WHO 2003
Education		
% Men	92	UNESCO
% Women	92	UNESCO
Population Data		
Population under 18	16,599,000	UN Population Division
Population under 5	4,737,000	UN Population Division
Annual growth rate (%) (1990-2003)	1.8	UN Population Division
Life expectancy	72.2	UN Population Division
Economic Data		
National Gross Income per capita	1,819 USD	World Bank
% population living with less than 1 USD/day	8	World Bank
Displacement figures for 2004		
Displaced people up to 30/11/2004	124,411	RSS
Displaced people up to 30/09/2004	205,504	CODHES
Displaced people assisted up to 30/11/2004	65,909	ICRC

ANNEX 2: MAP OF COUNTRY AND LOCATION OF ECHO OPERATIONS



ANNEX 4: OTHER DONORS' ASSISTANCE

Donors in COLOMBIA/ECUADOR/VENEZUELA the last 12 months					
1. EU Members States (*)		2. European Commission		3. Others	
	EUR		EUR		EUR
Austria	0	ECHO	8,500,000	US	38,000,000
Belgium	0	Other services	11,000,000	Canada	1,000,000
Denmark	0			Switzerland	540,000
Finland	300,000				
France	0				
Germany	2,301,000				
Greece	0				
Ireland	0				
Italy	0				
Luxembourg	0				
Netherlands	0				
Portugal	0				
Spain	0				
Sweden	324,600				
United Kingdom	0				
Subtotal	2,925,600	Subtotal	19,500,000	Subtotal	39,540,000
		Grand total	61,965,600		

Dated : 10/01/2005

(*) Source : ECHO 14 Points reporting for Members States. <https://hac.cec.eu.int>
 Empty cells means either no information is available or no contribution.

Annex 5: List of Abbreviations

ACH- ESP	Acción Contra el Hambre
AIDCO	Europe Aid Co-operation Office
ANNF	Asociación Navarra Nuevo Futuro
AUC	Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia
BPRM	Bureau for Population, Refugees and Migration
CISP	Comitato Internazionale Per Lo Sviluppo Dei Popoli
CODHES	Consultoria para los Derechos Humanos y el Desplazamiento
COOPI	Cooperazione Internazionale
DIAKONIE	Diakonisches Werk der Evangelischen Kirche in Deutschland
EC	European Commission
ECHO	European Commission: Directorate-General for Humanitarian Aid
ELN	Ejército de Liberación Nacional
EU	European Union
FARC	Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia
GP	Global Plan
HDI	Human Development Index
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IHL	International Humanitarian Law
LRRD	Linking Relief, Rehabilitation and Development
MDM - FRA	Médecins Du Monde
MPDL	Movimiento por la Paz, el Desarme y la Libertad
MSF	Médecins sans Frontières
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
PAHO	Pan American Health Organisation
RSS	Red de Solidaridad Social
SI	Solidaridad Internacional
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	The United Nations Children's Fund
UNOCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
US	United States of America
USAID	US Agency for International Development
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organisation

COMMISSION DECISION

of

on the financing of humanitarian operations from the budget of the European Union in SOUTH AMERICA

THE COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES,

Having regard to the Treaty establishing the European Community,
Having regard to Council Regulation (EC) No.1257/96 of 20 June 1996 concerning humanitarian aid¹⁷, and in particular Article 15(2) thereof,

Whereas:

- (1) Colombia continues to experience a violent internal conflict, which has led to internal displacement of over three million people since 1985 and more than 200,000 in 2004 alone,
- (2) Most internally displaced people (IDPs) are in need of short term relief immediately after their displacement and need assistance to improve their living conditions and to be integrated into a new environment,
- (3) The Colombian institutions do not have sufficient capacity to cope with the humanitarian needs of IDPs and in some cases do not have access to them,
- (4) Over 14,000 children have been recruited by armed groups in Colombia and there is a need to protect vulnerable IDP children and prevent further recruitment,
- (5) The conflict in Colombia is increasingly affecting the surrounding countries, particularly Ecuador and Venezuela,
- (6) In 2004, over 30,000 Colombians sought asylum in Ecuador, many in need of protection and humanitarian assistance,
- (7) There are over 130,000 Colombians living in border areas of Venezuela who are in need of protection and humanitarian assistance,
- (8) There is a need for better coordination of humanitarian assistance in Colombia,
- (9) In order to maximise the impact of humanitarian aid for the victims, it is necessary to maintain a technical assistance capacity in the field,

¹⁷ OJ L 163, 2.7.1996, p. 1-6

- (10) An assessment of the humanitarian situation leads to the conclusion that humanitarian aid operations should be financed by the Community for a period of 18 months,
- (11) It is estimated that an amount of EUR 12,000,000 from budget article 23 02 01 of the general budget of the European Union is necessary to provide humanitarian assistance to more than 260,000 IDPs, refugees and other vulnerable groups, taking into account the available budget, other donors' interventions and other factors,
- (12) In accordance with Article 17 (3) of Council Regulation (EC) No.1257/96 of 20 June 1996 concerning humanitarian aid, the Humanitarian Aid Committee gave a favourable opinion on 23 February 2005,

HAS DECIDED AS FOLLOWS:

Article 1

1. In accordance with the objectives and general principles of humanitarian aid, the Commission hereby approves an amount of EUR 12,000,000 for humanitarian aid operations (Global Plan) for internally displaced people, refugees and other vulnerable groups in Colombia and neighbouring countries from Article 23 02 01 of the 2005 budget of the European Union,
2. In accordance with Articles 2 and 4 of Council Regulation (EC) No.1257/96, the humanitarian operations will be implemented in the framework of the following specific objectives:
 - To improve the living conditions and to promote the social integration of IDPs and other vulnerable groups affected by conflict and violence in the regions most affected by displacement
 - To provide emergency assistance immediately after displacement, to offer protection and basic health care for vulnerable populations and to ensure improved levels of compliance with IHL
 - To prevent the recruitment of children and young people by armed groups through support, protection and their reintegration into the state education system
 - To improve the levels of protection and social integration of refugees in Ecuador and Venezuela, and in other countries if required, and to provide humanitarian assistance to asylum seekers in need in these countries
 - To improve the coordination and quality of humanitarian assistance by increasing the exchange of information between humanitarian organisations
 - To maintain a technical assistance capacity in the field, to assess needs, appraise project proposals and to coordinate and monitor the implementation of operations
3. The amounts allocated to each of these objectives and for the reserve are listed in the annex to this decision.

Article 2

Without prejudice to the use of the reserve, the Commission may, where this is justified by the humanitarian situation, re-allocate the funding levels established for one of the

objectives set out in Article 1(2) to another objective mentioned therein provided that the re-allocated amount represents less than 20% of the global amount covered by this decision and does not exceed EUR 2 million.

Article 3

1. The duration of the implementation of this decision shall be for a period of 18 months, starting on 01/01/2005.
2. Expenditure under this decision shall be eligible as of 01/01/2005.
3. If the actions envisaged in this decision are suspended due to *force majeure* or comparable circumstances, the period of suspension will not be taken into account for the calculation of the duration of the implementation of this decision.

Article 4

This Decision shall take effect on the date of its adoption.

Done at Brussels,

For the Commission

Member of the Commission

Annex: Breakdown of allocations by specific objectives

Specific objectives	Amount per specific objective (EUR)
To improve the living conditions and to promote the social integration of IDPs and other vulnerable groups affected by conflict and violence in the regions most affected by displacement	4,600,000
To provide emergency assistance immediately after displacement, to offer protection and basic health care for vulnerable populations and to ensure improved levels of compliance with IHL	3,500,000
To prevent the recruitment of children and young people by armed groups through support, protection and their reintegration into the state education system	750,000
To improve the levels of protection and social integration of refugees in Ecuador and Venezuela, and in other countries if required, and to provide humanitarian assistance to asylum seekers in need in these countries	2,200,000
To improve the coordination and quality of humanitarian assistance by increasing the exchange of information between humanitarian organisations	300,000
To maintain a technical assistance capacity in the field, to assess needs, appraise project proposals and to coordinate and monitor the implementation of operations	150,000
Reserve	500,000
TOTAL	12,000,000

Grants for the implementation of humanitarian aid within the meaning of Council Regulation (EC) No.1257/96 of 20 June 1996 concerning humanitarian aid are awarded in accordance with the Financial Regulation, in particular Article 110 thereof, and its Implementing Rules in particular Article 168 thereof.¹⁸

Rate of financing: In accordance with Article 169 of the Financial Regulation, grants for the implementation of this Decision may finance 100% of the costs of an action.

Humanitarian aid operations funded by the Commission are implemented by NGOs and the Red Cross organisations on the basis of Framework Partnership Agreements (FPA) (in conformity with Article 163 of the Implementing Rules of the Financial Regulation) and by United Nations agencies based on the Financial and Administrative Framework Agreement (FAFA). The standards and criteria established in Echo's standard Framework Partnership Agreement to which NGO's and International organisations have to adhere and the procedures and criteria needed to become a partner may be found at

http://europa.eu.int/comm/echo/partners/index_en.htm

¹⁸ Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1605/2002 of 25 June 2002, , OJ L248, 16/09/2002 and No 2342/2002 of 23 December 2002, OJ L 357 of 31/12/2002.