

“Evaluation of DG ECHO's actions in Ethiopia”

Contract number: ECHO/ADM/BUD/2012/

March 2012 – July 2012

Final Report

30 July 2012

Claude De Ville De Goyet, Team Leader
Annemarie Hoogendoorn
Alemtsehay Aberra Teklu
Sifan Abera Koriche

Cost of the report 124,882€ (0.06 % of the budget evaluated: 196,761,444€)



The report has been financed by and produced at the request of the European Commission. The comments contained herein reflect the opinions of the consultant only.

Table of Contents

| | |
|---|-----------|
| List of tables..... | iv |
| List of figures..... | iv |
| Table of pictures..... | iv |
| Executive Summary | v |
| 1. Introduction..... | 1 |
| 1.1. The country..... | 1 |
| 1.2. The hazards..... | 1 |
| 1.3. The Humanitarian actors | 2 |
| 1.4. DG ECHO strategy and program..... | 3 |
| 2. Purposes and scope of the evaluation | 6 |
| 2.1. Purposes | 6 |
| 2.2. The Scope | 6 |
| 3. Methodology and limitations..... | 7 |
| 3.1. Methodology | 7 |
| 3.2. Limitations | 8 |
| 4. Key evaluation questions | 9 |
| 4.1. To what extent has DG ECHO assistance been relevant, appropriate and timely to the needs and priorities in Ethiopia?..... | 9 |
| 4.1.1. The response to the protracted food and nutrition emergency | 9 |
| 4.1.2. The response to the refugee crisis in 2011 | 18 |
| 4.1.3. Other sudden onset crisis..... | 24 |
| 4.2. To what extent DG ECHO strategy and action is coordinated, complementary and coherent (3Cs)? | 24 |
| 4.2.1. International level with other actors | 25 |
| 4.2.2. Within the EU (with Member States / other EC instruments)..... | 26 |
| 4.2.3. Within ECHO and its partners | 27 |
| 4.2.4. With GoE (national, zone and <i>woreda</i>)..... | 28 |
| 4.3. Have DG ECHO's actions improved the living conditions in the short term? .. | 29 |
| 4.4. What is DG ECHO longer-term impact on the population?..... | 32 |
| 4.5. How efficient was the use of resources? | 34 |
| 5. Overall Conclusions | 38 |
| 5.1. DG ECHO in protracted food crisis in Ethiopia | 38 |
| 5.2. DG ECHO in Rapid Response events..... | 39 |
| 5.3. LRRD..... | 40 |
| 5.4. Improving DG ECHO capacity..... | 40 |
| 6. Recommendations | 42 |
| 6.1. Strategic recommendations | 42 |
| 6.2. Operational recommendations..... | 43 |

List of tables

| | |
|---|----|
| Table 1: Humanitarian situation in Ethiopia | 2 |
| Table 2: Number of refugees in Ethiopia | 2 |
| Table 3: DG ECHO funding in Ethiopia (by fiscal year)..... | 4 |
| Table 4: DG ECHO funding in Ethiopia (by duration)..... | 4 |
| Table 5: DG ECHO funding in Ethiopia (per budget line and sector)..... | 5 |
| Table 6: Number of persons interviewed per type of agency and country | 7 |
| Table 7: “Who is the most influential in selecting the beneficiaries? | 10 |
| Table 8: Relevance and appropriateness: Strengths and weaknesses | 13 |
| Table 9: Evolving refugee crisis..... | 19 |
| Table 10: Refugee camps, capacity..... | 19 |
| Table 11: Targeting of vulnerable groups by ECHO / by long term development projects | 24 |

List of figures

| | |
|--|----|
| Figure 1: How EOS/TSF is working | 15 |
| Figure 2: Quality of ECHO coordination with EU | 24 |
| Figure 3: Effective coordination due to dialogue between ECHO and non-EU actors..... | 26 |

Table of pictures

| | |
|---|----|
| Picture 1: Focus group discussion..... | 7 |
| Picture 2: Highlands | 12 |
| Picture 3: Plumpy Nut | 15 |
| Picture 4: Nutritional education | 16 |
| Picture 5: Mother with child, OTP..... | 16 |
| Picture 6: Woman fetching water..... | 17 |
| Picture 7: Food aid by WFP | 20 |
| Picture 8: Water point for host community awaiting for completion of the system | 21 |
| Picture 9: Construction of shelters | 21 |
| Picture 10: Water reserve capacity 5l/person..... | 22 |
| Picture 11: Model house NRC | 22 |
| Picture 12: Model house DRC | 22 |
| Picture 13: Picture taking, Dollo Ado | 23 |
| Picture 14: Finger printing, Dollo Ado | 23 |
| Picture 15: Boosting station | 35 |
| Picture 16: TSF Programme, Chart..... | 39 |
| Picture 17: Shelter kitchen | 40 |

Executive Summary

Introduction (Paragraph 1-23)

i. Ethiopia, with a population of about 84 million (2012), is one of the world's poorest countries in spite of the growing economy (average real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of 11% over the last six years).¹ The major hazard is the recurrence of droughts on a background of chronic food and livelihood crisis: *"a significant proportion of the population live on or below the poverty line, where food insecurity is widespread and rates of acute malnutrition are often at or above the international threshold that defines an emergency situation"*.²

ii. In 2011, Directorate General European Commission Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection (DG ECHO) was the third largest humanitarian donor in Ethiopia with a share of 9.8% of emergency funding following the United States Government (39.8%) and the United Kingdom Department for International Development (DfID) with 10.4% share.³ DG ECHO's strategy and activities from 2007 revolved around the following sectors: Food Aid and short term food security and livelihood support, nutrition, water/sanitation/hygiene (WASH), health, disaster risk reduction and since 2011 protection and refugees assistance.

iii. Ethiopia is part of the Regional Drought Preparedness Programme that was launched by the European Union (EU) in 2006 to alleviate the impact of recurrent drought cycles on vulnerable communities in Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda.

iv. From 2007-2011, DG ECHO approved a total of 125 projects amounting to €196,761,444. United Nations (UN) agencies or International Organizations received 57.3% (with 43% to the World Food Program (WFP) alone). The five best funded Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) received between €5.9 and €8 million each over 2007-2011.

Purpose and scope of the evaluation (Paragraph 24-26)

v. The main purposes of the evaluation are lesson learning and accountability in order to improve future performance. It is an evaluation of DG ECHO strategy and overall action over the period 2007-2011 rather than a detailed project level review. Among other objectives, it aims to identify what, if any, other sectors of intervention should be addressed by ECHO, how to progress from emergency/transition to structural/development actions and to analyse DG ECHO's coordination with other actors and the role and involvement of the Government of Ethiopia (GoE).

¹ World Bank 2012 <http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/ethiopia>.

² Emergency Nutrition Network 2011, Field Exchange Issue 40 February 2011, <http://fex.enonline.net/40/contents.aspx> (accessed 14 May 2012).

³ UNOCHA Financial Tracking System FTS.

Methodology (Paragraph 0-33)

vi. A team of four experts (2 internationals and 2 nationals) carried out the following tasks:

- Review of 254 documents.
- Briefing and interviews in European Commission (EC) Head Quarters (HQ) in Brussels.
- Interviews in Addis Ababa and Nairobi (Regional Support Office).
- Field visits to 23 projects (out of 30 funded in 2011) from 17 partners.
- Twelve focus group discussions with 171 beneficiaries (69.6% women) and a survey by questionnaire with 107 respondents.

In all, 180 stakeholders were interviewed (including 18 from EC and 25 from GoE).

vii. The team opted to see as many projects and partners as possible at the cost of not being able to appraise any in great detail. Also noteworthy was the late and limited opportunity to interview high-level officials in the federal GoE.

viii. The analysis is based on the main types of hazards present in Ethiopia: The protracted food security crisis that regularly is exacerbated locally by drought spells and the rapid response events in relation to (a) displacement of population (mostly refugees) and (b) other sudden shocks.

Relevance and appropriateness

Protracted food and livelihood crisis (Paragraph 41-68)

ix. With so many districts (*woredas*) vulnerable to the risk of drought in a country with endemic acute malnutrition (over 50% are classified as either hotspot # 1 or # 2 by the GoE⁴), who makes the choice of the target groups? According to interviews and replies to questionnaire, the implementing partners then the GoE (not DG ECHO) have the most influence. This explains the much dispersed location of DG ECHO projects over the country.

x. Usually a local needs assessment reporting a Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM) rate higher than the national (very high) average⁵, and a history of past drought episodes are offered to justify a vulnerability to future risks. Those rates are not compared over a time trend or to other *woredas* or zones.⁶

xi. The types of interventions vary considerably.

- ECHO provided funding to WFP for general food distribution based on the regularly updated GoE Humanitarian Requirements Document, with exclusion of parts of Somali Region where WFP cannot monitor due to security constraints.
- Some are directed to drought risk reduction (increasing resiliency) targeting groups such as pastoralists receiving significant food assistance from other sources with a budget and resources far above those of the DG ECHO project. The range of activities includes early

⁴ DRMFS 2012 and Emergency Nutrition Coordination Unit 2012.

⁵ GAM rates can fluctuate over the years according to the season and crop timing.

⁶ Instances of a GAM rate improving in the three years preceding the project (according to local health authorities) or even rates lower than the national average according to other surveys have been noted.

warning, bush clearing, water works, livestock measures and Pastoral Field schools in a typical Linking relief, rehabilitation and development (LRRD) approach.

- Others are predominantly aimed to the therapy of acute malnutrition through the partners' support to the Outpatient Therapeutic Programme (OTP) of the GoE. Noteworthy is the interruption of DG ECHO support to Targeted Supplementary Feeding (TSF) activities of WFP as a result of major flaws in the selection of beneficiaries as noted by an external evaluation.⁷ Provided these shortcomings are corrected, TSF remains a cost effective prevention measure.⁸ Finally, nutritional education was not a strong component of those activities.
- DG ECHO encouraged partners to add a WASH component to their nutritional intervention. The activities ranged according to project from mere hygiene and sanitation promotion up to the construction of new water works. Those WASH/nutrition activities are often targeting of different beneficiaries.
- Few projects in protracted food crises include primary health care and public health. In one zone, two different partners provided WASH and health care support, again to different but occasionally overlapping groups.

xii. Partners point a slow response of DG ECHO (Paragraph 60-62). Most interlocutors stressed that DG ECHO is significantly slower than the United States (US) Office for Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) and the UN managed Humanitarian Response Fund (HRF).⁹ On the other hand, DG ECHO has been quicker than other EC instruments including e.g. the Instrument for Stability.

Response to Refugee crisis in 2011 (Paragraph 69-94)

xiii. Until mid-2011, DG ECHO had no specific projects addressing the needs of the refugees considered as stable and chronic. As early as March 2011, the situation deteriorated in Liben Zone with a rapid inflow of new refugees from Somalia, many with serious acute malnutrition and health problems. The inflow culminated in June 2011. It was not until August that the international community, DG ECHO included, reacted to the situation. Most emergency projects were signed around September retroactive to July.

xiv. The scope of interventions was broad, comprehensive and amply justified by the available data (GAM rates exceeding 50%, high mortality).¹⁰ It included support for food aid (WFP), the entire range of nutritional interventions, health care, WASH (mostly water supply including contribution to permanent solutions encompassing the host population), protection including registration and transit facilities (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, UNHCR) and shelters (tents and transitional shelters).

xv. DG ECHO action was untimely but once mobilized, it was a concerted effort managed by the Regional Support Office (RSO) in Nairobi with reinforcement from the RSO in Amman and the headquarters. The resulting program was highly relevant and appropriate.

⁷ A similar action was taken by DFID.

⁸ This activity mostly carried out by WFP is specifically excluded from the DG ECHO contribution.

⁹ HRF is mostly funded by EU Member States bilateral contributions. OFDA and ECHO do not support it.

¹⁰ From interviews with ARRA, MSF and UNHCR.

The Acute Watery Diarrhoea (AWD) crisis in 2009 (Paragraph 95-96)

xvi. In 2009, an epidemic of AWD¹¹ reached the capital area. The response was swift from both the GoE and DG ECHO. The Regional Health Authorities (RHA) requested Médecins sans frontières (MSF) assistance. DG ECHO support to this agency and United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) has been rapid, decisive and most appropriate. It included strengthening of the health institutions to face future threats (LRRD).

Coordination, coherence and complementarity (3 Cs)

xvii. Interlocutors are poorly rating the coordination of DG ECHO with other actors.

xviii. At international level (Paragraph 97-106)

DG ECHO is not a leading participant in the many fora and task forces' meetings. Comparison with the two the response funding sources (OFDA and HRF) suggests that the main factor impeding coordination, liaison and therefore capacity to advocate and influence others is the acute shortage of senior staff in DG ECHO's office. A promising development is the reinforced cooperation on food security between the EC Delegation and the US Embassy in Ethiopia, where there are opportunities to incorporate coordination on relief, nutrition, water and sanitation, etc.¹²

xix. Within the EU (Paragraph 107-111)

The coordination and exchange of information inside the EU Delegation is excellent. Most of the development actors are sharing DG ECHO commitment to drought risk reduction. However, partners did not see any concrete benefits in terms of extended or complementary (post-humanitarian) support from EC development instruments. The reason is the heavy mid-term earmarking of EC funds in consultations with the GoE. The new EU initiative for Supporting Horn of Africa Resilience (SHARE) is offering encouraging perspectives. The pending issue is the selection of the target groups. In Ethiopia, the implementation of the Lisbon Treaty that prescribes full coordination between EU Member States for international assistance has taken off very well for development assistance and also is extending to the humanitarian sector (EU Humanitarian Breakfast, joint EU ambassadors visit to Southern Ethiopia in August 2011, etc.).

xx. Within DG ECHO and its partners (Paragraph 112-114)

The systematic exchange of information among actors of the drought risk reduction initiative in the Horn of Africa is contrasted with a lack of periodic collective consultation with all DG ECHO partners within Ethiopia. The distribution of responsibilities and coordination between the Regional Support Office (RSO) and the country office leaves also room for improvement.

xxi. With the GoE (Paragraph 115-121)

While at zone or *woredas* level, partners are engaging closely and constructively with local authorities (that have the last decision on their project), and at federal and regional level some partner agencies are participating in technical task forces, there is no structured working dialogue between ECHO and GoE. The GoE does not recognize ECHO, one DG of the EC, as a separate institution and the Head of Office does not feel authorized to visit or coordinate at

¹¹ I.e. Cholera.

¹² As reported in interviews with the EC delegation.

this level. Other offices in the EU delegation (for instance rural development or food security) and many implementing partners maintain a constant technical dialogue with their counterparts.

Effectiveness in improving conditions

In protracted food crisis (Paragraph 124-132)

xxii. The effectiveness of a limited one-sector intervention is expected to be modest.

xxiii. The relief food aid provided by all humanitarian donors has been effective to avoid major increases in malnutrition. DG ECHO however is one among many (and bigger) contributors. A key issue that needs to be tackled is the low level of accountability for the Government of Ethiopia food aid flows that affect the DG ECHO relief through WFP (and also the EC contribution to the Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP)).

xxiv. Drought risk reduction activities have improved the conditions and resiliency of their beneficiaries. However, the result is short-term and not sustainable or scalable. Nutritional interventions are saving lives but the underlying causes were not addressed. Water works are leaving a more significant and durable impact, especially for women.

In refugees and other sudden crisis (Paragraph 133-137)

xxv. The short-term impact of the international assistance to the 150,000 refugees¹³ has been significant. DG ECHO contribution was very positive as reflected in the sharp drop of acute malnutrition and mortality in the camps. The response to the Acute Watery Diarrhoea / Cholera (AWD) outbreak has also been decisive as illustrated by the low case-fatality ratio (20 deaths out of 10,305 cases).¹⁴

Long-term results (Paragraph 138-145)

xxvi. Resilience to drought remains a major challenge in Ethiopia that is beyond what DG ECHO alone could possibly achieve. Projects are relatively modest and of short duration. Their long-term result may be more subtle through capacity building of local authorities, change of attitudes in the communities (not measured in this evaluation) and preparing the ground for development actors.

A clear factor for the limited results is the dispersion of interventions (livelihood, nutrition, wash, health) over a large number of different beneficiaries precluding possibility of cross sectoral synergy.

Efficiency (Paragraph 146-157)

xxvii. In protracted crises, the lack of clear rationale for such a complex mosaic of projects with many partners over a very wide geographic area, each offering a limited set of solution to a multifaceted problem does not appear very efficient. The response to the refugee and AWD crises was efficient.

¹³ UNHCR 2012, Statistics provided to the interviewers.

¹⁴ MSF 2009, Descriptive report.

xxviii. Relief is much more expensive than long-term support for food security development (US\$180 vs. US\$65 per person per year on average). Increasing the EC/ECHO funding for (integrated) food security programmes can therefore be expected to further maximise coverage and outputs against lower costs. Relief assistance should concentrate on transitory food insecure people only, and not serve beneficiaries who are actually chronically food insecure.

xxix. The efficiency of partners is variable as reflected by the sometime excessive manpower overwhelming local counterparts. The use of national staff is a very positive point. For the DG ECHO allocation to general food distribution through WFP, it is remarked that a recent food commodities audit has shown a dramatically low level of accountability.

xxx. The efficiency of DG ECHO procedures has been the object of many comments from the interlocutors. Repetitive reformulation of projects, especially by larger, financially less dependent partners has not resulted in commensurate changes in the project. ECHO grants are regarded as “expensive money” due to the relatively heavy staff investment required from the partner for a short duration project.

xxxi. Conclusions and recommendations

| Conclusions | Recommendations |
|---|---|
| Strategic | |
| The strategy of ECHO is not CLEARLY focused. Protracted food crises are posing a difficult challenge given the relative size of DG ECHO budget. (Paragraph 158-161) | R1 To differentiate strategically between protracted food crises, acute food emergencies and sudden onset crises and conflicts. |
| The resources spread increasingly thinly over a large number of projects, places and beneficiaries. It is detrimental to effectiveness and time consuming for the country office. (Paragraph 162) | R2 To reduce significantly the number of projects / partners directly funded by DG ECHO. |
| Little impact should be expected from interventions providing mono-sectoral services to many dispersed targets. Beneficiaries would benefit from the concentration of the various sectors supported by DG ECHO on behalf of fewer beneficiaries. (Paragraph 163, 175) | R3 To provide a cost-effective multi-sectoral package to fewer beneficiaries in a limited number of <i>woredas</i> in protracted crises. In particular, an in-depth review could be launched specifically to define the supporting role of the health sector in tackling food security and nutritional problems. |
| Presently, selection is offer-driven and disconnected from development actors' priorities (Paragraph 161, 169). There is little collective consultation or objective comparison of the vulnerability of the proposed communities. (Paragraph 164) | R4 The selection of those target <i>woredas</i> should be the result of consultative process involving the EU delegation (SHARE initiative, the partners and stakeholders including the GoE. |
| The approval process of DG ECHO is perceived by most partners as comparatively slower and less flexible than OFDA or HRF. (Paragraph 166, 173) | R5 The approval process should be reviewed, simplified and shortened and the electronic exchange system made more user-friendly. |
| Drought risk reduction is essentially a long-term activity. (Paragraph 156, 159, 169, 174) | R6 The drought risk reduction projects should cover several (3) financing cycles with more flexibility to allow responsive and appropriate programming as the drought cycle phases change. |
| The response to the refugee crisis has been delayed in part due to the lack of instrument for pre-funding partners. (Paragraph 178) | R7 In situations requiring a rapid response, DG ECHO should explore a mechanism to pre-assign funding to selected partners. It should also enter into active dialogue with HRF and OFDA to contribute and exercise influence in the immediate response. |

| Conclusions | Recommendations |
|--|--|
| Operational | |
| Lack of human resources has been responsible for the lack of presence of DG ECHO in most influential fora. At field level, if general monitoring is appreciated, sectoral guidance is insufficient. (Paragraph 172, 176) | R8 DG ECHO's office in Ethiopia should be significantly strengthened with senior staff and sectoral experts. In line with the Lisbon Treaty, DG ECHO to take a stronger role for coordination of EU assistance in the humanitarian sector in Ethiopia. |
| TSF is a valuable tool and probably more cost effective than treatment of cases. (Paragraph 56, 163) | R9 DG ECHO should reconsider funding for TSF both for WFP and nutrition partners once the basic flaws in selecting beneficiaries have been addressed. |
| Malnutrition rates are affected by multiple factors and influenced by much larger programmes than those of DG ECHO. A change of acute malnutrition or crude mortality rates is not necessarily reflecting the effectiveness or lack of the emergency project. (Paragraph 127, 128 and 157) | R10 DG ECHO should continue improving the selection of indicators specifically measuring the effectiveness of the partner. |
| The lack of working dialogue at federal level is limiting the influence of DG ECHO and its ability to promote changes. (Paragraph 159, 164) | R11 DG ECHO should expand its indirect support to build the capacity of the GoE counterparts and encourage partners to engage in existing fora and Task Forces. |
| There is limited collaboration by DG ECHO and its partners with the specialized research and other scientific agencies in Ethiopia and more in general in the Horn, on how best to promote food security and livelihoods in arid lowland areas. (Paragraph 177) | R12 DG ECHO and partners should develop better links with the universities and research community for development of an evidence-based set of cost-effective drought resilience promotion models that can easily be sustained and scaled up and meet the needs of various types of livelihoods in the arid lowland zones. |

1. Introduction

1.1. The country¹⁵¹⁶

1. Ethiopia, with an estimated population of about 84 million (2012)¹⁷, is the second-most populous country in Sub-Saharan Africa. Ethiopia is also one of the world's poorest countries. At US\$390, Ethiopia's per capita income is much lower than the Sub-Saharan African average of US\$1,165 in FY 2010, ranking it as the sixth poorest country in the world (GNI, Atlas Method).

2. After the major drought in 2002/2003, Ethiopia has also been one of the fastest growing economies in Africa. Official Ethiopian statistics indicate an average real GDP growth of 11% over the last five consecutive years "though the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund have estimated GDP growth to be in the range of 7%-8%".¹⁸

3. Although the formal Ethiopian state structure has been transformed from a highly centralized system to a federal and increasingly decentralized one, a number of challenges remain. The May 2010 parliamentary elections resulted in a 99.6 % victory for the ruling party and its allies, reducing the opposition from 174 to only two seats in the 547 members of the House of Representatives.

4. The successive Demography and Health Surveys (DHS) (2005 and 2011)¹⁹ showed improvement in some public health indicators (from 35% to 55.7% measles immunization coverage). General Acute Malnutrition (GAM as measure of wasting) averaged 11% in 2000 and 2005. 2011 rates are 9.7%.²⁰

1.2. The hazards

5. Ethiopia is highly vulnerable (score 3 on the vulnerability and crisis indexes of DG ECHO Global Needs Assessment (GNA)²¹. The country is prone to recurrent droughts and floods. Poverty in rural areas is widespread in spite of the overall GDP growth, so even a minor disruption in the weather pattern or food prices can have an adverse impact on the food security situation of the country. Regarding public health, epidemics of diseases (such as Acute Watery Diseases) are recurrent although not regularly. In 2009, it affected the capital city, Addis Ababa.

6. The country suffered two consecutive failed rainy seasons, in October-December 2010 and in March-May 2011. The crisis in 2011 was triggered by drought attributed to the La

¹⁵ World Bank (2012): Ethiopia: Country Brief, <http://go.worldbank.org/WA1RL12OL0> (accessed 27 April 2012).

¹⁶ DG ECHO (2012): Ethiopia Fact sheet.

¹⁷ Figures vary widely. The CIA World Fact Book anticipates the population to be 93,815,992 in July 2012, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/et.html> (accessed 3 June 2012).

¹⁸ US Department of State April 2, 2012, Bureau of African Affairs, Background Note: Ethiopia <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2859.htm> (accessed 2 June 2012).

¹⁹ Ethiopia Central statistics Agency (2006): Ethiopia Demographic and Health Survey 2005; and Ethiopia Central statistics Agency (2012): Ethiopia Demographic and Health Survey 2011.

²⁰ In 2011, GAM survey methodology changed making this figure difficult to compare with those of prior surveys

²¹ DG ECHO (2012): Global Needs Assessment - Vulnerability Index and Crisis Index 2011-12, ec.europa.eu/echo/files/policies/strategy/gna_2011_2012.xls.

Niña episode in the eastern Pacific and reported failure of rains in the pastoral areas of south-east and southern Ethiopia – and patchy rains in Somali Region. The result has been an exacerbation of the chronic food insecurity, water shortage and acute stress on households and livelihoods.

7. According the Joint Government and Humanitarian Partners' Document, the more favourable rain performance in the second part of the year has “temporarily alleviated water and pasture shortage in the South and South Eastern parts of the country, the impact on livestock productivity and overall food security situation is minimal, as full recovery especially in pastoral areas, is expected to take longer time.”²²

8. While the humanitarian situation has improved still about 3.2 million people are reported to need humanitarian aid in the first half of 2012 (Humanitarian Requirements Document (HRD) 2012). In comparison, 4.5 million received aid in the second half of 2011 because of severe drought (HRD 2011).

Table 1: Humanitarian situation in Ethiopia

| Hazard | % Pop. Exposed | Ranking |
|-------------------|----------------|------------------|
| Drought | 11.24% | 21st out of 184 |
| Earthquake | 0.26% | 100th out of 153 |
| Flood | 0.09% | 109th out of 162 |
| Landslide | 0.08% | 24th out of 162 |

Source: <http://www.unisdr.org/partners/countries/eth> (accessed 27 April 2012)

9. The situation in neighbouring countries, especially Somalia, led to a sharp increase in the number of refugees in 2011. According to UNHCR, the trend will continue in 2012.²³

Table 2: Number of refugees in Ethiopia

| Number of refugees in Ethiopia: UNHCR planning figures | | |
|--|----------|----------|
| Jan 2012 | Jan 2013 | Dec 2013 |
| 204,940 | 228,660 | 252,610 |

Source: UNHCR 2012 (see footnote 23)

1.3. **The Humanitarian actors**

10. As noted in a recent evaluation: “In Ethiopia, more than in other countries in the region, emergency response is factored in to annual government planning, with the production of a twice-yearly ‘Humanitarian Requirements Document’ (HRD),” ... “which sets the framework both for international donors and for all agencies who wish to provide relief services in Ethiopia.”²⁴

11. In January 2009, the Ethiopian Parliament passed legislation to regulate NGOs. The new law is demarcating areas of operations (for example by excluding those receiving more than 10% of funding from external sources from engaging in essentially all human rights,

²² HRD, Humanitarian Requirements Document 2012.

²³ UNHCR (2012): Country operations profile – Ethiopia, <http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/page?page=49e483986>

²⁴ DEC 2012 East Africa Crisis Real Time Evaluation (RTE): Ethiopia January 2012.

conflict resolution, and advocacy activities)²⁵. That forces partners to maintain a difficult balance to meet the GoE and DG ECHO demands and ultimately place the burden of publically defending the humanitarian space on EC delegation.

12. Two separate Government institutions are overseeing proposed humanitarian projects from their approval, their monitoring, technical to the evaluation and annual financial auditing: the Disaster Risk Management and Food Security Section (DRMFSS) of the Ministry of Agriculture and Regional Development, and the Administration of Refugees and Returnees Affairs (ARRA) in their respective areas of thematic responsibility. The process of securing approval of externally funded projects is time consuming due to its multi-layer structure from district level (*woreda*) to zonal, regional and national.

13. Ethiopia is one of the fifth largest beneficiaries from humanitarian assistance. In 2011, according to UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs' (OCHA) Financial Tracking System (FTS), the contribution amounted to over USD 822.5 Million, out of which almost 190 million came from bilateral contributions from EU Member States plus US\$80 million from the European Commission including DG ECHO. In total in 2011 the EU accounted for 33% of all aid flows.

14. US OFDA, followed by the UK (DfID) and DG ECHO are the largest donors to emergency responses in Ethiopia. In 2011, their respective share was 39.8%, 10.4% and 9.8% (FTS). While DG ECHO and OFDA are funding their implementing agencies directly, other donors established a common fund called the Humanitarian Response Fund (HRF) managed by UN OCHA. Contributors are mostly EU countries: UK, Denmark, Netherlands, Norway, Ireland, Italy, Sweden and Spain as well as Switzerland. In 2011, HRF had disbursed some US\$50 million against proposals submitted by UN and International Non-Governmental Organisations (INGOs).

1.4. DG ECHO strategy and program

15. DG ECHO strategy and activities revolved around the same sectors over the period covered by this evaluation: Food aid and short term food security and livelihood support, WASH, health, disaster risk reduction and more recently protection. Priority and ranking order changed somewhat over the time. The attention is focused on drought related response, mitigation and preparedness and, since 2011, on refugees.

16. Ethiopia is part of the Regional Drought Preparedness Programme (RDPP) that was launched by the EU in 2006. The programme seeks to alleviate the impact of recurrent drought cycles on vulnerable communities in Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda. Activities focus on the upkeep of water sources, initiatives centred on livestock, and alternative income generating activities.

17. Humanitarian funding sources are multiple including Food Aid, European Development Fund (EDF) and others. The total of projects over the period covered by the evaluation reached 125. In 2010, DG ECHO funded projects exceeded € 28 million and amounted in 2011 close to € 45 million.²⁶

²⁵ Article 14j restricts participation in activities that include the advancement of human and democratic rights, the promotion of equality of nations and nationalities and peoples and that of gender and religion, the promotion of the rights of disabled and children's rights, the promotion of conflict resolution or reconciliation and the promotion of the efficiency of the justice and law enforcement services to Ethiopian charities and societies. Cf. <http://www.icnl.org/research/monitor/ethiopia.html> (last accessed 23 July 2012).

²⁶ According to the Ethiopia Fact Sheet, the total EC contribution was €50.86 million in 2011. The estimated contributions of the regional Nairobi based projects were not tallied by the evaluators for lack of documented evidence.

18. Financial data made available to the evaluators are summarized in the tables below²⁷. From the total of €196,761,444, 57.3% were allocated to UN agencies or IOs. The WFP received 43% of DG ECHO's budget.

Table 3: DG ECHO funding in Ethiopia (by fiscal year)

| Number of projects per fiscal year | | | | | |
|------------------------------------|------|------|------|------|------------|
| 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | total |
| 15 | 25 | 31 | 24 | 30 | 125 |

Source: own elaboration based on ECHO documentation.

19. Of a total of 36 partners, only 5 were consistently funded over the 5 years: WFP, Action Against Hunger (ACF), Cooperazione Internazionale (COOPI), Merlin and Save the Children (SC)/UK. See table below:

Table 4: DG ECHO funding in Ethiopia (by duration)

| Number of partners according to the duration of partnership with DG ECHO | | | | | |
|--|-----------|-------------|------------|------------|-------------------|
| One year | Two years | Three years | Four years | Five years | TOTAL of Partners |
| 11 | 9 | 3 | 8 | 5 | 36 |

Source: own elaboration based on ECHO documentation.

20. Out of the 11 partners with one-year active partnership, four were newly funded for the refugee crisis in 2011.

21. The five best-funded NGOs are in decreasing order: ACF/France with € 7.1 M; COOPI and GOAL with € 6.5 million each; SC/UK with € 6.4 million and Merlin with € 5.9 million over 2007-2011. The absence of European Participating Red Cross Societies or International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) is noted.

22. Funding by budget line and sector is shown in Table 5.

²⁷ All data are tabulated according to the year of the financial decision, not the date of implementation. FY 2006 was not included.

Table 5: DG ECHO funding in Ethiopia (per budget line and sector)

| | | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2007-2011 |
|------------------|--------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| | | | | | | | Total Amount |
| By Source | ETH/BUD | 4,850,000 | 3,800,000 | 6,000,000 | 15,000,000 | 30,000,000 | 59,650,000 |
| | ETH/EDF | 0 | 0 | 10,000,000 | 0 | 0 | 10,000,000 |
| | FA/BUD | 14,650,000 | 35,700,000 | 10,000,000 | 0 | 0 | 60,350,000 |
| | HF/BUD | 0 | 10,676,719 | 31,780,225 | 13,409,000 | 0 | 55,865,944 |
| | HF/EDF | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 14,995,500 | 14,995,500 |
| | Total | 19,500,000 | 50,176,719 | 57,780,225 | 28,409,000 | 44,995,500 | 200,861,444 |
| By Sector | Food Aid | 1,375,000 | 27,393,115 | 38,549,548 | 8,635,000 | 22,200,000 | 98,152,663 |
| | Health | 4,650,000 | 2,470,000 | 2,925,903 | 2,275,000 | 3,125,000 | 15,445,903 |
| | Nutrition | 2,274,800 | 7,150,000 | 1,999,548 | 1,675,000 | 2,832,500 | 15,931,848 |
| | WASH | 0 | 1,330,000 | 3,225,000 | 2,135,000 | 1,442,750 | 8,132,750 |
| | Protection | 0 | 0 | 0 | 545,000 | 11,195,250 | 11,740,250 |
| | Drought RR | 137,600 | 9,471,104 | 6,106,372 | 12,394,000 | 1,400,000 | 29,509,076 |
| | LRRD | 137,600 | 362,500 | 4,973,853 | 1,250,000 | 1,400,000 | 8,123,953 |
| | Total | 8,575,000 | 48,176,719 | 57,780,225 | 28,909,000 | 43,595,500 | 187,036,444 |

Source: own elaboration based on ECHO documentation.

The average duration of projects fluctuated between 9 and 12 months according to the year with a no cost extension of up to 1.5 month in average

23. The geographical and sectoral distribution of DG ECHO interventions in 2011 is very widespread.

2. Purposes and scope of the evaluation

2.1. Purposes

24. The main purposes of the evaluation are lesson learning and accountability in order to improve future performance. It is an evaluation of DG ECHO strategy and overall action rather than a detailed project level review.

25. The specific purposes are as per the Terms of Reference:

- To provide a situation analysis focusing on the current humanitarian situation.
- To provide a structured and comprehensive retrospective assessment of DG ECHO funded operations in order to establish their impact and whether they have achieved their objectives.
- To evaluate DG ECHO's response to the drought.
- To identify what, if any, other sectors of intervention could have been or should be addressed by ECHO.
- To provide an overview of transition strategies. More concretely to look at the current development / recovery donors' programmes and plans giving recommendations as to how to progress from emergency / transition to structural / development actions.
- To produce recommendations for defining ECHO's multi-sectoral strategy and for improving the effectiveness of future operations.
- To analyse DG ECHO's coordination with other actors and the role and involvement of the Ethiopian authorities in the provision of International humanitarian aid vis-à-vis its mandate in order to improve actions in the future.

2.2. The Scope

26. The scope of the evaluation covers the implementation of DG ECHO funded action since 2007 with a special focus on the last 3 years. Furthermore it focuses on the following components of the overall action: nutrition, health, food assistance, water and sanitation, short-term livelihood support, general support to refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs), protection and disaster risk reduction. This sectoral distribution will determine the structure of this report.

3. Methodology and limitations

3.1. Methodology

27. The evaluation, based on **Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance** in Humanitarian Action (ALNAP) guidance (Overseas Development Institute (ODI) 2006), includes the following steps:

- Collection and review of the documentation. The most significant were the official financing decisions and the FicheOps of all projects. The latter were made available before the field visit and completed during the visit in DG ECHO's office in Addis Ababa. DG ECHO guidelines, Global Plans and strategic documents or implementation guidelines were particularly useful.
- Briefing in EC HQ: this one-day visit permitted the team to clarify the Terms of Reference and led to the submission of the inception report.
- Further interviews with DG ECHO and DG Development and Cooperation (DEVCO) Desk Officers or staff.
- Interviews in Ethiopia: The number of partners (38 over the period covered by the evaluation) and of on-going or terminated projects (116) presented a challenge. Due to the strategic objective of this evaluation and the considerable diversity of the interventions, the evaluators opted to meet as many partners and visit as many projects as possible, at the expense of in depth review of any single intervention.



Table 6: Number of persons interviewed per type of agency and country

| Type of agency | Ethiopia | Nairobi | Brussels | TOTAL |
|------------------------|----------|---------|----------|-------|
| EC / ECHO | 8 | 4 | 6 | 18 |
| NGO or Red Cross | 89 | 1 | 3 | 93 |
| UN Agency | 36 | 4 | - | 40 |
| Government of Ethiopia | 25 | - | - | 25 |
| Others | 4 | | | 4 |
| TOTAL | 162 | 3 | 9 | 180 |

- On site visits to 23 projects from 17 partners including some terminated recently. The projects were in the regions of Amhara, Afar, Somali (Shinile, East Hararghe, Liben and Gode Zones), and Oromiya (Borena Zone).
- Twelve focus groups discussions (FGD) were held with a total of 171 beneficiaries, of whom 119 women (69.6%). The focus group discussions at Outpatient Treatment Centres were exclusively directed to women (mothers of malnourished children). Actual woman participation varied in other groups according to local culture and traditions.

- Key experts at DG ECHO RSO and implementing partners of regional projects were interviewed during a visit to Nairobi.
- A written questionnaire was submitted to all interviewees and an additional specific questionnaire to project implementers; 107 interlocutors completed the general questionnaire and 66 the project specific questionnaire. Interviews and analysis showed that some questions were not clearly understood. Nationals expressed a greater reluctance to express their value judgment on a funding agency than what is usually seen in other countries. While in oral interviews, they were critical of ECHO approval process, timeliness or adaptability, they often gave the highest score to the same written questions.

28. All interviews were semi-structured based on the key evaluation questions as reviewed in the inception note. Triangulation was widely used to validate the information.

29. An interactive debriefing workshop was organized for all current implementing partners on May 10, 2012. They were 36 participants. The draft of this final report was shared with interviewees for accuracy review and factual check. A more formal and therefore less interactive debriefing was also organized on May 11 with a few of the major stakeholders.²⁸

30. The team leader, Mr de Ville de Goyet, was primarily responsible to cover aspects of overall policy / strategy and the 3Cs (complementarity, coordination and coherence). He also covered the sectoral issues in health, nutrition and WASH as well as the response to the refugee crisis in 2011. Ms Hoogendoorn covered the issues of general food aid, emergency livelihood support and drought risk reduction including links with climate change. Mr Aberra Teklu and Mr Abera Koriche complemented the team with their expertise in food and livelihood issues, conducted the focus group discussions and carried out the analysis of the questionnaires.

3.2. Limitations

31. The implementing partners organized the focus groups and selected the initial pool of participants. This limitation was not critical given the additional filtering done by the interviewer and the large number of participants met.

32. Meeting with authorities at federal level has been limited and late as the GoE is highly centralized and particularly sensitive in matters dealing issues of crisis, emergency or even acute malnutrition. A technical interview with the Public Health Emergency Management Centre (PHEMC) was cancelled at the last minute. This limitation was partly offset by the excellent contact and interviews with the federal DRMFSS state Minister of the Ministry of Agriculture and zone or district (*woreda*) authorities.

33. Although priority was given to the most important partners (based on duration of partnership in Ethiopia, number of projects and total amount received from ECHO), the time available was not sufficient for a thorough visit and in-depth appraisal of any single project. Operational observations made to partners may not have been representative of the overall performance of the project.

²⁸ Participants included EU staff and, major Implementing Partners but not the GoE or DFID.

4. Key evaluation questions

34. This chapter is organized around five key evaluation questions adapted from the ToR, the briefing and the inception note. Also the recently published ALNAP Lessons Paper on Humanitarian Action in Drought-Related Emergencies was used to frame this evaluation.²⁹

35. In this report, the key evaluation questions addresses the issues of:

- a) Relevance, appropriateness and timeliness
- b) Coordination, coherence and complementarity (3Cs)
- c) Short term effectiveness
- d) Long-term impact including on Drought Risk Reduction
- e) Efficiency

36. Each section (for one question) will include the findings (from literature review, interviews with key stakeholders, direct observations and focus groups discussions during site visits, and analysis of the questionnaires), the conclusions and specific technical recommendations.

37. Broader strategic or cross cutting issues are discussed under the section on general conclusions and recommendations.

4.1. To what extent has DG ECHO assistance been relevant, appropriate and timely to the needs and priorities in Ethiopia?

38. Ensuring relevance, appropriateness and timeliness of an intervention is a difficult achievement but an absolute pre-requisite for effectiveness or impact. Actions that are not relevant or appropriate to the real priority needs of the beneficiaries cannot have a positive and appreciated impact.

39. DG ECHO mandate is to provide assistance to the most vulnerable. Was it so in Ethiopia? To this question, 87 out of the 98 respondents to the questionnaire replied affirmatively. This is an overwhelming support to DG ECHO action in Ethiopia. Only 11 believed that there were people in greater need. Shortcomings are not at *woreda* level but at household level: landless, handicapped, people living with HIV/AIDs, urban poor, ex-pastoralists, and women-headed smallholder farmers.

40. The analysis is based on the main types of hazards that are present in Ethiopia:

- The protracted food security crisis which regularly is exacerbated by drought spells; and
- The rapid response events in relation to (a) Displacement of population (Refugees) and (b) other shocks (e.g. AWD).

4.1.1. The response to the protracted food and nutrition emergency

41. As noted by the Emergency Nutrition Coordination Unit (ENCU) of the DRMFSS, “*Ethiopia is a diverse country where a significant proportion of the population live on or below the poverty line, where food insecurity is widespread and rates of acute malnutrition*”

²⁹ ALNAP (2011): Humanitarian Action in Drought-Related Emergencies, ALNAP Lessons Paper, October 2011.

are often at or above the international threshold that defines an emergency situation”.³⁰ In addition, a significant part of the population has limited access to basic services, health water, etc.

42. In such a country with a background of historically catastrophic food shortages, “needs” for humanitarian assistance abound. The latest Government endorsed HRD (Humanitarian Requirement Document 2012) is designating 117 districts (*woredas*) as hotspot # 1 and 169 as hotspots # 2. Every six months, a new ranking is issued with sets of *woredas* moving up and down the classification according to climatic conditions and the findings of the early warning system. This issue is particularly complex when communities are selected on the basis of their vulnerability to potentially forthcoming dry spells rather on the existence of an acute severe crisis.

43. Who is selecting among those hotspot *woredas* those eligible for DG ECHO support? The replies to the questionnaire are revealing in this regard: half of the respondents consider that the Implementing Partners have the most influence on the choice of the target beneficiaries.³¹

Table 7: “Who is the most influential in selecting the beneficiaries?”

| Most influential | Total of replies | Replies from GoE | Replies from UN |
|------------------------|------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| ECHO | 11 (11%) | 3 (23%) | 1 (4%) |
| Implementing Partner | 52 (52%) | 6 (46%) | 10 (43%) |
| Government of Ethiopia | 38 (38%) | 4 (31%) | 12 (53%) |
| TOTAL | 111 | 13 | 23 |

Source: Replies to the questionnaire

44. Analysis of the responses according to whether the respondent was an implementing partner or not did not show a different pattern in the opinions.

45. For the response to the **protracted food and nutrition emergency** in Ethiopia, the following main observations were shared by the partners and other stakeholders:

At general level

46. Over the period covered by the evaluation, DG ECHO funding was granted to two UN partners and between three and 12 NGO partners per year. It should be noted that DG ECHO contribution is small in relation to the total needs as estimated in the Government endorsed Humanitarian Requirement Document³² and total WFP/DRMFSS budgets. Amounts peaked in 2009 (€ 40 million) down to around € 20 million per year in 2010 and 2011. Food Aid through WFP represented a large part of DG ECHO portfolio (approximately 40%).

47. Which criteria do the implementing partners use to choose the site of their project and therefore the targeted beneficiaries? The hotspot classification (HRD) and a GAM rate over 12% (very close to the average rate countrywide of 9.7%³³) associated with a history of recent

³⁰ Emergency Nutrition Network 2011. Field Exchange Issue 40 February 2011. <http://fex.enonline.net/40/contents.aspx> (accessed 14 May 2012).

³¹ The evaluators' expectation was that the Government had the most influence. It has proven not to be the perception of the responders including those from the Government.

³² Several interlocutors including from DG ECHO consider that the HRD is generally underestimating the number of population in needs.

³³ Central Statistical Agency [Ethiopia] and ICF International (2012), *Ethiopia Demographic and Health Survey 2011*, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia and Calverton, Maryland, USA, March 2012.

occurrence of drought are the most usual. It is indeed a very common combination leaving considerable margin to implementing partners.

48. The partners usually conduct a needs assessment locally. It is a requirement of DG ECHO. However the findings are rarely compared to other areas potentially as vulnerable or to a time trend over the last few years. In one instance (Amhara), the zone health authorities believed that the rate of malnutrition had indeed decreased over the past three years. The evaluators (or the implementing partners) were not in position to corroborate or disprove this trend towards improvement prior to their intervention. The fact that the GAM rates can fluctuate significantly according to the season is further putting in question the reliability of this indicator and therefore the objectivity of the choice. In another part of the country (Somali Region), a *woreda* was targeted for expensive intensive support to the Outpatient Therapeutic Centres (OTC) while regularly repeated nutrition surveys had indicated that GAM and Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM) rates were below the national average.

49. As noted by Frankenberger (2012), “*Coverage is given more weight than intensity of programmes*”.³⁴ Dilution of support is happening at the level of the ECHO portfolio (projects in many different parts of the country) and at the level of the implementing partners which are under pressure to present large beneficiary numbers, among others through coverage of more areas³⁵.

Specific to the Drought Risk Reduction projects

50. As a translation of LRRD principles into practice, the first **DG ECHO Regional Drought Preparedness, Risk Reduction and Early Warning Decision for the Horn of Africa** (ECHO/-HF/BUD/2006/02000) started on 1 July 2006 with a funding of € 10 million for national and cross-border programmes targeting agro-pastoral and pastoral communities, with a maximum potential duration of 18 months.³⁶ From the onset, the aim has been to start a preparatory track for DG DEVCO development projects and to build strong linkages with operations of other donors. Since, there have been two more Regional Drought Risk Reduction decisions: ECHO/-HF/BUD/2008/01000 with a total of € 30 million (of which € 8.4 million for Ethiopia) for the period January 2008 – June 2009, and ECHO/-HF/BUD/2010/01000 with a total budget of € 20 million for the period July 2010 – December 2011 in South Ethiopia and Northern Kenya only.

51. In the mid-term review for Drought Risk Reduction Phase 1 (2007) it is highlighted that droughts are a different type of emergency: “*While DIPECHO interventions aim at preparing communities to deal with rapid onset and man-made disaster, drought preparedness faces a more complex problem as the situation is a ‘chronic emergency’ because of the protracted nature of the crisis and its continued demand for humanitarian aid.*”³⁷ The livelihood of pastoral communities depends on the two yearly rainy seasons that are marked by erratic patterns; recurrent droughts are a natural phenomenon. The productivity of pastoral systems is reduced as a result of increasing pressure on the lowland areas caused by socio-economic development in other parts of the countries and by an outright demographic explosion in nearly all countries of the Horn. Internal and cross-border conflicts often constrain herders for

³⁴ Evaluation of DG ECHO-financed Livelihood Interventions in Humanitarian Crises – Aide Memoire for Ethiopia Case Study.

³⁵ Reaching out to many beneficiaries also is a way of pushing down the costs per beneficiary, one of the criteria used by ECHO for appraisal of the project proposal.

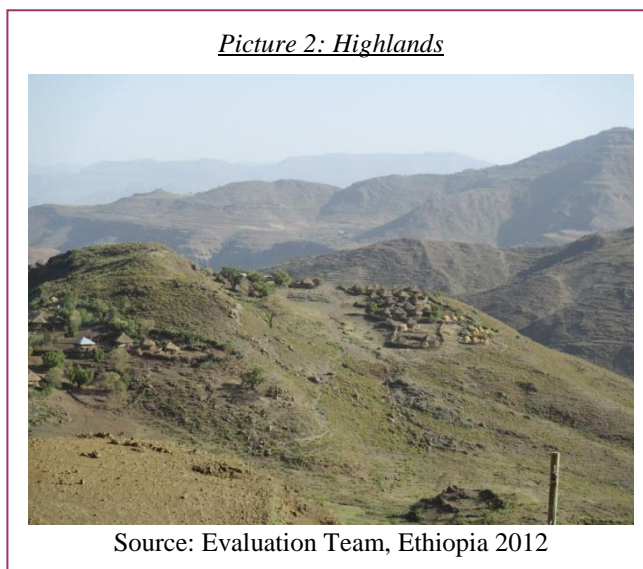
³⁶ In practice, the time available for implementation is much shorter.

³⁷ Schimann PM & J Philpott (2007), Mid-Term Evaluation of DG ECHO financed actions in the Greater Horn of Africa, AGEK Consultants, Kirchheim/Teck, August 2007.

accessing vast grazing areas, also because of lack of temporary water points in the dry seasons. Pastoralists generally have been neglected from Government's side, there has been limited economic investment and infrastructure is poor. For decades, pastoral communities in the Horn have been receiving humanitarian aid.

52. The first Drought Risk Reduction adopted the concept of **Drought Cycle Management (DCM)** where the interventions follow the different phases of the drought cycle (normal, alert, alarm, emergency, recovery). It is aimed to initiate sustainable development and reduce poverty through a community-based bottom-up approach. DCM attempts to reach a stronger resilience of rural livelihoods, among others through strengthening of value chains for marketable products. It identifies three major components: (1) preparing for the onset of a drought through a.o. improving access to water and grazing land and through strengthening of animal health care; (2) contingency planning for bridging the gap of lesser resources which in principle should involve line departments and communities; and (3) early warning to be informed on the onset of droughts.

53. An important context factor for the humanitarian responses to the protracted food and nutrition security emergency in Ethiopia is the large **Productive Safety Nets Programme (PSNP)** that started in 2005. The programme was set up by the Government to address chronic food insecurity among people in agrarian areas (mainly the highlands) with predictable food needs. Participants in public works programmes are provided with food and cash for a total of six to nine months per year, which enables them to improve their own livelihoods and thus become more resilient. In the past years, a start has been made to extend the social protection programme to pastoralist areas as well. However, as was shown in a recent study, extension of the PSNP to pastoralist areas requires a different programme design in line with the cultural practices of sharing within mutual support networks, the power of informal authorities in targeting decisions, and the specific gender context³⁸.



54. In times of crisis (transitory food insecurity), extra funding is made available for scaling up of support. First, this comes from the PSNP's Contingency Budget (20% of the budget), and, when that is exhausted, the **Risk Financing Mechanism**. The beauty of this mechanism is that in existing PSNP districts, if all works well, the 'typical' timeline for humanitarian response can be reduced to as little as two months from warning to response. This is earlier than what is normally achieved for regular humanitarian responses, primarily because of the secured funding base so that quick action is possible. In the course of 2011, the Ethiopian federal Government effectively triggered the Risk Financing Mechanism in August to address the transitory food needs till the harvest in November for approximately 9.6 million people

³⁸ Sabates-Wheeler R, J Lind & J Hoddinott (2011), Implementing social protection in pastoralist areas: How local distribution structures moderate PSNP outcomes in Ethiopia, IDS/IFPRI, Brighton/Washington DC, December 2011, http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1997339.

living in PSNP districts (6.5 million existing PSNP clients, 3.1 million people who normally do not need assistance).³⁹

55. The key findings in this portfolio evaluation on relevance and appropriateness of the Drought Risk Reduction programmes basically confirm what was already highlighted in previous ECHO commissioned evaluations undertaken in 2007 and 2009⁴⁰. The following overview brings together the main points:

Table 8: Relevance and appropriateness: Strengths and weaknesses

| Strengths | Weaknesses |
|--|--|
| Strategic level | |
| Strategy designed by ECHO for bridging between relief and development. Propagates harmonized solutions to restore sustainable extensive pastoral livestock husbandry. Focus on exchanges of best practices and lessons learned. | After three Drought Risk Reduction rounds, the piloting nature is somewhat lost as most IPs seem to be more geared to replication than innovation . Most IPs did not use a true participatory strategy, did not engage in coordination and did not draw from research institutions. |
| Extension of the ECHO mandate to incorporate Drought Preparedness (DP) is appropriate; will lead to a more durable impact of emergency aid. | Time frame is transferred from an emergency context, too short for the more complex DP projects. |
| ECHO able to finance innovative pilot projects with strong R&D approach seeking to demonstrate the validity of the approach. | Challenge of drought preparedness in the Horn is to support the pastoral production systems / value chains , for which other EC / donor development instruments are more suited. A related task is to better support economic diversification out of pastoralism through micro-finance projects. |
| The regional approach including options for cross-border interventions recognizes the mobility of pastoralists across international borders. | As national and lower-level policy settings in each country are different, tailor-made approaches are required to ensure that sufficient coordination with Government agencies takes place. |

³⁹ Hobson M & L Campbell (2012): 'How Ethiopia's Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP) is responding to the current humanitarian crisis in the Horn', *Humanitarian Exchange Magazine*, No. 53, March 2012, <http://www.odihpn.org/humanitarian-exchange-magazine/issue-53/how-ethiopias-productive-safety-net-programme-psnp-is-responding-to-the-current-humanitarian-crisis-in-the-horn>.

⁴⁰ Schimann PM & J Philpott (2007): *Mid-Term Evaluation of DG ECHO financed actions in the Greater Horn of Africa*, AGE Consultants, Kirchheim/Teck, August 2007; and Wilding J, J Swift & H Hartung (2009): *Mid Term Evaluation of DG ECHO's Regional Drought Decision in the Greater Horn Of Africa*, AGE Consultants, Kirchheim/Teck, March-May 2009.

| Strengths | Weaknesses |
|---|---|
| Operational level | |
| Activities often sub-contracted to local partners with good knowledge of local context. | However, the local partners often lacking in technical skills. Most projects not (sufficiently) linked to research institutions . |
| Early warning systems have a long history in Ethiopia, starting in 1987 as a mechanism to determine food aid needs. | Early warning used to be biased to (highland) agriculture; only recently indicators have been added to monitor rangelands, water availability and conditions of livestock. The various countries in the Horn all have their own early warning methodologies which reduces comparability of findings. |
| Community-based rangeland improvement is a useful activity that can easily be replicated and scaled up by the Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP). | Although destocking is a good coping mechanism during drought periods, ECHO projects can only cover a small portion of the needs. |
| Water projects based on traditional technologies (<i>'ela'</i>) but in the second and third round also other approaches (water harvesting, sub surface dams). Projects usually include training of Water Users' Associations. | Design and quality of water constructions not always good. Capacity not enough, in many areas still need for water tinkering during dry spells. |
| Support to veterinary pharmacies and Community Animal Health Workers (CAHWs) is useful to improve the delivery of animal health services including mass vaccination campaigns. FAO has provided effective coordination. | Although the CAHWs approach has been widely adopted, there still is a need to clarify the professional profile of the actors and their role in relation with the public services. |
| Attention to settling of conflicts over scarce pastures and water sources along the Kenya-Ethiopia border very appropriate. | Conflict resolution approach involving elders has been replicated to small extent only. |
| Pastoral Field Schools (PFS) are promising approach to increase the productivity of (agro-) pastoralists. | General education is a high priority for the development of the arid and semi-arid lands but scope of interventions needed is outside the drought preparedness portfolio. |

Specific to the nutrition response projects

56. Nutritional therapeutic interventions in Ethiopia are clearly codified by the Federal Ministry of Health (FMOH) in printed guidelines widely available to all partners.⁴¹ The interventions may include:

- **Blanket Supplementary Feeding** consisting of distribution of enriched ration to all pregnant or lactating women (PLW) and children less than 5 years regardless of their

⁴¹ Federal Ministry of Health, March 2006, Guidelines for the enhanced outreach strategy (EOS) for child survival interventions.

nutritional status. This intervention is limited to very severe situations (see next section) and has not been observed in the protracted crises.

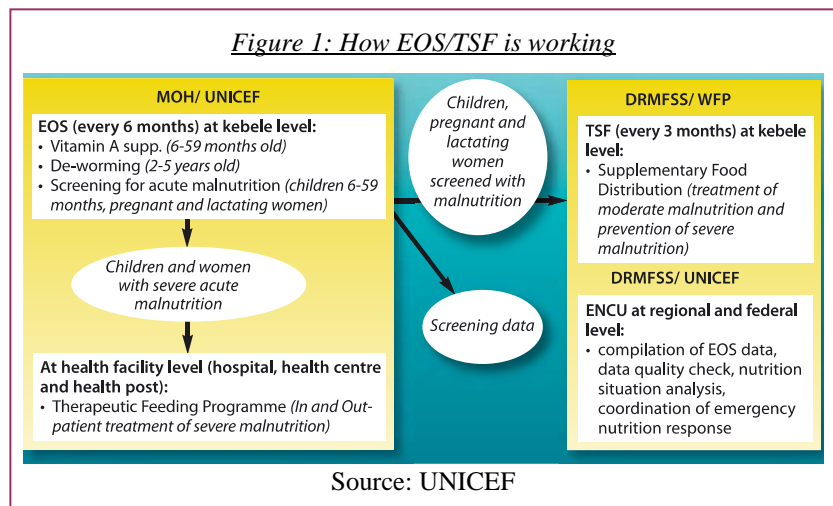
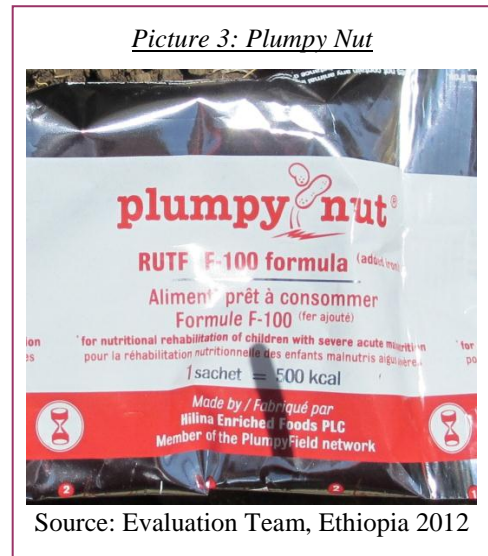
- Targeted Supplementary Feeding (TSF):** Supplementary food basket comprises two 3-monthly rations of 25 kg of Corn Soya Blend (CSB) and 3 litres of oil. According to WFP, the size of the ration has been set to compensate for intra-household sharing. The TSF has a fairly unique design for the TSF in that food distributions only take place every three months and there are no anthropometric measurements of children between distributions. The programme encountered a number of challenges including logistical problems in more inaccessible areas of the country, delayed communication of screening results and weak linkages with other programmes (Field Exchange Issue 40 February 2011). WFP is a major provider of the TSF ingredients (palm oil and CSB). DG ECHO funding of WFP TSF has been discontinued pending changes in the design of this intervention. DG ECHO support to NGOs is also reduced as this activity is regarded as well funded by other donors. Nevertheless, TSF is seen by many interlocutors as a cost effective measure to prevent acute malnutrition.

- Outpatient Therapeutic**

Program (OTP): Severely acute malnourished (SAM) who have appetite and no medical complications are treated as outpatient at the health centres, posts or extensions of the FMoH.⁴² In addition to medical treatment (see Figure 1), the children receive individual doses of ready to eat enriched formula (see Picture 7, a photo of Plumpy Nut, the ubiquitous ready to use therapeutic foods in Ethiopia). Most of DG ECHO nutrition funding is directed to this activity most likely to save lives.

- Cases of SAM with complications** are referred to the Stabilization Centre (SC) at the health centre. Few very severe cases have been observed in the facilities visited by the evaluators.

57. In Ethiopia, implementing partners may not design or set up their own nutritional programmes or centres but can only provide a supportive role to the outreach health teams or the established health facilities. Statistics of therapeutic care provided by the partners are therefore reflecting the output and outcome of the health services. Proposals and reporting



⁴² Children with Middle Upper Arm Circumference (MUAC) < 11 cm and/or bilateral oedema.

formats do not often permit to single out the added value of DG ECHO supported nutritional programmes (for instance improved quality of screening and care and /or increased coverage).

58. The projects visited by the evaluators differed greatly in terms of expertise and human resources. In one zone, it varied from a health worker for a large *woreda* to a full team of six (nurses, technicians, and registrar) to cover each weekly session of the OTP centres. Support offered by the partners ranged also from periodic training of and cooperation with the Health Extension Worker (HEW) to provision of additional staff and a vehicle per *woreda* to assuming full operational responsibility for the OTPs. In one case, the NGO mobile team was formally supervising the HEW on behalf of the FMoH. This reflects the quality of the relation with zonal authorities but also is a model that hardly can be replicated by the Government due to the resources that are required for such high level of inputs.

59. In the observed projects, nutrition education was mostly limited to a short presentation with some visual aids to mothers waiting for the distribution of the supplementary rations (see Picture 5). This may not be sufficient to change behaviour and traditional nutritional practices. No results of a Knowledge, Attitude and Practices (KAP) survey were available.

60. In summary, there is a need for differentiation of approaches in the nutrition projects: (a) the emergency interventions in acute crisis situations (GAM > 15%, presence of “aggravating factors”), (b) development-like interventions in sites where malnutrition is around the national average. Although DG ECHO requested some partners to review the initial design of their nutrition interventions considered to be too predominantly developmental in nature, a grey line remains between providing lifesaving humanitarian emergency response and building the capacity of the FMoH to address historically high levels of acute malnutrition in vulnerable areas.

Specific to other sectors

61. DG ECHO encouraged partners to include **WASH activities** in their drought related nutritional interventions. This approach is rightly motivated by the importance of access to proper water quality and sanitation for the survival of the malnourished children.

62. The evaluators observed a considerable diversity in the activities included under this sector when associated with nutrition interventions. In some projects, the WASH activities consisted of simple sanitation and hygiene lectures to mothers in the OTP centres accompanied occasionally with distribution of chlorine based water purification tablets (Watertab). In others, it included the cleaning and disinfection

Picture 4: Nutritional education



Source: Evaluation Team, Ethiopia 2012

Picture 5: Mother with child, OTP



Source: Evaluation Team, Ethiopia 2012

of cisterns, rehabilitation of shallow wells or collective water points (for human and / or livestock use). In a few instances, new water facilities were built bringing a significant benefit to the community and in particular to the women responsible of transporting the water over long distance (see Picture 6).

63. DG ECHO rationale to combine nutritional and WASH interventions is to bring an added value to the treatment malnourished children or mothers. However, the WASH activities rarely targeted those screened for TSF or outpatient care or even the communities or villages where most cases were proceeding from. In one partner's project entitled "integrated approach", the two components worked almost completely independently. Community WASH workers did not coordinate with their nutritional counterparts during their home visits. The implementing partners selected different communities in the *woreda* for water improvements regardless of their nutritional status, losing the hope for added value from synergy within the same project.

64. DG ECHO focused mostly on water and sanitation. Construction of latrines is limited to OTP and health facilities. Nevertheless, partners are complementing ECHO funding with other sources and often offer comprehensive support.

65. Malnourished children rarely die from malnutrition. The direct cause of mortality is often infection, particularly measles. Adding a **primary health care and public health** dimension to nutritional interventions is particularly relevant. This was exceptionally the case. Only in one instance in Gode, the evaluators could observe a project combining nutrition and health interventions. Those health interventions consisted on mobile primary health care clinic, immunizations and health/nutrition education. WASH was not included as another partner provided this assistance with a different albeit occasionally overlapping geographical scope. Focus groups discussions stressed the importance for the community of a joint approach aiming to provide a more complete package of services. The DG ECHO Head of Office considered that DG ECHO funding was not necessary as OFDA was focusing on health.

66. Timeliness of the response is part of the relevance and appropriateness. In protracted food security crisis, DG ECHO funding process was almost unanimously regarded as significantly slower and more cumbersome than others (HRF, OFDA). As one partner less dependent on ECHO funding stated: "*we submitted emergency nutrition proposal last year in August 2011 at the climax stage of Horn of Africa drought to save lives of children and mothers at risk and received approval in January 2012. Thus, from this I can say ECHO is no longer important for supporting emergency/lifesaving project*".

67. From DG ECHO's perspective, the poor quality of some proposals explained the efforts and delays required for their improvement to the high standards of DG ECHO. Admittedly, projects aiming to increase the resiliency of population and addressing the seasonal fluctuations of the rate of malnutrition do not require the same rapid and expedited response as the rapid response in the aftermath of a tsunami or earthquake.

Picture 6: Woman fetching water



Source: Evaluation Team, Ethiopia 2012

68. Nevertheless, it remains a general perception that DG ECHO approval and disbursement process has lost its leading edge over time. The DEC RTE in January 2012 noted that “ECHO in particular was mentioned as a slow and bureaucratic donor”.⁴³ DG ECHO new electronic system (APPEL) often was spontaneously cited as contributing to delays due to its lack of flexibility and poor user-friendliness.

4.1.2. The response to the refugee crisis in 2011

69. The main observations in relation to the rapid **response to the refugee crisis in 2011** are as follows:

At general level

70. DG ECHO until mid-2011 had no project targeting specifically refugees. A multi-year support to the International Migration Organization (IOM) was primarily addressing the needs of the IDPs in the region of Gambella, although refugees are occasionally mentioned in the project document. This project has not been visited. In Liben Zone (Dollo Ado) of the Somali region, DG ECHO had no presence in early 2011. The situation was regarded as sufficiently stable and chronic, therefore not requiring an emergency response.

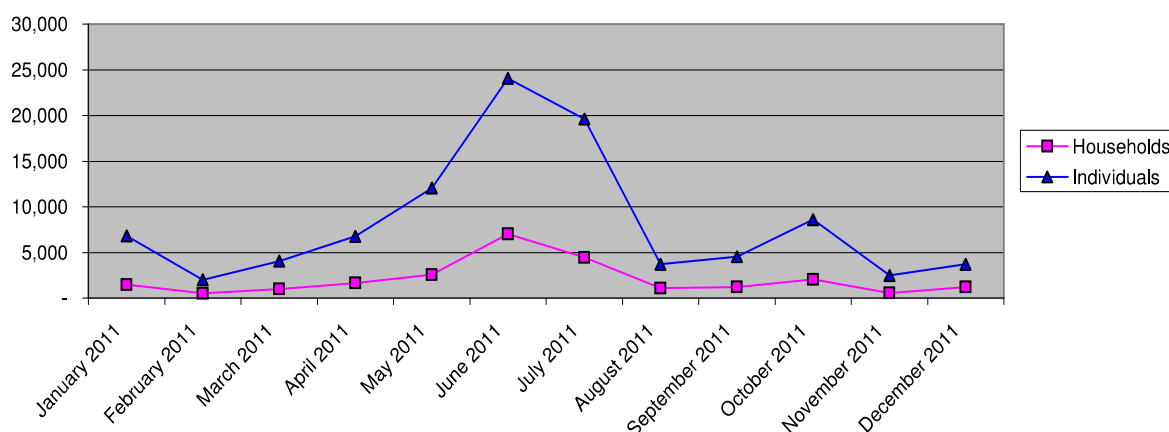
71. The situation changed for the worse in the first semester of 2011. The sharp deterioration of food security combined with increasing violence conditions in Somalia resulted in the inflow of large number of refugees, creating a very severe humanitarian crisis during the second trimester of 2011. Early, MSF and other partners had reported high mortality from SAM and attempted to raise the attention of the donors without substantive response from the humanitarian community or support from the responsible coordinating agencies. As noted by the authors of an earlier evaluation: *“there appears to be a substantial reality gap between the actual conditions in the camps as described to us by many of the DEC agencies, and the picture painted by ARRA (the government body concerned) and UNHCR”*⁴⁴.

72. It was not until the visit of the High Commissioner for Refugees in July 2011 that the emergency was publically recognized both by UNHCR and ARRA and delays in the response admitted: *“All of us could see this escalation coming from a long way away. Nonetheless, we, the international community, were slow to react to signs that things were starting to deteriorate”*.⁴⁵ The first ECHO visit to the refugee camps around Dollo Ado took place only in August 2011. From there, according to partners, the process accelerated and contracts were signed in September. Funding was made retroactive from start of July 2011, before “we even knew funding was available” as one interlocutor noted. Retroactivity can be a convenient feature but is no substitute for rapid approval for smaller partners without the necessary cash flow. Only those agencies with significant budget from diversified sources are able to avail themselves of this retroactive clause.

⁴³ Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC 2012): [East Africa Crisis Appeal - Ethiopia Real-Time Evaluation Report January 2012](#).

⁴⁴ DEC East Africa Crisis Real Time Evaluation RTE: Ethiopia January 2012.

⁴⁵ UNHCR High Commissioner Guterres at the opening of the annual Executive Committee meeting. October 2011.

Table 9: Evolving refugee crisis⁴⁶

Source: UNHCR 2011 (see footnote 46)

73. The delay in DG ECHO approving projects from reliable long-time partners does not compare well with OFDA pre-approved grants to two key partners for their immediate response. The lack of special mechanism in DG ECHO has damaged its reputation as a first responder.

74. At the time of the visit (May 2012), a total of 150,000 refugees were distributed in five camps, the last one in Bur Amino nearing its full capacity leading to plans for the establishment of a sixth one. See Table 10:

Table 10: Refugee camps, capacity

| Camp | Date of creation | Current capacity | Comments |
|------------|------------------|------------------|---------------------|
| Bokolmanyo | Feb 2009 | 38,996 | Full Capacity |
| Melkadida | Feb 2010 | 40,351 | Full Capacity |
| Kobe | June 2011 | 26,458 | Full Capacity |
| Hilaweyn | Aug 2011 | 26,016 | Full Capacity |
| Bur Amino | Nov 2011 | 15,723 | Cap. approx. 25,000 |

Source: UNHCR 2011 (see footnote 46)

Demographic breakdown shows a relative absence of male of working age.⁴⁷ The most common explanation is that those able bodied men are attending the livestock and crops in their place of origin.

Specifics to the food and livelihood security in the camps

75. The nutritional and health situation remained alarmingly critical for months. Needs assessment carried jointly by partners reportedly showed figures of GAM rates far exceeding the emergency levels (up to 50%). At the time of the evaluation (April 2012), it has considerably improved and stabilized with the exception of the latest camp of Bur Amino still receiving new arrivals.

⁴⁶ Source: UNHCR statistics as of December 2011.

⁴⁷ As of April 2012, 17,090 male versus 28,662 female of age 18-59 years (Source UNHCR statistics as of March 2012).

76. DG ECHO contributed to the **General food distribution** by WFP through an additional and specific emergency project. This contribution, in addition to the countrywide DG ECHO contribution to WFP, was most appropriate to save lives and to provide a basic food ration to all refugees fully dependent on the external assistance. The design of WFP monthly food basket (based on wheat grain) was however poorly adapted to the local diet of the refugees (rice or pasta). The absence of a cash / voucher component and the long distances between the unique distribution site and the shelters resulted in food brought by WFP at an extraordinary expense are sold at a fraction of the cost to provide for milling, transportation and purchase of other essentials.⁴⁸

77. The camps of up to 40,000 inhabitants each established in semi-arid areas offered limited opportunity for livelihood interventions and in particular income generation activities.

Specific to the nutrition response projects

78. At the time of the evaluation, the situation had returned to the “normal” in older camps and most of ECHO funded nutritional emergency projects were officially terminated (6 months duration in general). Assessing their relevance was based on interviews and file reviews rather than direct observation of the emergency response under crisis situation (real time evaluation).

79. Needs assessments were carried out twice a year with the participation of most partners. If preliminary data circulated widely, several months’ delays are occurring before any written documentation is officially released by ARRA.⁴⁹ Most of recent data quoted in this report could not be verified independently or documented.

80. Nutritional interventions included the entire set of activities from blanket supplementary feeding to stabilization centres (see paragraph 52). Initially, partners funded by DG ECHO selected which activities they wished to undertake and decided where to carry them out. Progressively, partners have seen their responsibilities reshuffled by ARRA in agreement with UNHCR. In the last trimester of 2011, a decision was made to reassign full responsibility (and accountability) for nutrition to one single agency in each camp. As a result, one of ECHO traditional partners lost most of its nutritional activities keeping only the care of SAM with complications (stabilization centre) while locally new actors took over. The evaluators consider this decision rationale in principle and well within the normal prerogatives of a coordinating agency.

Picture 7: Food aid by WFP



Source: Evaluation Team, Ethiopia 2012

⁴⁸ An additional 20% was added to the distribution to cover those costs. It is no substitute to a cash or voucher approach.

⁴⁹ The Emergency Nutrition Coordination Unit (ENCUC) from DRMFS has no jurisdiction or authority in nutritional matters related to refugees and returnees. Similarly ARRA authority and interest are limited to this constituency. Partners are not allowed to include host communities in their nutritional assessments or surveys or even to use their funds earmarked for refugees to screen for malnutrition outside the camps.

81. All visits and interviews in Liben Zone suggest that ECHO funded nutritional activities were highly relevant and appropriate to the survival and needs of the refugees. The comparative need for and potential relevance of DG ECHO funded projects in other regions (for instance, Gambella or Tigray) was not evaluated.

Specific to other sectors

82. Other DG ECHO funded humanitarian interventions in refugee camps included provision of health care, WASH, shelters, protection and overall coordination.

83. Medical interventions, mostly funded through MSF, were relevant and appropriate considering the scarcity of health services even before the establishment of the camps. Of particular credit to DG ECHO and the partners is ensuring the provision for access to those services for the host population.

84. The negotiation of this medical care project has been unnecessarily time consuming considering the emergency conditions. Admittedly quality and reliability of the data (for instance GAM rates quoted by the partner as over 80%) were questionable and costs per beneficiaries were high due to MSF heavy reliance on expatriate staff. However, it is doubtful that the lengthy iterative negotiation leading to three reformulations of the proposal has led to substantive changes in the actual response in view of

the access of the partner to other significant and more flexible sources of funding. The most likely impact is in the selection of expenditures to be submitted for retroactive reimbursement by DG ECHO rather than in added value for beneficiaries.

85. Access to minimum amount of safe water was a formidable challenge for the host population before the crisis. Tripling the population compounded the problem. DG ECHO supported **WASH sector** was addressing a most critical need of the refugees settled in locations inconveniently located far from the sources of water.

86. Water trucking, an activity rightly considered as prohibitively expensive by DG ECHO, is normally not funded. DG ECHO showed flexibility by recognizing that there was no alternative under the circumstances. Very early, DG ECHO focused on supporting more sustainable alternatives such as the construction of a modern treatment and distribution system of water from a perennial river. Interlocutors and partners appreciated particularly the ability of DG ECHO to include in its support the host communities (see photo of water point, Picture 8).

87. Missing in the initial proposals submitted to donors supporting this water engineering work, DG ECHO included, was a clear provision and plan for maintenance and repair of the complex and sophisticated water system required to serve close to 50,000 residents over a

Picture 8: Water point for host community awaiting for completion of the system



Source: Evaluation Team, Ethiopia 2012

Picture 9: Construction of shelters



Source: Evaluation Team, Ethiopia 2012

large area. The limited storage capacity in the main camps (5 litres / person in Bokolmanyo for instance) makes the population highly vulnerable to any interruption of services (see Picture 10).

88. Shelters are rightly included in the portfolio of DG ECHO funded projects. Two successive steps were considered: the provision of tents as an immediate solution and the design and construction of transitional (more durable) shelters. These approaches are common in most population displacements and are addressing the needs of the population, as the international community perceives them.

89. Experts agree that tents are expensive (above 500 Euros / family) and short lived (5 to 10 months according to type and quality). Pastoralists especially in Somalia attach no particular importance to housing and accommodation. One can only speculate whether a consultative process would not have led to alternative solutions (including substitution of tents by a mix of plastic sheeting and cash or vouchers) more appreciated by the beneficiaries. Apparently, the issue has never been raised.

90. The two DG ECHO funded partners (NRC and DRC) each designed a model of transitional shelters with local (Ethiopian) material (see Picture 12 and Picture 11). A community-based process (through associations, cooperatives and elderly representatives) selected the NRC model (comparatively more expensive). Not much debate was reportedly taking place as again shape or size of shelters is not particularly essential for this population. The projected life of the shelter is 5 years.

91. In new refugee settings, **protection** is a key issue. This evaluation could only appraise retroactively the situation at the border with Somali. Other camps and sites have not been visited. DG ECHO supported UNHCR protection and registration processes at the entry point. New refugees are first received and registered by ARRA at its reception centre where food (hot meal), health and nutrition screening and care are provided by DG ECHO funded partners. UNHCR protection officers monitored the entire process and in particular the interviews qualifying or disqualifying the person as

Picture 10: Water reserve capacity 5l/person



Source: Evaluation Team, Ethiopia 2012

Picture 12: Model house DRC



Source: Evaluation Team, Ethiopia 2012

Picture 11: Model house NRC



Source: Evaluation Team, Ethiopia 2012

refugee of Somali origin. In a second step, bona fide refugees are then formally registered again by UNHCR at its transit centre where they stay until accommodation is ready in the newest camp (currently Bur Amino). Food, health and nutrition care, and psychosocial assistance are provided with DG ECHO support. In the peak of the influx, duration of the transit stay exceeded two weeks.

92. The registration of refugees is a complex process well-tuned up over the years. It includes photo taking and finger printing of all family members (see Picture 13 and Picture 14). The incoming flow in mid-2011 created a need for massive surge response for the registration by UNHCR. DG ECHO contribution was therefore appropriate and relevant. At the time of the visit, several months after the completion of the emergency project, the level of activity in both the reception centre (ARRA) and the Transit Centre (UNHCR) was low.

93. If the process of registration of Somali refugees on Ethiopian territory appeared effective, there was no link and least of all a sharable database between the settlements for IDPS on the Somalia side and those in Ethiopia. This is a matter in need of further progress.

94. DG ECHO supported the **coordination and management** of the humanitarian assistance to refugees, including the planned set up of an Internet facility for all partners in Bokolmanyu. The lack of success of this joint service initiative is symptomatic of the difficulties met in developing systems that benefit all partners. It is another issue to be addressed by UNHCR with DG ECHO support. The distinction between management and coordination was rather subtle at the time of visit: ARRA, the national agency with oversight authority on all activities and partners (UNHCR included), was operationally responsible for “camp management”, an activity funded and therefore supervised by UNHCR. The latter assumed responsibility for coordination of the overall assistance. Both agencies equally chaired all task forces and coordination meeting. The delicate and rather ambiguous balance appeared to work.

Picture 13: Picture taking, Dollo Ado



Source: Evaluation Team, Ethiopia 2012

Picture 14: Finger printing, Dollo Ado



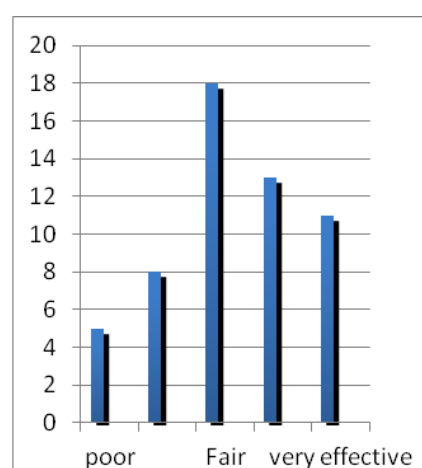
Source: Evaluation Team, Ethiopia 2012

4.1.3. Other sudden onset crisis

95. In the period that is covered by this portfolio evaluation (2007-2011), there has been one **rapid response shock in the health sector**. In 2009, an epidemic of Acute Watery Diarrhoea (AWD)⁵⁰ affected the country and in particular the capital. The need for external assistance was rapidly and clearly identified by the by the GoE. The Regional Bureau of Health of the capital region requested support from MSF/Belgium. The funding from DG ECHO directed to both MSF and UNICEF was rapid, relevant and appropriate. It was the DG ECHO intervention most often cited as a success.

96. The design of the AWD project is particularly interesting for its built-in provision for capacity building of the health authorities to face future occurrence of the outbreak.

Figure 2: Quality of ECHO coordination with EU



Source: own elaboration based on replies to questionnaire.

4.2. To what extent DG ECHO strategy and action is coordinated, complementary and coherent (3Cs)?

97. This section is covering ALNAP/OECD criteria of Connectedness and Coherence, DG ECHO concept of LRRD and the 3Cs (Coordination, complementarity and coherence) from the Maastricht Treaty. It will reply to the question at a global level (humanitarian community), European level (within EU and EC) and national level (cooperation and contribution with and from the Government of Ethiopia).

98. Several sections of the questionnaire to be completed by the interlocutors dealt directly with the issue of 3 Cs:

- 89% believed that the ECHO target groups are either not reached by long term development instruments or the coverage is insufficient:

Table 11: Targeting of vulnerable groups by ECHO / by long term development projects

| Are the vulnerable groups targeted by ECHO also covered by long term development projects? | |
|--|------------------|
| No | 36 (41%) |
| Yes but coverage is insufficient | 42 (48%) |
| Yes and coverage is sufficient | 10 (11%) |
| TOTAL replying to this question | 88 (100%) |

Source: own elaboration based on replies to questionnaire

- Only 55 interlocutors expressed some opinion on the coordination between humanitarian and development instruments in EU: The results are mostly neutral with a clear predominance on the positive side (see Figure 2).

⁵⁰ AWD is normally caused by Cholera. The GoE concerned about public perception expressly requested the change of terminology. A few other countries especially in Asia are adopting the same practice. Cases of “AWD” are generally not declared to WHO as required under the International Health Regulations.

4.2.1. International level with other actors

99. The USA is the largest and most influential humanitarian donor in Ethiopia. When food assistance is included, it far exceeds in contribution the other two main actors (DFID and EC). The approach adopted by the US **Foreign Disaster Assistance Office (OFDA)** has evolved over the years. The features of OFDA 3-prong approach are worth mentioning:

- A Rapid Response Fund (US\$20 million since 2005) with advance transfer of funds to two NGOs heading each a consortium of partners, respectively on nutrition and WASH. As one of the leading agencies said “we have 4.8 USD million in bank!”
- A resiliency programming through a limited number of partners with projects of up to three years duration⁵¹.
- A Disaster Risk Management (DRM) capacity building directed in part to the GoE.

100. In addition, a *Crisis Modifier* provides direct funding to USAID/Ethiopia to protect development gains during times of shock. Similarly *Risk Financing* provides food aid assistance for PSNP beneficiaries during emergencies. Small grants allow partners to provide a quick response in the event of a small / localized issue that would otherwise set back the larger development activities. Activities are generally no longer than a few months.

101. A promising development is the reinforced cooperation on food security between the EC Delegation and the US Embassy in Ethiopia, where there are opportunities to incorporate coordination on relief, nutrition, water and sanitation, etc.

102. The **Humanitarian Response Fund (HRF)** managed by UN OCHA was established in 2006 to address gaps in critical, life-saving emergency response. Contributions to the HRF has been made by various donors including DfID, Denmark, Netherlands, Norway, Ireland, Italy, Sweden, Spain and Switzerland.⁵² Through its cooperative decision-making process, the HRF has allocated more than US\$131 million in emergency assistance since its inception. Most interlocutors praised the flexibility and speed of this mechanism that is credited to play a significant coordinating role. OFDA and DG ECHO are not contributing.

103. There are also key development activities related to drought risk reduction in Ethiopia lowlands. They comprise the USAID Pastoral Livestock Initiative (PLI I and PLI II) that stretched from 2005 to 2012; the 15-year World Bank and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) funded Pastoral Community Development Programme (PCDP) that started in 2003 and will be implemented in three phases; the new USAID PRIME programme on Pastoralists Areas Resilience Improvement and Market Expansion 2012-2016; and the new EU SHARE initiative Supporting Horn of Africa Resilience (see Paragraph 105).

104. A number of coordinating mechanisms and forums have been established for coordination among all those actors and initiatives. It is including the Humanitarian Country Team and Clusters (sector) under UN leadership. The most influential, however, are the many inter-sectoral and sectoral task forces headed by the DRMFSS of the GoE. There is general consensus that DG ECHO is not sufficiently represented and influential in these forums.⁵³

105. One to one coordination between DG ECHO and the main donors is also regarded as too sporadic. The factor mentioned the most frequently is the low level of staffing in DG ECHO's office compared to OFDA and HRF. The issue is compound by the time consuming management of a larger number of relatively short-term projects and partners. Undoubtedly, it is difficult to determine which of the many meetings will turn to be of critical relevance and importance to DG ECHO, making compulsory to attend most of them, a full time task for a senior official.

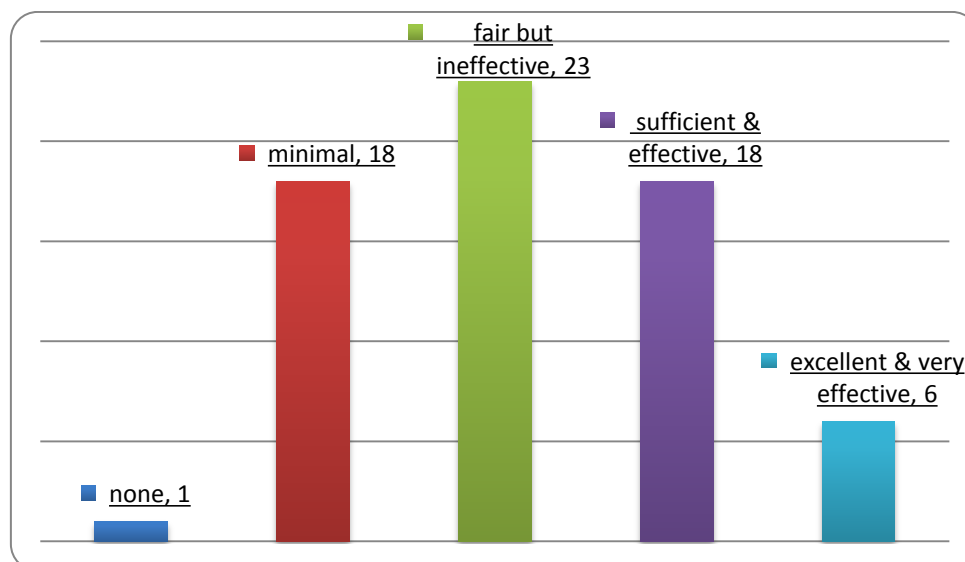
⁵¹ Eight NGOs and five UN agencies, most of those also are among the 38 partners of DG ECHO.

⁵² OCHA 2012, <http://ochaonline.un.org/ethiopia/HRFinBrief/tabid/6617/language/en-US/Default.aspx>.

⁵³ Although the implementing partners should attend task force meetings etc., this is not always happening.

106. This shortcoming is confirmed by the results of the questionnaire survey: 62% of the respondents (41 out of 66) believed that the dialogue between ECHO and non-EU actors is either minimal or insufficient to lead to effective coordination (see Figure 3). Only six interlocutors gave ECHO the top rating.

Figure 3: Effective coordination due to dialogue between ECHO and non-EU actors



Source: Replies to the questionnaire

4.2.2. Within the EU (with Member States / other EC instruments)

107. By nature, DG ECHO humanitarian interventions in protracted emergencies cannot address the root causes of the crisis: poverty, underdevelopment, and unbalance between population size and land without mentioning the underlying climatic changes. For instance, the **Drought Risk Reduction projects** primarily concentrate on livestock management, cropping and the water sector; other sectors like public health (including nutrition) and education are left to specialized development institutions. Development instruments of the EC and the Member States should take the relay to ensure sustainable impact. This is in line with the EU policy on supporting disaster risk reduction in developing countries: *“Implementing Hyogo (... the international Framework of Action that also the EU has signed up to...) also includes support for better integration of DRR⁵⁴ into: (a) development and humanitarian policies and planning, (b) crisis response where disaster response and recovery are concerned, and (c) climate change adaptation strategies.”*⁵⁵

108. Within the EU delegation, the exchange of information (proposals, plans and reports) between DG ECHO and development sectors (rural development, food security, etc.) is continuous and excellent. In Ethiopia, the implementation of the Lisbon Treaty that prescribes full coordination between EU Member States for international assistance is taking off very well for development assistance and also is extending to the humanitarian sector (EU

⁵⁴ DRR in this context refers to overall Disaster Risk Reduction.

⁵⁵ EC (2009): EU Strategy for Supporting Disaster Risk Reduction in Developing Countries, Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament, Brussels, COM(2009) 84, http://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/policies/dipecho/EU_Strategy_supporting_DRR_2009_en.pdf.

Humanitarian Breakfast, joint EU ambassadors visit to Southern Ethiopia in August 2011, etc.). Joint efforts are needed e.g. to discuss the humanitarian situation and caseloads.

109. In an extent infrequently seen in other countries, the DG ECHO Head of Office is closely integrated within the delegation. Drought risk reduction is a shared priority. This did not materialize into complementary action. EU development funds are pre-programmed jointly with the GoE and earmarked years in advance.

110. The issue is not proper to EU but is shared by most donors including USAID. What is perceived lacking is a transition instrument sufficiently flexible to bridge the gap and a negotiated process whereby target groups are jointly identified. As stated by a donor official: “*Humanitarian partners are targeting the most vulnerable while development agencies are targeting the most viable*”.

111. The recent launching of the EU initiative for Supporting Horn of Africa Resilience (SHARE) is offering encouraging signs. The SHARE initiative is specifically designed to improve disaster preparedness and better link humanitarian aid and development cooperation.⁵⁶ DG ECHO in Ethiopia had a significant input into the planning of the proposed allocation of these funds to ensure better complementarity and coherence in Ethiopia.⁵⁷

4.2.3. Within ECHO and its partners

112. In most countries, DG ECHO has taken the initiative to organize regular coordination meetings among partners and stakeholders. Those workshops permit to define a common terminology and a shared approach towards preparedness and disaster risk reduction. They are highly appreciated by the participants. In Ethiopia, there is no such regular opportunity for open discussion and sharing of experience among partners. One factor is the environment in Ethiopia with a Government not particularly supportive of research and innovation in the humanitarian field as was already noted in the evaluation of livelihood commissioned by ECHO.⁵⁸

113. At regional level, the Drought Risk Reduction programme managed by the Regional Support Office (RSO) is organizing periodic meetings of partners from the participating countries. This was often mentioned as an appreciated opportunity to exchange and compare experiences, an opportunity not available at national level. The Regional Learning & Advocacy Programme for Vulnerable Dryland Communities (REGLAP) based in Nairobi is a DG ECHO funded mechanism for coordination and lessons learned within the Drought Risk Reduction programme. REGLAP has published some interesting bulletins with sets of good practice examples⁵⁹. As was noted in Southern Africa (DIPECHO), similar initiatives led by the partners themselves are improving coordination but they also blur the difference between critically seeking real lessons (that is, good practices that are peer reviewed) and promoting one's own projects.

⁵⁶ The first phase (2012-2013), funded with more than € 250 million will improve the resilience of communities and give better access to safe water and nutrition in the drought-affected areas of Somalia, Ethiopia, Kenya, and Djibouti. Running between 2014 and 2020, the second phase will cover the larger region of the Greater Horn of Africa.

⁵⁷ DG ECHO contributed to the inclusion of FAO in the process of planning and consultation for EDF 11th cycle.

⁵⁸ Evaluation and review of DG ECHO financed livelihood interventions in humanitarian crises – FINAL REPORT (5 March 2012) p 13 “*ECHO and its partners in Ethiopia have been less engaged in overt advocacy or operational research because a strong central government discourages advocacy efforts and exercises a tight control on research carried out by NGOs*”.

⁵⁹ REGLAP (2011): Disaster Risk Reduction in the drylands of the Horn of Africa: Good Practice Examples from the ECHO Drought Cycle Management Partners, Nairobi, June & December 2011.

114. While obviously drought related problems affect all dryland areas in the Horn of Africa in a more or less similar way, the truth is that national settings are very different. A regional dimension supposes very close cooperation with a clear distribution of responsibilities and mutual trust between the regional level and the country office. In this regard, there is room for improvement as some regional initiatives were not appropriately supported at country level and at least one partner in Ethiopia claimed to negotiate directly with the RSO without consultation with the country office. Considering the size and complexity of Ethiopia and its centralized oversight of external assistance, there is a need to avail of sufficient technical capacity at ECHO Ethiopia so that it is well equipped to function as the sole front office for the partner agencies.

4.2.4. With GoE (national, zone and *woreda*)

115. As noted in the introduction, the GoE is tightly coordinating, cautiously approving and closely monitoring all externally funded projects. A detailed Memorandum of Understanding must be signed between regional / *woredas* authorities and each partner before initiating the activities of a new or renewed project. Most partners are consulting with local authorities prior to submitting their letter of intent to DG ECHO. All subsequent changes resulting from DG ECHO review of the proposal are negotiated in parallel track with Government authorities. Once approved, all partners are required to report periodically and subject to yearly external financial audit and technical evaluation. Nutritional surveys and assessment are subject to prior approval from the Emergency Nutrition Coordination Unit (ENCU).

116. The Government's DRMFSS, which has offices at all administrative levels, is directly managing the main **Food Aid programmes**. Although DG ECHO's office has no direct contact with DRMFSS, it contributes to the DRMFSS managed relief food distribution machinery through its contribution to WFP. The exception is in Somali Region where WFP through the Hubs & Spokes system is directly implementing and distributing to end beneficiaries.⁶⁰

117. In the **drought risk reduction projects**, collaboration with zone and *woreda* level GoE line departments has been an integral feature. Sustainability can only be ensured when there is sufficient commitment from public service agencies and *woreda* level technicians to take over the supervision and coordination. However, GoE budgets for the extensive less densely populated lowland areas are rather limited, and vary according to when major donor-funded pastoral support programmes⁶¹ are phased in and out. Contrary to OFDA and some other donors, ECHO is not providing direct support to the authorities.

118. The issue of how best to link with GoE structures is particularly at stake for the early warning activities. It will determine to what extent the local information generated through ECHO funded projects is channelled from *woreda* to zone to region to federal level and how it is used for preparation of the Humanitarian Requirements Document. The quality of the link may also influence how livestock marketing information (volumes, prices, and tendencies) will reach out to pastoralists, by mass media and other channels that reach out to the communities.

119. The findings from the field visits indicate that it very much depends on the personal relations between NGO staff and *woreda* officials how much linking takes place. In general, interviews with zone and *woredas* officials as well as partners demonstrate an excellent level

⁶⁰ The contract with WFP stipulated that the conflict-affected areas in Somali Region are excluded from ECHO funding.

⁶¹ The main development programmes in the lowlands of Ethiopia.

of cooperation at local level. Most zone health / nutrition bureaus expressed spontaneously satisfaction with DG ECHO partners. In spite of this positive relationship, delays for approval of the MoU may take several months.

120. At federal level, the findings are more contrasted:

- On one side, there is little working relationship, technical dialogue and least of all consultation between DG ECHO's office in Addis Ababa and DRMFS or ARRA. The reason is unclear but the operational consequences are detrimental. Partners expressed concern that due to this lack of communication at programme level (as opposed to political level, a responsibility assumed by the EU Delegation), ECHO country staff is unable to assist in speeding the process, solving bureaucratic delays in importing supplies, negotiating for permits for telecom equipment or tax exemption issues.⁶²
- On the positive side, DG ECHO has an effective action and presence within DRMFS with the assignment of a senior advisor. For one year, this national expert funded through the UN International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR) is closely collaborating with GoE counterparts.⁶³ His role is to assist Ethiopia to formulate a comprehensive policy on disaster risk reduction. The draft policy is pending formal approval. Another task is the development of database of disaster losses (Desiventar). However, the contact between this UNISDR person and DG ECHO's office was under-developed and the added value was not exploited.
- FAO, another regionally funded partner (but also implementing projects funded by DG ECHO decisions specific for Ethiopia), has a solid relationship with the Ministry of Agriculture, enabling it to advocate for food security issues and partners, and to actively engage in policy development on (agro-)pastoralism and, more in general, on supporting livelihoods in dryland areas.

121. ECHO, being a DG of the EC, is not formally recognized as separate entity by DRMFS.⁶⁴ Although such recognition might bring some advantages, it is not a pre-requisite to dialogue and effective promotion. The current situation however does not affect the EU capacity to speak out on sensitive issues (humanitarian principles). Humanitarian affairs are periodically discussed among representatives of EU Member States and raised at the highest level of GoE by the EU Ambassador when and as necessary.

4.3. Have DG ECHO's actions improved the living conditions in the short term?

122. This section on effectiveness is focusing on the immediate or short-term impact of DG ECHO interventions. Estimating the impact in terms of life saved and suffering alleviated is notoriously difficult. Measuring it objectively was beyond the scope of this evaluation.

123. Interlocutors were invited to score on a scale of 1 to 5 how much ECHO projects did improve living conditions of the beneficiaries⁶⁵: Although the majority (52 out of 97) were opting for the middle score ("moderately"), 20 and 21 were scoring 4 or 5 ("very

⁶² Some reported that in case of problems in the implementation of DG ECHO funded projects, they seek support from OFDA or the US Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (US State Department).

⁶³ The expert recruited locally by UNDP is reporting to UNISDR in Nairobi. There is no direct link with or reporting to the DG ECHO office in Addis Ababa.

⁶⁴ Nor are apparently OFDA (part of USAID) or BPRM (an office of the US State Department).

⁶⁵ Question 3 in questionnaire.

significantly”) respectively. Only 4 believed that the improvement was less than moderate or even inexistent. The reply was strongly supportive of DG ECHO effectiveness.

In protracted food nutrition crisis

124. Food and livelihood assistance: In Ethiopia, food and nutrition conditions remain still fragile. In many parts of the country, it will take a long time before sustainable food security conditions will be achieved. The Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP), which started in 2006, currently covers 7.6 million people with the intention to assist them to shift away from dependency on food aid. For others, in line with the regularly updated Humanitarian Requirement Document, there are on-going general food aid operations. It can be said that the relief food aid that is provided by humanitarian donors including DG ECHO has been effective to avoid major increases in malnutrition.

125. ECHO funding to WFP for **drought-related food aid** in the period 2008-2011 has been channelled to the Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation (PRRO 10665). In this operation, the specific objective was to reduce the rate of acute malnutrition (GAM) as ultimate “proof” (indicator) of success or good performance. It is a fallacy as food-based assistance only addresses one of the facets of a multi-sectoral problem and often does not address the root causes leading to malnutrition. Moreover, particularly in the dryland zones, GAM rates are fluctuating over the year according to seasonal rains, making it an unreliable short-term indicator of effectiveness. For the new PRRO for 2012-2013, the Food Consumption Score and the Coping Strategies Index have been taken as key indicators for the outcome of food assistance.

126. For the DRR-funded community-based food security interventions, the key outcome indicators generally are phrased as a certain degree of increase in community-based drought response capacities. Some partners also have put their contribution to policy debates and integration of specific activities in *woreda*-level work routines as specific objectives. While evidently the majority of the funded programmes have achieved such positive impacts, most of them are short-term in nature. Real outcomes in the dry lowland zones are mainly produced by the larger programmes (Pastoral Livelihood Initiative (PLI) funded by USAID, the Pastoral Community Development Programme (PCDP) funded by World Bank, the PSNP mentioned above). Although ECHO has to accept that expectations have to be modest and that attribution in most cases is not realistic, it needs to be pointed out that the activities on livestock management certainly have contributed to improved livelihood resilience.

127. The indicators proposed by the partners occasionally but too frequently were too ambitious and not reflecting the changes that could be attributed to the project activities. In particular, although with less frequency in 2011, the first indicator was for instance a reduction of the acute malnutrition rate or crude mortality rate. Those changes are the result of multiple factors and are not realistically attributable to the partners' action. A typical example was the use by WFP of a decrease of the GAM rate in protracted crisis under a certain threshold (FicheOps 2011).⁶⁶⁶⁷ Similarly, partners providing technical support to the OTP may not really claimed the output and success of the MOH work as their own. Moreover, baseline data are usually missing.

⁶⁶ The WFP project in the refugee camps makes no reference to Acute Malnutrition Rates as indicators when attribution for any change would have been more easily attributable, WFP being the only source of food for this target group.

⁶⁷ In the case of WFP, GAM rates are not further mentioned in the 2012 documents.

128. One drought risk reduction project in a particularly difficult environment (Afar) presented as a success story, was visited months after its termination and during a moderate drought. The admittedly superficial observations pointed at best to a short-lived increase in resiliency of the beneficiaries. Investment in livestock from income generated by a partner-supported cooperative was reportedly in jeopardy and small irrigation projects were temporarily abandoned due to the migration of the target groups.⁶⁸

129. Nutritional interventions are in fact supportive of the FMOH programmes. Their attributable effectiveness and impact are primarily on the improved quality and coverage of nutritional case finding and care by the OTPs. This added value is real but not measurable by statistical reports. The successful treatment of cases, as measured by relapse and default rates among other indicators, strongly suggests that lives have been saved in the short-term. The effectiveness of nutritional education could not be evaluated.

130. In the areas that were visited by the team, access to **water** has improved in communities served by partners. In some cases, life has dramatically changed for the families and especially the women. Given the magnitude of the needs (lack of water is often the most single important factor in food insecurity), there are considerable needs that could not be met even in the most effective projects. As a matter of fact, water trucking during part of the year is still common practice in parts of Ethiopia.

131. The effectiveness of the community-based **early warning interventions** remains under debate. It is not that the community was unaware of the risk of their vulnerability to drought as often is the case for other hazards such as flood, earthquake or tsunami. It is rather that their own coping alternatives may be very limited and increasingly so. In particular there also is a rather weak link between and Government's early warning system at *woreda* level and further up. This is a task still in progress.

132. Effectiveness in terms of impact of any single (sectoral) intervention is likely to be limited. No project offering the whole scope of sectoral services to the same community has been visited.

In rapid response crisis

133. In the **refugee camps**, statistics and experiences collected and the results of the interviews with those few actors present since the inception of the crisis indicate that the international response, once it was mobilized, has been effective. Mortality returned to levels closer to "normal" and GAM rates reportedly over 50% dropped to 15%, the threshold for emergency in the more stable and older camps. In Bur Amino, the reception centre for new arrivals the reported rate remained over 30%.⁶⁹ The positive impact is also illustrated by the absence of serious health problems and could be observed in the visits.

134. The severity of the initial situation, the magnitude of the response and the multi-sectoral approach adopted are important factors for this success. Unfortunately, this impact has taken place months after the start of the crisis, period during which lives have been lost. The attribution to any single intervention or donor is impossible.

135. One activity could not be implemented by UNHCR: the establishment of an Internet facility for all partners in Bokolmanyu. Permit to import telecommunication equipment was not granted and the Ethiopian provider of services imposed by ARRA turned to be highly unreliable. NGOs are facing similar obstacles to import radios or material affecting negatively

⁶⁸ Water from the river remained available for irrigation.

⁶⁹ Interlocutors quoted the new rates from the preliminary draft results from a joint survey. Official results were not yet released and could not be confirmed.

their operations and security. In several instances, they expressed to the evaluators the wish for a support from DG ECHO to solve this issue.

136. Regarding the **AWD epidemic in 2009**, the only data available to the evaluators were provided by the detailed reports from MSF. No independent or official source could corroborate those data as an appointment with the Public Health Emergencies Centre (PHEM) was cancelled at short notice. Interviews with UNICEF and other actors and MSF evaluation of its response concur that the DG ECHO funded intervention has been effective as well as timely in Ethiopia. The reports by MSF indicate that, in brief, only 20 deaths occurred among 10,305 cases in a city of 3 million inhabitants.

137. In summary, the effectiveness of interventions varies according to the type of crisis. DG ECHO seems at its best in acute crises and is still seeking its way in protracted food nutrition crisis where the input of DG ECHO is comparatively modest.

4.4. What is DG ECHO longer-term impact on the population?

138. Recurrent household level food and nutrition crises are common in most of the country. Some communities are entirely dependent on the input of food programs (relief or food / cash for work) for their survival. Pastoralists' resilience to recurrent shortage of water (drought or not) is minimal and decreasing with the environmental deterioration (climate change?) and the population increase. In general, resilience to drought remains a major challenge in Ethiopia that is beyond what DG ECHO alone could possibly achieve.

139. However, unless humanitarian programmes leave some sustainable change in resiliency or risk reduction, DG ECHO partners would need to continue their food security activities indefinitely until development catches up or economic and environmental conditions improves significantly.⁷⁰ It is no surprise that the achievements in the area of drought preparedness and resilience at community level were assessed to still be limited:

- Although good pilot projects, the short duration, mono or bi sectoral nature of the projects and the relatively modest investments preclude a significant drought risk reduction impact. The improvement in quality of life as observed was tangible and appreciated by the beneficiaries in absence of drought but fragile and short-lived when a minor crisis occurred.
- An attributable long-term impact must be reviewed in context with the more comprehensive package of services being provided by GoE and the international community.
- Finally, it is too early to assess the long-term as either projects were still being implemented or were terminated only few months earlier.

140. One activity designed for long term and clearly linked with development is UNISDR efforts to promote adoption of a DRR policy at national level as well as to establish a database on disaster losses in Ethiopia. Another one is the funding to FAO with the aim to assist the Government in technical coordination and dryland policy development. Both are worthwhile visionary contributions but require additional sustained international support.

⁷⁰ Indeed, some partners are in Ethiopia for decades and plan to continue providing the same services subject to funding availability. For those partners, humanitarian funding is merged into a long-term fund raising perspective.

Positive longer term results

141. In interviews and visits, some sustained positive results have been observed:

- The focusing of local authorities on the issue of risk reduction and improved response was noted. It is particularly important in a political context where emergencies are perceived as a negative note on the march towards development.
- A greater preparedness of DG ECHO and partners to respond early to a severe drought was part of DG ECHO office strategy. Widespread presence in the country and collaboration with many partners was perceived as an asset. The evaluators however see also some serious disadvantages to this dispersion.
- The strengthening of local nutrition services is a direct contribution of NGOs providing their services through local health services. How better prepared and more efficient the local counterparts of the partners will be and remain after the end of project is not something one can measure easily. However, the close synergy observed is bound to leave a permanent mark.

142. In the rapid response to the refugee crisis at the Somalia border, any long-term result is more problematic. Now that the situation has been mostly stabilized, the refugees will continue to depend on external assistance, from GoE included. There are however contributions that contribute to link relief to rehabilitation and development (LRRD):

- The investment in a permanent water system for the older camps;
- The support for transitional (5 years) shelters with local material and technology;
- A clear policy to include the host population in DG ECHO funded projects, contributing to limit potential conflicts or tension between the two communities.

143. Regarding the AWD response, it is clear that both the authorities and the urban population have a better understanding of the disease dynamic as well as the effective measures to take to reduce mortality and control its transmission. They are better prepared now. A major factor is that this project was in response to their request and not a donor driven initiative.

Problems noted or negative results

144. Out of the 79 interlocutors who expressed an opinion in the questionnaire regarding a possible negative impact from DG ECHO action, only one third (26) mentioned some minor negative result. These unintended consequences included:

- Increasing dependency on external assistance and free services;
- Increasing expectations from beneficiaries;
- Lack of synergy between sectors;
- Delays in delivery of services due to a perceived late approval by DG ECHO compounded by the late signature with the GoE of the Memorandum of Understanding, authorizing the project implementation. To be noted that DG ECHO funds projects retroactively. High level of services difficult to maintain in refugee camps with potential conflict with host population.

145. In summary, even if direct observation of tangible benefits following the termination of projects (especially in protracted crisis) may seem not particularly encouraging, it does not mean that those drought risk reduction projects did not leave a permanent change and, in

consequence, impact behind through changes in attitude and practices that can be subtle but important for the future. The ultimate question is how (agro-) pastoralists relying on livestock as part and parcel of their identity can sustain their livelihood given the increased population, pressure on environment and climate change. There is need for more diversified income generation for longer-term resiliency (i.e. survival).⁷¹

4.5. How efficient was the use of resources?

Efficiency in selection of projects and partners

146. The first issue regarding efficiency is the lack of clear rationale for such a complex mosaic of projects with many partners over a very wide geographic area. Could some consolidation lead to more efficient use of the limited resources?

147. From an analysis undertaken by the EC Delegation it is learned that over the past four years, for relief the average cost per capita was US\$180 per year which is nearly three times the amount that is spent for long-term food security development (on average US\$ 65 per capita per year)⁷². This underwrites that the big shift towards longer-term programmes that was undertaken by the EC in 2005 has resulted in maximised coverage and outputs against lower costs. It also means that the much higher costs level per person can only be justified when relief is provided to transitory food insecure people, not when the beneficiaries are actually chronically food insecure. Another point in this respect is the low level of accountability for DRMFS food aid flows (to which DG ECHO contributes through WFP), as demonstrated in a recent food commodities audit⁷³.

148. For the DG ECHO Horn of Africa **Drought Risk Reduction (DRR) portfolio**,⁷⁴ the 2007 evaluation already called for a reduction of the number of partners and avoidance of overlap of project areas of partners, for reasons of efficiency and transparency. However, this did not happen at all. Over DRR2 (split in two rounds of allocations, one in 2008 and the other at the end of 2009, most implementing partners benefitting from both) and DRR3 the number of partners in Ethiopia increased to 8 resp. 12. At the same time, the average amount of funding per partner decreased from € 1,037,151 for the first round of DRR2 to € 652,854 per year for DRR3.⁷⁵ In response to the 2010/2011 drought, most of the DRR partners got substantial

⁷¹ In Afar, the cooperative created by the partner reinvested its income into livestock. Women members of the cooperative recognized that it was a poor investment in a forthcoming drought. Perhaps it is a lesson on diversification being learned the hard way and the possible seed of cultural change that the evaluators may never know of. The same conclusion was reached in another focus group where participants recognized that more livestock was not in their best interest. A key informant in Borena stated that nowadays people have more livestock than ever before. Herds are continuously increasing. As a result, losses during drought times in terms of tropical livestock units dying (on top of commercial destocking) are also greater.

⁷² EC Delegation Ethiopia (n.d.): Relief Humanitarian Funding versus Rural Economic Development and Food Security (RED&FS) Funding.

⁷³ EU Delegation (2012): Note for the File: Zero Draft for Humanitarian Breakfast on 14 May related to FS (Relief versus LT FS), RDFS, Addis Abeba, May 2012.

⁷⁴ In this paragraph, DRR is meant as Drought Risk Reduction.

⁷⁵ Overall, in the period 2008 – 2011, ECHO spent € 27.07 million on Drought Risk Reduction projects in Ethiopia (on average, € 6.77 million per year).

additional “crisis modifier” allocations to boost their water and/or livelihood activities in the areas covered by the DRR-funded projects⁷⁶.

149. While DG ECHO continued to fund the large programmes implemented in Somali Region and in Borena and Bale Zones in Oromiya Region, in the last round South Omo Zone in SNNP Region was added. It is striking here that for this geographical expansion the same two *woredas* were covered by a number of partners. From the FicheOp it was learned that the agencies were asked to come up with an action plan to avoid overlap, and that that was done through the establishment of a monthly coordination forum and division of *Kebeles* over the three partners.⁷⁷ As the three partners do not offer the same skills and services, one may wonder whether overlapping avoidance (leading to dispersion) could not be replaced by a search for synergy and complementarity for more impact on the same beneficiaries.

150. A similar observation is noted in the **nutrition / WASH projects**. Provision of nutritional services in one place, WASH and health services in others appear to be inefficient way to approach a multi-sectoral issue. The only benefit is an artificially increased number of “beneficiaries” and a greater convenience for each individual partner able to merge ECHO funded activities into their own programme rather to contribute to a mutually agreed DG ECHO master strategy.

151. In rapid response projects, the selection of partners seems to have been efficient given the urgency and magnitude of the needs.

Efficiency in project implementation

152. Being this an evaluation of DG ECHO’s portfolio in Ethiopia rather than an in-depth evaluation of each single project, the evaluators were not in position to assess whether partners were using DG ECHO resources efficiently. They noted that DG ECHO’s in-depth review of the proposals included a careful review of cost per beneficiary. Some observations are worth mentioning:

- The resources of very similar projects of different partners may vary greatly: From one to six health workers to assist one OTP centre in the same zone.
- A strong point is the reliance mostly on national experts. The issue noted in other countries of weakening local services by recruiting (poaching) local Government staff is not relevant to Ethiopia: Local authorities consulted on this matter were consistent in stressing that universities are producing enough qualified professionals to replace those moving to better paid NGO jobs.
- With exceptions, the number of expatriates is low. One factor is the policy of GoE to require that the overhead for administration be no more than 30%. It is strictly

Picture 15: Boosting station



Source: Evaluation Team, Ethiopia 2012

⁷⁶ The “crisis modifier” allocations for drought response projects amounted to € 2.8 million in 2009 (from Decision ECHO/-HF/BUD/2009/02000) and € 6.25 million in 2011 (from Decision ECHO/ETH/BUD/2011/91000).

⁷⁷ VSF, Farm Africa and Christian Aid.

enforced and verified through annual audits. This consideration is not applicable to the rapid response to refugees when speed and experience are essential to save lives.

Efficiency within DG ECHO and its procedures

153. The most important factor is the comparatively low staffing of DG ECHO's office compared to other key donors and the load of projects. The high quality and dedication of the current staff alone are to be noticed positively but cannot be sufficient. The inadequate level of staffing resulted in shortcomings in coordination and strategic planning.

154. DG ECHO's approval process is seen to be slower and more cumbersome than others. As one UN interlocutor said: "It is expensive money" referring to the need for full time staff for proposal and reporting to ECHO. It is occasionally hard to see the cost/benefit of the repetitive reformulation of proposals. This search for constant improvement in the proposal has costs in terms of time and reputation for speed. In some instances, it best to leave well enough alone.

155. A logical corollary of the regional DRR approach with projects being implemented in a wide geographical area in various countries is that project follow-up capacity easily becomes overstretched. Unless there are very clear agreements on each one's role and responsibilities, there is a certain in-built tension between the RDD Regional Coordination Unit and the national DG ECHO Technical Assistants (TAs) in the countries. The *modus operandi* seems to have been to leave the direct administrative burden (including regular monitoring visits and time-consuming coordination with DEVCO and other donors) to the TA(s) and their professional support staff in-country, while strategic support and oversight was seen to be the role of the DRR coordination unit and the Regional Support Office (RSO) in Nairobi⁷⁸. Logically, such a split in responsibilities is not the most efficient approach for coherent strategy in a large and sensitive country as Ethiopia. Also, it has not been conducive for DRR mainstreaming across all sectors and beyond the community-level, nor has it facilitated regular contact between DG ECHO TAs in-country and partners on one side and research and other agencies in Ethiopia or more general in the Horn on the other. But it should also be said that the ECHO TAs and partners in Ethiopia showed a positive attitude to and familiarity with DRR concepts, especially for the recovery and rehabilitation phase. DRR mainstreaming has quickly become part of "good humanitarian practice"⁷⁹.

156. The duration of projects aiming to prevent or correct lasting consequences of protracted crisis is too short. Theoretically 15 months or more, in practice the average has been consistently under 10 months (except in 2010 where it reached 12 months). In DIPECHO preparedness projects for sudden onset disasters (a DRR in the broad sense of the term), partners are encouraged to plan for up to three 15 months cycles while formal approval is limited to the lifespan of the financial decision. There is an understanding that further funding

⁷⁸ In the first evaluation of the drought risk reduction projects (Schimann & Philpott, 2007) two approaches for coordination of the regional programme were proposed: (a) outsourcing through sub-contracting to FAO, or (b) mainstreaming of drought risk reduction into all ECHO-funded activities for all phases in the drought management cycle and across all sectors. The advantage of the first option would be that FAO could easily liaise with technical departments in recipient countries (not always straightforward for DG ECHO TAs). The second option had the key advantage that all management responsibility would be firmly placed in the hands of the TA(s) at country-level.

⁷⁹ Wilderspin I, J Barham, G Gill, I Ahmed & H Lockwood (2008): Evaluation of Disaster Risk Reduction Mainstreaming in DG ECHO's Humanitarian Interventions, Aguaconsult Ltd, Wivenhoe, June 2008, <http://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/evaluation/2008/DRRMainstreaming.pdf>.

can be expected subject to encouraging progress towards sustainable results and a clear exit strategy. Failure to do so in drought reduction projects may be due to a greater unpredictability of the funding mechanism. **In brief, planning 4-year ahead is far more efficient than planning 3 times for a 15-month period, especially in drought reduction; a thematic refractory to short term measures.**

157. Finally, as indicated earlier, the selection of indicators to measure performance and effectiveness show a healthy concern for objective measurements of outcome and even impact. This is not always practical when the partner activities over the short duration of the project are unlikely to affect those indicators. A different type of indicators may also be needed when the partner is focusing on strengthening and supporting the response (nutrition) of local services.

5. Overall Conclusions

5.1. DG ECHO in protracted food crisis in Ethiopia

158. In the last five years, the programme and office have developed considerably and contributed to strengthen the partners in Ethiopia. It is to the credit of a very small team of competent and dedicated national and expatriate personnel. It is time to seek ways to better focus its impact in protracted crisis and strengthen its influence as leader in creativity at community level.

159. DG ECHO support in Ethiopia should be placed in the proper perspective. The magnitude of the needs is far beyond DG ECHO capacity. It is a situation that has continuously threatened the lives of millions. Multi-billion food and livelihood programmes are now in place and seem to have been effective in preventing catastrophic crises seen in the past. The strengths of DG ECHO contribution are in its focus on communities and its potential for innovations. These strengths have not been fully channelled within the framework of a clear strategy. They will not be fully exploited if they do not insert optimally within the strategy of the GoE and other stakeholders. However, as relief is much more expensive than long-term support for food security development, relief assistance should concentrate on transitory food insecure people only, and not serve beneficiaries who are actually chronically food insecure.⁸⁰

160. The importance to find a creative niche within this international effort will become more pressing as the discrepancy between the needs and DG ECHO resources will grow over time: Ethiopia's food security will not improve dramatically in the near future. A demographic growth of 2.6 %⁸¹ leads to projection of 50% population increase in the next twenty years, increasing the pressure on the environment.⁸² Adding the potential impact of climate change on rainfalls in Ethiopia, the prospect for the most vulnerable is bleak and unlikely to be significantly and sustainably improved by relatively modest humanitarian and short-lived investment alone. Linking relief and development is particularly critical in Ethiopia.

161. Linking with EU development instruments has been a priority of the office in Addis Ababa.⁸³ This collaboration with DEVCO partners and promotion towards combined effort are ultimately on the point to produce concrete results. The EU SHARE initiative should provide the EU delegation with a tool to build on the work of the humanitarian partners, with DG ECHO as a source of technical expertise and advice.

162. DG ECHO would gain to better focus its own strategy. DG ECHO documents offer a conceptual framework for projects. However correct the approach may be, it is so broad that it could apply to initiatives totalling billion of Euros. What bears significant potential for

⁸⁰ Quantified evidence is potentially available at DRMFS, a source not accessible during our evaluation and unlikely to be more forthcoming in the near future.

⁸¹ US Department of State April 2, 2012, Bureau of African Affairs, Background Note: Ethiopia, <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2859.htm> (accessed 2 June 2012).

⁸² In one community visited, households were living on 0.125 ha. Improved access to drinking water is insufficient to improve food security.

⁸³ There is often more LRRD than a casual observation would reveal. Most of the partners are in Ethiopia for the long run. They designed their proposal to fit into their own long-term vision, hoping to identify funding sources (often development) to continue or expand on the DG ECHO funded project. Most partners are primarily development actors, although they tend to downplay it when dealing with humanitarian interlocutors.

improvement is a sense of priority or strategic choices indispensable given the unbalance between the needs and the resources. The result is a dispersion of resources spread increasingly thinly over a large number of projects, places and beneficiaries. It is overtaxing the limited management capacity of the office.

163. In addition to being scattered over too many projects, the action is also lacking integrated multi-sectoral approach. Livelihood, nutrition, WASH or health activities are usually isolated and disconnected from each other. As noted in ALNAP lessons Paper (Lesson 4), “Drought presents multiple threats to life. It is not uniquely a food security issue.... Agencies should be prepared to initiate multi-sectoral responses to meet the real needs of the drought affected populations”⁸⁴. A particularly powerful tool is the TSF program which is not included in DG ECHO’s portfolio.

164. A strategy is or should be a collective work at country level. It should involve all partners, Government included. There is no loss of independence for DG ECHO in consulting with national counterparts but a possible benefit in coherence and complementarity. The ALNAP paper reaches the same conclusion: “Where government takes a lead role in disaster response, UN and other international actors should redefine their role or risk creating parallel and incoherent structures” (ibid.). Currently, the burden for maintaining some coherence falls on the partners who are consulting, coordination and seeking approval of the authorities on their own.

165. Finally, the evaluators found that DG ECHO action in Ethiopia is properly addressing the major crosscutting issues. Gender sensitivity is in-built in food aid and nutritional interventions. Although women still do not have much power in traditional cultural settings in the pastoralist areas, most of the DRR-oriented food security interventions pay some attention to “gender” issues. Water improvement benefits more directly the women who bear the burden of transporting water containers sometimes hours away. Environment is the core issue and concern in drought risk reduction. HIV was only occasionally mentioned in the interviews for practical reasons: Targeted communities are isolated, have no access to health care and least to all to HIV testing or care. Prevalence of HIV is believed to be low in the more rural communities. However, for example in Borena Zone this could easily change once the Mombasa – Addis road is open. This indicates a need for more HIV prevention mainstreaming in the activities funded by all international partners in Southern Ethiopia including DG ECHO.

Picture 16: TSF Programme, Chart

| Date | Area | Total Beneficiaries | Total Distribution | Total Distribution per person | Total Distribution per household | Total Distribution per village | Total Distribution per zone |
|-------|------|---------------------|--------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 15/05 | 1 | 51 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 16/05 | 5 | 0 | 39 | 0 | 39 | 0 | 39 |
| 17/05 | 25 | 0 | 8 | 0 | 3 | 11 | 30 |
| 18/05 | 35 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 33 |
| 19/05 | 11 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 34 |
| 20/05 | 6 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 35 |
| 21/05 | 33 | 0 | 14 | 0 | 4 | 18 | 36 |
| 22/05 | 4 | 0 | 33 | 0 | 3 | 35 | 37 |
| 23/05 | 24 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 27 | 38 |
| 24/05 | 18 | 0 | 16 | 0 | 3 | 19 | 39 |
| 25/05 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 40 |
| 26/05 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 41 |
| 27/05 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 42 |
| 28/05 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 43 |
| 29/05 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 44 |
| 30/05 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 45 |

Source: Evaluation Team, Ethiopia 2012

5.2. DG ECHO in Rapid Response events

166. Rapid response to crises is the public trademark of DG ECHO. If the response to the AWD epidemic has been exemplary, the international reaction to the refugees’ influx in 2011 was much delayed and made slower in the case of DG ECHO by lengthy and not always

⁸⁴ ALNAP 2011. Lessons paper: Humanitarian action in drought related emergencies.

productive negotiation of the contract document. As noted earlier, OFDA rapid response funds have proven to be more flexible and speedy. Once activated, DG ECHO assistance covered adequately the scope of needs across sectors. Its impact was boosted by the inclusion of the host population and a search for longer-term solutions (water supply, for instance).

167. Although considerably improved, the situation in the camps is far from stabilized. Somali Region is a priority for DG ECHO. DG ECHO's final decision regarding the target groups covered by DG ECHO funded projects are based on comparative needs assessments. Under these criteria, the refugees **and** surrounding host population should receive continuing attention, shifting from emergency response to drought risk reduction based on their relative vulnerability as any *woredas* subject to protracted food crisis.

168. Crosscutting issues including HIV when pertinent received the relevant attention from partners. For instance, efforts are made to include the criteria of vulnerability in the process of allocation of transitional shelters.

5.3. LRRD

169. Drought risk reduction is essentially a long-term activity and some would argue a development activity. By essence, disaster (and in this case drought) risk reduction is linking relief and development. It would be best if responsibility and ownership would become fully assumed by development actors. The obstacle in Ethiopia was not the lack of promotion of the concept by DG ECHO but the strict earmarking of development funds. The SHARE initiative is promising in the extent that ownership and decision-making are primarily in the EU delegation development sector with DG ECHO in a technical support capacity.

170. Partners' projects are reasonably inserted in a LRRD perspective as those partners, at least those less dependent on DG ECHO funding, are securing additional sources to extend and sustain those activities. The problem in Ethiopia with LRRD seems to be the relief part of the concept. It is hard to escape the feeling that some of the worthwhile projects have limited link with emergency relief. Yesterday's drought or the probability of one tomorrow are used to select the target *woredas* that will receive for a short time some of the basic services lacking chronically in a large part of the country: nutritional services, access to water, minimum livelihood and food security.⁸⁵ The fact that the targets are on the latest hotspot #1 list (the result of a compromise between nutritional indicators and political considerations) is not in itself a sufficient proof of need for humanitarian (emergency) relief. It should be complemented either by GAM rates markedly above the national average or increasing; a clear threat of increased food insecurity (not merely the possible occurrence of dry spell episodes that are common to most districts) or special vulnerability (cultural or economic).

5.4. Improving DG ECHO capacity

171. The findings points towards the need for improvements both in Ethiopia and Brussels.

172. In Ethiopia, a recent evaluation of *DG ECHO financed Livelihood Interventions in Humanitarian Crises* concurred that "the office in Addis Ababa is

⁸⁵ Some projects turned down as too much "development" is repackaged without necessarily a change in nature.

Picture 17: Shelter kitchen



Source: Evaluation Team, Ethiopia 2012

seriously understaffed”.⁸⁶ The size of the country and DG ECHO portfolio justifies the **assignment or recruitment of additional human resources** to match the needs and emulate other donors: nutritionist, food security and WASH / health experts. Strategic planning, liaison with other actors and constructive advocacy will become possible, strengthening the role and presence of DG ECHO.

173. DG ECHO process for project **review and approval needs to be more efficient** to regain the lost reputation as an efficient responder to humanitarian needs. In particular, the frequent complaints on APPEL, the electronic exchange information system, must be urgently addressed.

174. The **duration of projects** in protracted crises needs to be expanded. Subject to the financial limitations, partners should be encouraged to submit multiple cycle projects (3 times 15-18 months) for all the projects in protracted food crises (not only DRR projects), as in the case of DIPECHO, funding would be one budgetary cycle at a time.

175. The **portfolio of projects needs consolidation** and concentration to a more limited number of targets (*woredas* and beneficiaries) that would receive a comprehensive package of services (multi-sectorality) over an extended period of time. This may not necessarily mean the discontinuation of support to partners especially the smaller ones. Several approaches have been used by other agencies:

- Selecting one international partner who would subcontract sectoral services from others. This approach may encourage more support to local partners, admittedly a rare commodity in Ethiopia.
- Requiring a consortium approach, a solution with its own legal requirements that would pave the way for the same consortium applying to funding from other EC instruments.
- Continuing direct funding but with strict geographical conditions and fewer partners.

176. DG ECHO is praised for the frequency and depth of its general monitoring. However, the **sectoral monitoring** needs strengthening at Addis Ababa level. This can be achieved either by placing the management firmly in the hands of the TA at country-level (mainstreaming), and/or through outsourcing to specialized agencies such as FAO or others. In the first evaluation of the drought risk reduction projects (Schimann & Philpott, 2007), both alternatives have been proposed. The former is what has taken place, but without providing the necessary human resources (nutritionist, livelihood / food expert, WASH / health) to this office. Recruiting local expertise that is relatively accessible in Ethiopia is justified, should DG-ECHO funding remain at the current level.

177. Collaboration by DG ECHO and its partners with **research** and other scientific agencies in Ethiopia of more general in the Horn leaves room for improvement. For innovative food security approaches, this is an essential requirement. Again, involving selected specialized agencies could assist in this regard. FAO track record appears to be solid in its area of competence.

178. Finally, the speed of the response when lives are in immediate danger is the criteria on which the public judges DG ECHO. This area is in need of improvement. The lack of preapproved contingency funds (as made available by OFDA to its rapid response partners) is a severe limitation. A proactive dialogue with HRF and OFDA would permit DG ECHO to play a more influential role in the early response.

⁸⁶ Tim Frankenberger: *Aide Memoire for Ethiopia Case Study 2011*.

6. Recommendations

179. The recommendations are in two groups: strategic and operational.

6.1. Strategic recommendations

RECOMMENDATION #1.

180. It is recommended that DG ECHO adopts clearly distinct strategies:

- One with a low-external and sustained input for interventions in *woredas* with malnutrition level and exposure to drought risk close to national average (protracted food crisis);
- Another with more intensive and perhaps shorter-term response in case of severe food / nutrition emergency and finally;
- A rapid response strategy for sudden onset disasters or conflicts.

RECOMMENDATION #2.

181. It is recommended that DG ECHO in Ethiopia reduces considerably the number of projects directly funded and monitored by its staff. This reduction can result from a combination of the following approaches:

- Funding one single partner to provide the package of cross-sectoral interventions in one zone or *woreda*. This partner in turn will subcontract international or local specialized NGOs as appropriate;
- Requiring partners to submit proposals as consortiums to provide this multi-sectoral package;
- Reducing the total number of active partners.

RECOMMENDATION #3.

182. It is recommended that in protracted food crisis, DG ECHO's office in Ethiopia focuses better its strategy to ensure a measurable impact by:

- Reducing significantly the number of "beneficiaries", concentrating initially most of its action into no more than a few *woredas* in at most two or three zones;
- In the selected *woredas*, providing support for a cost-effective package of services comprising food and livelihood assistance, nutrition (including TSF and nutrition education), WASH (including new water points for human and animal consumption as needed), basic public health and primary health care. In particular, the role of the Ethiopian health sector in alleviating malnutrition should be reviewed and strengthened, if appropriate.

RECOMMENDATION #4.

183. The selection of those *woredas* / zones should be:

- Based on objective and comparative (time and space) criteria of vulnerability in all types of population including refugees camps together with their host communities;
- Determined jointly with EU development instruments (in particular SHARE) to ensure their involvement and continuing support to the selected beneficiaries;
- The result of an organized and transparent consultation process with other donors, implementing partners and key stakeholders including the Ethiopian federal institutions.

184. Further inclusion of new areas (zone, *woredas*) should be cautiously progressive, based on lessons learned from the initial phase and should not affect adversely the funding or duration the support of existing projects.

RECOMMENDATION #5.

185. It is recommended that as a matter of priority, DG ECHO HQ reviews its administrative procedures to simplify the process of request appraisal and reduce significantly the delay between the first proposal (or letter of intent for DRR projects) and the formal approval. In particular, the electronic filing system (APPEL) should be overhauled to increase its flexibility and user-friendliness.

RECOMMENDATION #6.

186. DG ECHO should recognize that drought risk reduction or increased resiliency couldn't be achieved in one single financial cycle, even with a multi-sectoral approach. It is recommended that it encourage partners submitting projects for protracted food crisis (not only DRR projects) to develop a multi cycle planning process on the model adopted for general disaster risk reduction by DIPECHO. The actual duration of the projects should be much closer to the 18 months written in the decisions and projects should include explicitly from their inception a three-cycle duration. As is the case, with DIPECHO projects, financing commitment will remain subject to funding availability in each cycle. The proposals should allow responsive and appropriate re-programming as the drought cycle phases change.

RECOMMENDATION #7.

187. It is recommended that DG ECHO improves significantly its capacity to approve in matter of days projects in severe emergencies or sudden disasters. EC should identify a mechanism to pre-assign to selected partners funding for **rapid response** in sudden or severe emergencies. This mechanism can be on the pre-financing of a consortium (model adopted by OFDA), through DG ECHO funding of the Humanitarian Response fund or other creative alternative.

6.2. Operational recommendations

RECOMMENDATION #8.

188. In line with the Lisbon Treaty, DG ECHO has to take a stronger role for coordination of EU assistance in the humanitarian sector in Ethiopia. It is therefore recommended that DG ECHO strengthens significantly the senior staff in its office in Ethiopia with special attention to liaison and participation in key coordinating fora including those chaired by the UN or the GoE.

189. In addition, DG ECHO should also expand the sectoral expertise available in its office in Addis Ababa through the local use of experts in food / livelihood security, nutrition, WASH and health. Those experts either recruited full time or on retainers should be under the direct authority of the Head of Office and receive guidance on technical matters from the RSO.

190. In addition, DG ECHO may also consider delegating the authority for technical oversight and coordination to specialized partners.

RECOMMENDATION #9.

191. Regarding Targeted Supplementary Feeding (TSF) activities, DG ECHO increase its support considering the potential impact on saving lives. It is recommended to reconsider

allowing the use of its WFP contribution for this purpose and encourage partners supporting the Outpatient Therapeutic Programme (OTP) to include TSF in their portfolio of interventions as a cost effective complement if and when the flaws noted in selecting beneficiaries are properly addressed by WFP.

RECOMMENDATION #10.

192. It is recommended that the partners and DG ECHO give more attention to the selection of appropriate indicators to measure the impact of their interventions. The proposed activities should be reasonably expected to change those indicators within the time frame of the project and any changes should be attributed mainly to the partner's intervention. This is especially critical for changes in rates of acute malnutrition in protracted food crisis. If overall "indicators" remain included, it should clearly be recognized that the changes in the indicators represent a **joint** impact of several initiatives including the DG ECHO funded project and that the partner cannot automatically be held accountable for poor performance in case of lack of change as expected.

RECOMMENDATION #11.

193. It is recommended that DG ECHO continues building the capacity of GoE institutions through the assignment of an UNISDR expert to the DRMFS or support to nutritional activities of the Ministry of Health. It should consider expanding this support to GoE through suitable partners (e.g. through UNHCR for supporting the transfer of medical services from MSF to ARRA, food and livelihood security policy support through FAO or other agencies). Partners should be encouraged to engage in existing forums and task forces.

RECOMMENDATION #12.

194. It is recommended that partners and DG ECHO link and collaborate with scientific or research institutions that can demonstrate a proven track record of informing and influencing policy and practice. The objective is to develop a set of drought resilience promotion models. Those models should meet the needs of various types of livelihoods that exist in the dry land zones (pure pastoralists, agro-pastoralists, agriculturalists, drop-outs who depend on daily labour and other small income sources) and be more cost effective than the current pilot approaches that are difficult to sustain or scale up.