

information to its Partners on how they can make use of these centres to increase their efficiency in procurement.

10. Increased networking and coordination between implementing partners helps to reduce duplication and enables partners to share and adopt best practices.
11. Thorough needs assessment involving the crisis affected communities is critical for the identification of gaps and improved planning. Their active involvement can help restore some measure of hope, confidence, and dignity to the affected population as well as increasing prospects of sustainability of life-time facilities such as those for water.
12. For water points in urban areas, local authorities can serve a useful role as a centralised point of their management and maintenance, to which water users can conveniently make regular contributions through monthly rates. Water committees may serve the role of oversight and policy advice through existing systems of council to avoid setting up parallel management systems for urban water.
13. Resourcefulness and creativity of the involved partners are critical for working towards the LRRD objective in linking OVCs to essential services. The preferred combination joins local IP efforts with sound guidance from a lead Partner, converging in successful care delivery such as the instances in which NSAs guided by lead partners are enabled to bring humanitarian relief to OVCs and mobile vulnerable populations.

6 CONCLUSIONS

6.1 CONCLUSIONS ON SECTORAL STRATEGY

6.1.1 Conclusion on Food Security

ECHO's interventions in the food security sector during 2004 and 2005 filled a critical but non-conventional humanitarian gap at a time when most donors including the EC focused on food aid and shunned agricultural recovery. By broadening its package of assistance from just seed and fertiliser to new and more adapted farming techniques, ECHO enhanced the effectiveness of its traditional instruments, especially when rainfall conditions were permitting. Most of the new techniques show promising results although a few may need more time than possible under the short window of ECHO's support (one year). Those that clearly need more time include drip and other micro-irrigation technologies, conservation farming, capacity building of the local seed multiplication systems, and some elements of livestock rehabilitation and development. These should be clearly handed over to funding instruments that allow multi-year programming such as the new EC Food Security Call for Proposals Facility whose budget is expected to increase with time and has an implementation timeframe of 3 years. The investment in coordination has paid off and needs to be continued if ECHO remains in agriculture; or by another EC financial instrument such as the Food Security Budget Line.

Despite the good harvest of April 2006, ECHO may still be needed in the agriculture sector at least for one more season after which (assuming no major disaster occurs) it can phase out in favour of more appropriate EC instruments that should take over. The sizeable 2006 harvest masks the low yields realized and the reality that this is only but one good harvest after many years of widespread crop failure. Even though most parts of the country received normal to

above normal rainfall, there were pockets of drought or excessive leaching which affected many poor communities.

Many farmers did not produce a surplus in 2006 which they can sell and repurchase inputs for the next cropping season. The country needs to import about 400,000 MT to supplement this year's production. Many of the smallholder farmers will run out of food within 6-8 months and will be in need of food aid during the hunger period (Dec 2006-Mar 2007). WFP estimates that during the 2006/7 hunger period, its pipeline will be required to feed an additional 1 million people over and above the 1 million people it is currently feeding under its core programme (HBC, School Feeding, etc). This is net of what Government will be feeding directly as well.

Further, vulnerability of these populations continues to grow given the consistent crumbling of the economy, rising unemployment, erosion of incomes due to inflation and faltering social services. Solutions to these are not in immediate sight despite recent radical monetary policy reforms announced by the Government (Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe, Monetary Policy Statement, 31st July 2006). Apart from maize seed which is available in adequate quantities for the 2006/7 agricultural season, other critical inputs (such as fertiliser, small grain and legume seed, and crop and livestock chemicals) remain scarce and expensive.

Perhaps ECHO can be said to have strolled a bit past its mandate when it embarked on dip tank rehabilitation in 2004, especially as this type of intervention could only be blanket targeted and the impact on vulnerable populations was mostly indirect. However, since ECHO is no longer financing this intervention in 2006, an opportunity was missed to offer direct support to the poor who lost their livestock to drought, livestock diseases or other social and economic challenges. The dip tank rehabilitation programme was a perfect entry point for supporting livestock dependent communities who live in NR IV and V where dryland cropping is too risky. What it lacked was a well formulated livestock asset transfer component for the ultra poor targeted at those who have lost all their livestock. The justification would be livelihood rehabilitation for the ultra poor whose livestock assets have been depleted by the protracted drought and the deterioration of government livestock services. Nonetheless, the livestock experience has stimulated internal policy debate within government that could result in change of policy to strengthen the involvement of the private sector in procurement and distribution of dipping chemicals, assuming forex availability improves. If this happens, it could sustain the gains made through the ECHO programme because the private sector will fill part of the gap left by the resource-constrained Veterinary Services Department. This policy outcome would underline the need for partners in all ECHO sectors to target areas with a higher propensity to trigger policy reform as these are likely to generate broad-based impact which is essential for sustained recovery and development.

6.1.2 Conclusion on Water and Sanitation

ECHO's WATSAN interventions reached 10% of the country's population and had positive sanitation spin-offs that also benefited OVCs and the elderly. Its implementation fell short by **marginalising women in the project cycle**, thereby compromising durability of results. As more women are taking over the responsibility of village pump minding, Partners need to consult women on the appropriateness of this technology to their natural abilities to maintain such equipment especially in relation to the menu of alternative technologies that women might find more user-friendly. For as long as the bush pump remains the main pump approved by the Government of Zimbabwe, Partners may need to promote a **gender-division of labour** between men and women in pump-minding and repair work on the basis of their natural

capabilities. As the scarcity and cost of spares continues escalating, the question of **economic-appropriateness of the bush pump** also needs re-examination, as does the issue of **the future role of the government**, especially DDF (Section 3.3.6). As support to government is outside ECHO's mandate, **the necessity of other EC instruments** to rebuild service provision in the water and sanitation sector becomes apparent. Priority should be given to identifying and testing appropriate, affordable technologies, which have lower operation and maintenance requirements. Consideration should also be given to competing demands for domestic water supply, especially from local livestock, agricultural or industrial uses. Sanitation solutions should be designed to have an impact beyond the immediate crisis, and prevent further emergencies from occurring by helping to reduce the incidence of communicable diseases like diarrhea. Hygiene promotion messages are therefore necessary and should focus on achieving *long-term behaviour change* in key areas known to reduce the risk of disease transmission hand-washing, safe human waste disposal and safe handling and storage of water. Efforts should be made to increase long-term capacity for sustained behaviour change at all levels through community mobilization and institutional support such as the training of extension staff.

6.1.3 Conclusion on IDPs

Recognition by Zimbabwe of a right to have access to land for earning a livelihood and ownership of land for a permanent dwelling has so far been the stumbling block to resolving the plight of the growing mobile vulnerable population. Forced evictions of the vulnerable continue until today, though on a smaller scale than in May-July 2005. Whilst support to IDPs fits squarely ECHO's mandate, three challenges confront ECHO. First is **determining the magnitude of need** both in terms of the old case load of ex-commercial farm workers and the new caseload brought about by Murambatsvina because the **situation of IDPs changes rapidly**. IDPs are highly mobile and even **ECHO partners lack precise information on the size of the case load and location of some of the IDPs** because of absence of a robust tracking system (due to political sensitivities). Whilst some are in designated camps and their needs can be quantified others have reintegrated with their families, or settled on state land scattered in various parts of communal and urban areas, and yet others may even have emigrated. Second, is **defining a clear exit strategy for support to IDPs**. Some of the "old caseload" have received and continue to receive humanitarian assistance from a variety of donors to the extent that there is now a real risk that they may be better off than hosting communities (e.g., IDPs in Karoi). Third, is **identifying the type of assistance that is feasible** within the peculiarities of Zimbabwe's policy context. For example, urban council bye-laws prohibit the construction of Blair latrines in urban areas, which limits the range of options for sanitation interventions.

As ECHO looks into the future, therefore **a proper situational analysis of IDPs** (mapping study) is vital as a starting point to inform future actions. Secondly, the **strategy should be phased on the basis of the space and conditions provided by the Government** for ECHO to intervene through its specialised Partners (such as IOM and UNICEF). As a number of donors are also providing support through the same Partners for the same target group, it is paramount that ECHO's actions continue to be strongly coordinated with those of other donors. The emphasis of ECHO should be on gap-filling. Where the Government has not provided land for permanent dwelling of IDPs, Type "A" assistance, comprising primarily **basic and temporary assistance**, should continue to be given mostly as non-food items (existing ECHO mandate) and food aid (new additional ECHO mandate). Such assistance may include temporary water supply (wells); mobile clinic (only for basic care), temporary shelter, sanitation, etc. For IDPs that are eventually allocated plots, ECHO should graduate its assistance to Type "B" that provides **basic but permanent assistance** in the first year (such

as boreholes, durable sanitation facilities, and basic components of shelter; clinics; and schools); and in the second year upgrade to Type “C” assistance that will facilitate exit - life skills and livelihoods training. Type “C” assistance may also include agricultural inputs (tillage, seed, fertiliser and agricultural chemicals). At Type “B” phase, ECHO could be innovative in introducing the concept of mobile doctors/panel doctors which could be passed onto other forms of EC support that could take over from ECHO and provide longer term development assistance (Type “D” assistance) from Year 4 onwards. At the same level (Type “B”), ECHO could in partnership with other donors provide the permanent shelter, confining itself to the basic superstructure and roofing materials, whilst the donor partners provide brick moulding assistance to the beneficiaries. ECHO could also use its food aid resources for public works (food for asset creation) that help to build the social infrastructure needed by the IDPs before ECHO can exit.

6.1.4 Conclusion on Home Based Care

Although valuable care was given, which alleviated the suffering of 3,500 families in three districts, and longer term impact was addressed through information, education and communication (IEC) on HIV-AIDS prevention to beneficiaries at food collection centres, defining a credible exit strategy to wean the project from cyclical external funding proved a big challenge. At present, the pipeline to the 3 districts is maintained by a WFP Integrated HIV-AIDS Programme serving 16,000 PLWHAs in 8 provinces. The experience proved that ECHO can provide some support but HBC should ideally be funded by a **more predictable (preferably pool-funded) aid instrument** which can be there for the long haul and can also provide ARV treatment and case monitoring in addition to basic care. As ECHO starts to manage global EU Food Aid operations in January 2007, the choice will be to continue complementing this larger Integrated HIV-AIDS effort by funding WFP or to handover this programme to more relevant EC/donor instruments that can provide both relief and development support on a long-term basis to PLWHAs.

6.1.5 Conclusion on essential services for OVCs

The number of OVCs (last estimated in 2003 to be 1.3 million) continues to grow as more parents/care-takers die due to HIV-AIDS. In the 7 districts targeted, ECHO enabled school fees to be waived for 2 of every 5 OVCs amongst 5,200 needing help to stay in school. The Partner “block grants” that funded latrines or rainwater harvesters in schools, in lieu of cash for OVCs’ school fees, were an effective “passport” for enrolment and retention of OVCs in schools. However, these grants did not address the strategic needs of women that built latrines or repaired boreholes.

Many of the basic needs of OVCs remain unmet as 4 out every 10 OVCs still lack access to essential food aid, health or education (UNICEF Survey, 2004). Part of this is attributed to GoZ interference in School Feeding. The mandate to reduce extreme vulnerability among OVCs can be expected to be met when ECHO starts managing EU Food Aid operations in January 2007, assuming greater humanitarian space is opened by GoZ. Through that instrument, it is essential that ECHO continues to enable WFP and NSAs to maintain and expand the food aid pipeline for VGF, including for OVCs. Although, in 2006 a pooled fund of USD \$40 million (PoS) is being made available to NGOs to enable OVCs to access essential education, health, social and legal services, clothing and other NFIs remain an unmet need for OVCs to remain in school. Assuming that food aid coverage for OVCs will expand under EU Food Aid operations, **ECHO could fill the gap by procuring NFIs, adding value to PoS grants to NGOs** to reduce extreme vulnerability. In the long run, such non-food items can be incorporated into the PoS, after ECHO has demonstrated how it works and its positive

impact. This would be consistent with ECHO's mandate during a chronic humanitarian emergency (Sections 3.6.1 through 3.6.6).

6.1.6 Conclusion on the management of Childhood Malnutrition

ECHO's support towards coordination amongst Partners to identify and treat severely malnourished children at community-level with drugs and nutritionals, referring to the district TFC if a child cannot be treated near home, reinforced the link between nutrition and HIV-AIDS interventions and produced positive results. One community malnutrition pilot site is linked to an NGO providing PMTCT by sharing EC-funded transport resources. Data for 2006 from 2 hospitals shows that with therapeutic foods and sound nurturing, 3 out of every 4 severely malnourished children can recover. Recovery chances are less for the severely malnourished already HIV-infected. Therefore, reducing extreme vulnerability of children to malnutrition needs primary HIV-AIDS prevention so that parents are HIV-free before conceiving a child. Changes in sexual behavioural would require to reinforce with all adults the measures to reduce HIV risk.

In addition, there are linked steps in the prevention of severe childhood malnutrition, involving household food security, episodic access to food aid, safe water, environmental hygiene and sanitation, access to health care and drugs and better nurturing by care-givers. ECHO's experience confirmed that household food security is essential to sustain the gains of nutritional therapy once the child has recovered and been discharged from a TFC. Work is already progressing by EC, ECHO, FAO and others to reinforce household food and nutrition security strategies for the extremely vulnerable, including the introduction of new instruments for sustainable interventions in food security, safe water and mitigation of HIV-AIDS impacts on OVCs. With such inputs there is added value to fund, through an appropriate EC instrument, **home-production of fortified peanut butter to help children to sustainably recover from malnutrition whilst in their homes** (3.4.1 to 3.4.6).

6.2 CONCLUSION ON OPERATIONAL STRATEGY

The correlation between ECHO's choice of sectors, intervention instruments and the outcome objectives of the two Decisions was strong. However, due to the short-term mandate of ECHO, the focus at sector level on achieving outputs saw many partners exceed their output targets but this did not always translate into impact. Restoration of water for instance did not necessarily translate into a reduction in cholera outbreaks nor did distribution of drip kits always result in increased food output. During the rainy season, nutrition gardens competed with dryland fields for labour.

The specific timing of ECHO's window (March to Feb) does not allow for post-harvest impact assessment in the case of emergency agricultural programmes unless a Partner benefits from two consecutive Decisions. The window was also inappropriate for WATSAN projects especially in cases where the late signing by ECHO of the Agreement compromised the Partner's planning capacity. All partners had to suspend their activities during the rainfall period as roads were inaccessible. PHHE sessions were equally affected because most of them were conducted in the open. In future ECHO might want to explore the feasibility of using October to September as the implementation window for water and sanitation projects. For agriculture, an ideal window would be April to June (12 months implementation and 3 months for impact assessment) but this is not possible unless the maximum duration of ECHO humanitarian operations is extended.

At the sector level, most resources were geographically targeted to the semiarid Natural Regions IV and V where a majority of poor people have historically lived and results of vulnerability assessments clearly show concentration of need. However, once in the targeted

geographic areas, less attention was paid to sharpening precision of individual targeting. Due to rapid changes in livelihood systems caused by HIV and AIDS, macro-economic instability and emigration, the vulnerable groups can no longer be geographically targeted nor identified using traditional screening criteria like type of house, household headship, marital status, or the burden of orphans (Section 3.1.2). Sharper instruments of targeting need to be developed on the basis of new empirical evidence on coping mechanisms. The dilemma in targeting was more visible in agricultural programmes where the noble objective to target assistance to those able to use new technologies lacked an upper limit of inclusion for some of the interventions. Targeting of assistance to internally displaced persons (IDPs) was another formidable challenge as data on location and needs could hardly be collected without political restraint (Section 3.5.1).

With the high staff turnover in humanitarian NGOs, slow adaptation to relief by development NGOs and the emergence of a new crop of relief NGOs responding to the post 2000 chronic emergency facing Zimbabwe, the pool from which ECHO and other donors could draw dependable Partners remained small in 2004 and 2005 and this reflected in some of the results underachieved. Yet ECHO continues to be faced with a practical problem: that of insufficient number of partners if it tightens further its partner screening criteria. As Zimbabwe's humanitarian crisis gets protracted ECHO might have to emphasise partner institutional development as opposed to selective partnership building (Section 7.1).

6.3 CONCLUSION ON GLOBAL STRATEGY

Analysis of strategy and methodology of elaborating decisions: In 2004 and 2005 Zimbabwe was no longer in a classic emergency situation. Transitory vulnerability initially caused by Cyclone Eline in February 2000 and then by drought in 2001-3 had declined. However, the population in chronic vulnerability was increasing as a result of: (i) economy-wide impacts of land reform; (ii) HIV and AIDS (1.8 million infected; and 1.3 million children orphaned); (iii) inappropriate economic management policies; and (iv) declining capacity for service provision by the public sector. Soaring inflation, economic contraction, withdrawal of bilateral aid and loss of personnel to emigration and HIV and AIDS crippled service delivery in government. Also of particular concern, was the plight of Internally Displaced Persons: initially about 800,000 ex-commercial farm workers affected by the FTLRP (from 2001-2006); and later over 700,000 urban dwellers displaced by Operation Restore Order/Murambatsvina in May-July 2005.

The objective of continuing “*to support the implementation of an integrated emergency intervention to reduce extreme vulnerability of the population groups at particular risk in Zimbabwe*” underlying DG ECHO Humanitarian Aid Decisions 2004 and 2005 was thus not only needed but also consistent with Articles 1 and 2(b) of the Council Regulation (EC) No 1257/96 of 20 June 1996 concerning humanitarian aid. Article 1 states that the objective is “*to provide assistance, relief and protection operations on a nondiscriminatory basis to help people in third countries, particularly the most vulnerable among them, and as a priority those in developing countries, victims of natural disasters, man-made crises... or exceptional situations or circumstances comparable to natural or man-made disasters*”. Article 2(b) further provides for provision of necessary assistance and relief to people affected by longer-lasting crises “*especially where their own governments prove unable to help*”. Zimbabwe was clearly in a situation of a protracted emergency. Hence not just ECHO but other donors (USAID and DFID) pursued similar protracted relief and recovery operations.

ECHO's change in strategy from classic relief to a value-adding package of instruments geared at addressing both short-term needs and the link to rehabilitation and development (for

example, in food security), was also necessary in 2004 and 2005. It was aligned with its objective to improve aid effectiveness, reduce vulnerability and prepare for exit. For example, in agriculture, this meant adding new interventions to try and address some of the causal factors entrenching the food crisis – declining yields in smallholder sector.

Whilst the shift in strategy was important, **ECHO’s mandate, tools, timeframe and procurement rules in some instances became too restrictive for this medium-to-long term development objective.** The limitation of ECHO’s Financial Regulation/Framework Partnership Agreement was evident through interventions in WATSAN, agricultural recovery and health/nutrition which could not provide the needed funding or capacity building support to critical government institutions and compromised programme delivery, aid effectiveness and sustainability of results. For example, the inability by ECHO Partners to support government extension services (AGRITEX) compromised delivery of agricultural training to recipients of farming inputs. Partners lacked the field personnel to fill the gap especially given the short implementation timeframe of relief, the large number of beneficiaries involved, and internal institutional weakness in adapting from development to relief work. Inability to revitalise DDF compromised sustainability of WATSAN rehabilitations. Structures set up at community level to maintain the water points failed to fill the state service gap.

With above average rainfall received during 2005/6 season, problems in Zimbabwe’s rural water sector are no longer to do with natural disasters per se but declining government and community capacities to service and repair the bush pump. This problem arises from scarcity of foreign exchange, inflationary costs of spares, lack/or high cost of transport to move spares to water points, and attrition of trained pump minders due to HIV and AIDS and emigration. The solutions to these problems are multi-faceted and would be more successfully addressed by interventions with multi-year programming cycles and more holistic scope than just “community- or non-state-actor - oriented”. Given the weak link between water coverage statistics and disease outbreaks, such programmes should ideally go beyond just repairing boreholes and fully embrace sanitation and hygiene education as well as other household needs in the context of a more elaborate “water for life” concept. Such “water for life approach” would recognise the critical role water can play not only for domestic purposes, but public health and other uses that link to sustainable recovery and development including the eradication of poverty and hunger through the use of the surplus for watering vegetable gardens and small livestock which can provide women with income to service the pumps and food that improves their nutritional status and well being as well as that of their children.

In addition, ECHO’s nutrition and home based care interventions needed to be complemented by the supply of anti-retroviral drugs (ARVs) in order to have more impact. Since ARVs are best procured and distributed as a social welfare programme through state systems, it meant implementation of this component was not possible within the *modus operandi* of ECHO. Without ARVs, ECHO’s home-based care interventions ran the risk of not only limited impact but duplicating WFP’s Vulnerable Group Feeding (VGF) funded by the EC Food Security/Food Aid Budget Line and hence, had to be handed over to the EC Food Security/Food Aid Budget Line for integration into WFP’s VGF programme. Under the circumstances, the EC is faced with a choice of **whether to perpetuate relief through ECHO operations** (which will have natural limitations with respect to impact and sustainability vis-à-vis underlying causes) or to **unveil new longer term development** programmes that can work with all stakeholders concerned to holistically revitalise collapsing systems that hitherto used to provide critical safety nets for the same vulnerable groups and once worked perfectly; thus allowing smooth phasing out of humanitarian aid. This dilemma equally confronts the EC and its Member States as it does other donors because of the political implications of funding such programmes in the context of the current impasse over

governance issues in Zimbabwe. Hence renewed efforts are needed at **thawing the political stalemate** between the Zimbabwe government and the international community in recognition of the worsening plight of the poor.

In 2004 and 2005, the EC may have been under moral suasion to maintain all the financial instruments it could possibly deploy in Zimbabwe (including ECHO budget line). **The needs in priority sectors could not be met merely by resources available at the time.** Following Council Decision of February 2002, EC aid remained partly frozen (“A Envelop”) and partly redirected to programmes in direct favour of the population. This modality impeded running of large scale development programmes as these can be hardly implemented only by non-state actors (NSAs). Development support from other donors had similarly been withdrawn. By continuing with its operations, albeit adapted to address some of the underlying causes, **ECHO filled a practical gap in both humanitarian and developmental aid.** In the rural water sector, ECHO was the largest single source of support for rural water, and funded both borehole repairs and some new drillings. In agriculture, ECHO (in collaboration with FAO and ICRISAT) was to complement conventional relief seed and fertiliser with improved farming methods such as conservation farming and fertiliser micro-dosing. Other donors have begun scaling up this approach.

However, there are new initiatives in water, food security and OVC sectors, funded by the EC and/or other donors, that are starting to improve resource-flows towards rehabilitation and development in Zimbabwe, namely: (i) EC-funded ACP-wide Water and Sanitation NGO Call For Proposals facility; (ii) the EC Food Security/Food Aid NGO Call for Proposals Facility; (iii) the pool-funded Programme of Support (PoS) for Orphans and Vulnerable Children in Zimbabwe; (iv) the EC-funded Micro-irrigation programme for smallholder farmers; (v) EC-funded STABEX 1995 Support to Farmers Unions and Farmers; and (iv) DFID-funded Protracted Relief Operation. Even in relief many donors are also funding priority areas such as IDPs. These create space for ECHO to **refocus on its mandate, restructure its portfolio, and possibly phase out some of its actions** (especially those of developmental nature) that are now in duplication with the new initiatives.

Assuming that these new initiatives are effective, and Zimbabwe is not struck by another natural or man-made disaster in the near term, this realignment could already in 2007 or at the latest in 2008 see ECHO **reducing further its allocation for Zimbabwe** as it concentrates only on “unmet needs” and “areas of distinct comparative advantage”. The objectives for its future interventions would clearly be mitigation of suffering and/or adding-value to the new initiatives, as necessary.

In reviewing the two DG ECHO decisions (2004 and 2005), what is not clear is the analysis underlying the inter-sectoral allocation of the resources. On the one hand ECHO cannot wait to respond only to demand expressed through partner proposals because they are often late and weak. On the other hand, prior allocation of resources to sectors requires that ECHO then strategically steers partners to submit matching proposals to fully absorb funds – a supply-driven approach with its own problems as well. The practice during 2004 and 2005 appeared to be a mixture of the two approaches. Perhaps, in future, **some flexibility to reallocate resources between sectors** on the basis of actual demand through Partners could be incorporated into the Decisions.

For its analysis of needs, DG ECHO largely depended on technical assessments carried out by thematic working groups individually or as part of UN-coordinated CAP. The analysis provides useful information on the macro-level picture but lacks district level disaggregation which is critical in matching aid response to actual need on the ground (see Section 3.3 on water and sanitation). Due to politicisation of HA information in Zimbabwe (especially on

IDPs, child nutrition and food insecurity), there is added value in DG ECHO investing in **independent needs assessments and feasibility** studies to inform its future decisions.

Coordination, coherence and complementarity: ECHO's financial support towards sectoral coordination of HA through the UN (FAO, UNDP, UNICEF and IOM) was essential. Coordination of emergency agricultural recovery programmes through FAO had high pay-offs: reduced duplication of assistance, greater coverage of most vulnerable groups, better harmonisation of approaches and more synergy in the package of support. Results were appreciated by all stakeholders and lessons learnt will strengthen coordination in other sectors (Section 3.1.1).

As the EC Delegation now manages a larger portfolio of programmes financing similar activities to those of ECHO in the water, food security, and OVC sectors, stronger coordination is now needed between the technical team in the ECHO Country Office and that in the EC Delegation to strengthen complementarity and eliminate any unnecessary overlap. A **mechanism to formalise** this may need to be established.

There is scope for ECHO to use its **competitive advantage in quick procurement and distribution of hardware items** (and to some extent infrastructure rehabilitation) to complement the programme activities managed by the EC Delegation (funded by EDF and AIDCO resources) which could **focus more on longer-term issues of capacity building and institutional development**. In addition, as ECHO will be managing the Food Aid operations of the EC starting January 2007, there is also scope for ECHO's new relief mandate to complement on-going development activities spearheaded by the EC Delegation. This could be through innovative approaches such as food-for-asset creation which have been proven to work well in the region (Malawi and Mozambique).

Added Value and LRRD: Support for the creation and operation of a strong coordination mechanism for humanitarian operations and gap filling in agricultural recovery through the promotion of improved farming methods and technologies, are examples of areas where ECHO had strong added-value. By jumpstarting technology adoption in agriculture, ECHO was successful in creating the model for LRRD which the Food Security NGO Call for Proposals facility and the new EC micro-irrigation programme can build upon allowing ECHO to eventually phase out of the sector. In the water sector, the necessary LRRD effect could not be generated. It would have needed in part working with an already established system, such as that put in place by government, DDF. Nevertheless, the new EC Water Facility presents an opportunity for ECHO to handover some of its activities such as drilling of new boreholes, hygiene and sanitation education and training of community institutions which are more of a developmental nature. As ECHO takes over management of food aid operations of the EC a fresh opportunity is availed to innovate beyond VGF in the context of generating multiplier effects that can trigger LRRD spin-offs in HBC. Seeing as child nutrition is complicated by HIV and AIDS and successful nutrition therapy and HBC require attention to ARVs, more predictable forms of support such as 10th EDF, Global AIDS Fund or Budget Support are more suitable to finance these actions than ECHO. Using its strength in procurement ECHO could confine itself to piloting of new hardware technologies which others can scale up.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 RECOMMENDATIONS AT GLOBAL STRATEGY LEVEL

Recommendation 1: After careful analysis of needs and gaps in aid responses, DG ECHO should restructure its portfolio of interventions in Zimbabwe with the view to refocusing on

its mandate and, from 2007 onwards, start progressively phasing out those interventions that can be handed over to more suitable instruments such as: (i) the EC Food Security Budget Line; (ii) the EC Water Facility; (iii) the EC Micro-irrigation programme; (iv) EC Microprojects programme; (v) DFID's PRO; (vi) the Programme of Support for OVCs; and (vii) any other new programmes, when they become fully operational. Holding all things constant, this realignment should be expected to see ECHO already in 2007 or at the latest in 2008 reducing further its allocation for Zimbabwe as it concentrates only on "unmet needs" and in "areas of distinct comparative advantage".

Recommendation 2: A formal mechanism for ensuring coordination and complementarity between programmes funded by the EDF, ECHO and AIDCO should be developed and operationalised at EC Delegation/ECHO Country Team level. This will facilitate information sharing as well as joint planning, implementation, and review.

Recommendation 3: The EC should through appropriate instruments, continue supporting HA coordination and policy advocacy through the most specialised UN partners (OCHA, FAO, UNICEF and IOM). The Food Security Budget Line for instance is best placed to takeover from ECHO the funding of coordination of agricultural recovery programmes.

7.2 RECOMMENDATIONS AT OPERATIONAL STRATEGY LEVEL

Recommendation 4: ECHO should review, document and share information on best practices in targeting in each sector to assist Partners with low targeting effectiveness to improve their approaches. ECHO may need to commission a study to undertake a comparative analysis of targeting approaches to inform the development of such a publication and to organise a Partners Workshop to share these experiences. As a learning organisation, ECHO should also continue to support independent monitoring and evaluation by specialist organisations such as ICRISAT and FAO.

Recommendation 5: ECHO in collaboration with other programmes of the EC Delegation, should periodically run in-country training sessions on Project Cycle Management and project proposal writing to strengthen Partner capacity. The training can also cover other aspects such as (i) participatory planning methods; (iii) gender and HIV and AIDS mainstreaming into relief programmes; (iv) project proposal writing; (v) ECHO guidelines; and (vi) rights-based approaches to development.

Recommendation 6: Approval and signing of Partner Agreements should be speeded up in Brussels in order to enable Partners to implement their programmes ahead of the rains.

Recommendation 7: ECHO might want to explore the feasibility of **adjusting its implementation window for water and sanitation projects to October to September.**

7.3 RECOMMENDATIONS AT SECTOR STRATEGY LEVEL

7.3.1 Recommendations for the Food Security Sector

Recommendation 8: Depending on quality of rainfall, in 2006/7 DG ECHO may phase out its agricultural assistance programme in Zimbabwe in favour of more holistic interventions by AIDCO no later than February 2008. In the meantime, ECHO could continue with a targeted, smaller and more market-friendly portfolio in 2007 that is strongly coordinated with activities funded by the FSBL to avoid duplication. To allow the use of more market-friendly

approaches in aid delivery ECHO may consider expansion of the FPA after first assessing feasibility.

Recommendation 9: As the country has adequate seed maize on the market, maize should be taken out of the input package and be replaced with groundnut, cowpea, small grains and vegetable seed that farmers can propagate on their own. The seed and fertiliser packs should promote adoption of improved crop varieties and farming methods so as to raise yields.

Recommendation 10: Interventions such as drip kits and local seed multiplication should immediately be handed over to the FSBL NGO Call for Proposals Facility which is more appropriate to finance them.

Recommendation 11: As livestock is as central to livelihoods of poor communities in NR IV and V as crops are to the rest of the agro-ecological regions, the EC through relevant development instrument(s) should consider supporting a comprehensive package of assistance to rebuild livestock assets of the ultra poor in Natural Regions IV and V. The intervention should be modelled along best practice such as developed by the Heifer Project International Zimbabwe or by BRAC's Challenging the Frontiers of Poverty Reduction Programme in Bangladesh. Meanwhile, ECHO could continue with small livestock projects as part of relief (See Annex 10, for further details on recommendations for the food security sector).

7.3.2 Recommendations for Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Sector

Recommendation 12: In recognition of the large need and the limitations of the ECHO mandate, the EC should influence other donors to set up/pool-fund a comprehensive programme of support to resolve on a sustainable basis challenges affecting the WATSAN sector in Zimbabwe. Whilst this is being set up ECHO can in the meantime handover the drilling of new boreholes to the beneficiaries of grants from the EC Water Facility. Any new interventions by ECHO Partners should be guided by a Protocol on LRRD and gender issues in WATSAN.

Recommendation 13: The EC should support research into alternative technologies for the bush pump, such as the "rope and washer" technology for water points less than 30 metres deep (see also Annex 11 for additional recommendations on water and sanitation sector).

Recommendation 14: DG ECHO should appraise the implementation capacity of third party NGOs and approve their selection prior to being subcontracted by its Partners. To achieve this, ECHO should make it mandatory for Partners that wish to implement through other IPs to first carryout a partner assessment (using a standardised approach) and submit a report on their findings together with their project proposal. During implementation, the ECHO Technical Team should strengthen field supervision (at least two visits per Partner) per year.

7.3.3 Recommendation on IDPs

Recommendation 15: To guide ECHO's 2007 programme, a **nationwide IDP mapping study should be commissioned in 2006** covering both the old caseload of "commercial farm displacements" and the new caseload of "urban displacements" to obtain a full picture of the magnitude and geographical location of unmet needs. Where IDPs have not yet been allocated land for permanent dwelling ECHO should continue with **basic and temporary assistance** consisting of food aid, basic health care, water and sanitation, and other critical non-food items. For IDPs allocated land for permanent dwelling, ECHO's assistance **should graduate to more sustainable but still basic interventions**. For the latter group, ECHO's support should be programmed in such a way as to be **handed over after 3 years to other EC and non-EC longer-term programmes** which should **equally cater for** deserving cases in IDP

hosting communities to prevent inequitable development. In the 3 years, ECHO should consider feasibility of **using food aid for asset creation** to rebuild critical social and economic infrastructure necessary for reintegration of IDPs into normal life.

7.3.4 Recommendation on OVCs

Recommendation 16: DG ECHO or a more appropriate instrument of the EC could add value to mitigating the impact of HIV-AIDS through joining-up with the new Programme of Support for OVCs. School-based feeding of OVCs and bulk procurement of clothing, shoes, stationary/other NFIs would complement the PoS grants for longer-term NGO strategies that enable OVCs to remain in school or to train for a livelihood. Funding of NFIs for OVCs should be to kick-start the approach and demonstrate how it works and the positive impacts so as to encourage its eventual mainstreaming into the PoS and exit of ECHO.

7.3.5 Recommendation on the Management of Childhood Malnutrition

Recommendation 17: The EC ought to consider proposals from ECHO Partners to pilot the Cottage Industry-style production of fortified peanut butter, drawing from the experience of Malawi, in order to strengthen community-based management of current levels of severe childhood malnutrition in children.