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Evaluation of DG ECHO's Actions in Zimbabwe

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AGRER/AEDES Consortium



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The Evaluation was carried out by a Team of Experts from AGRER Consulting. The views expressed in this report are those of the independent Consultant and do not reflect the views of the European Commission.

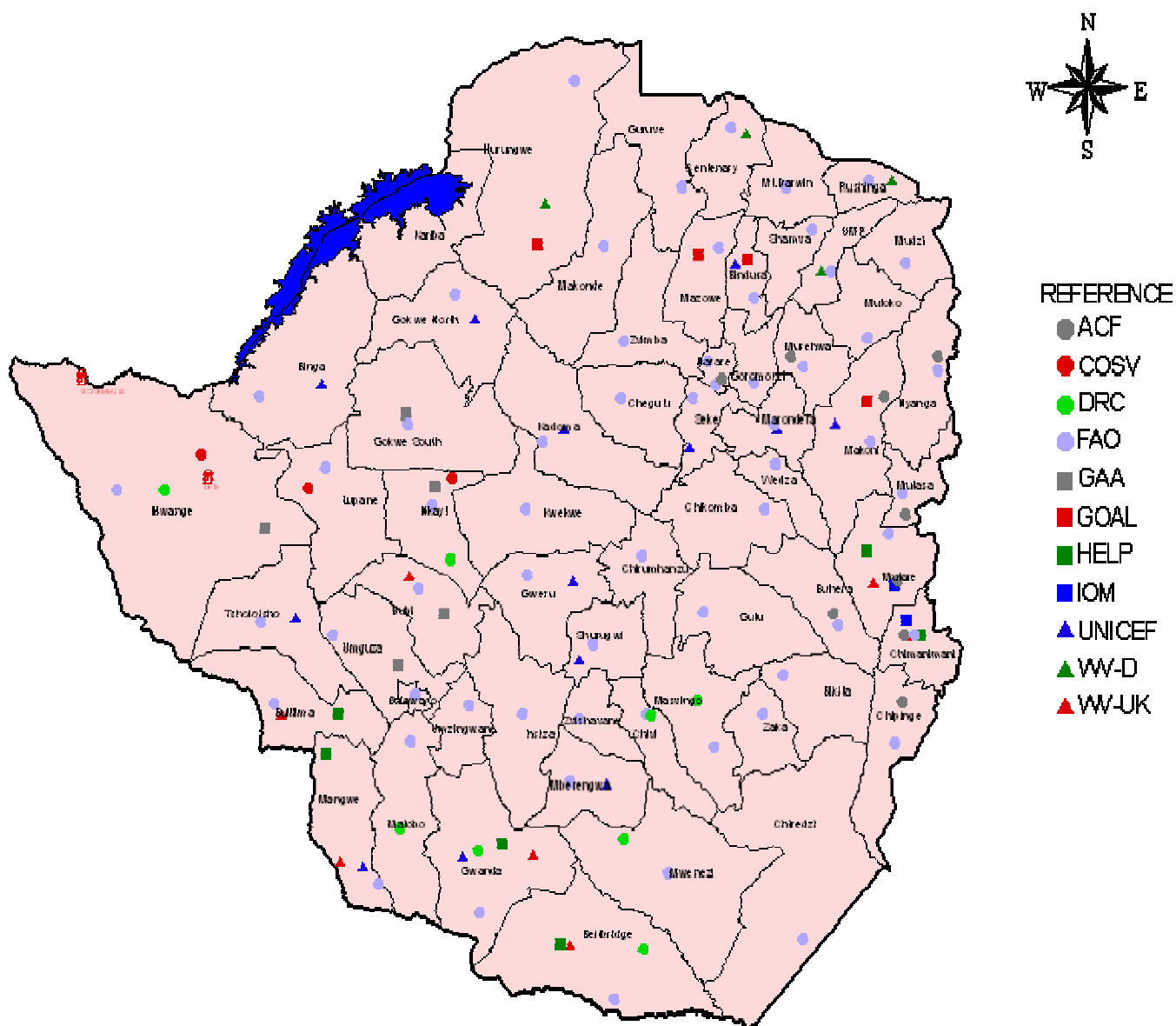
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MAP 1: ZIMBABWE
Partners and Intervention Districts for DG ECHO Humanitarian Aid Decision 2004



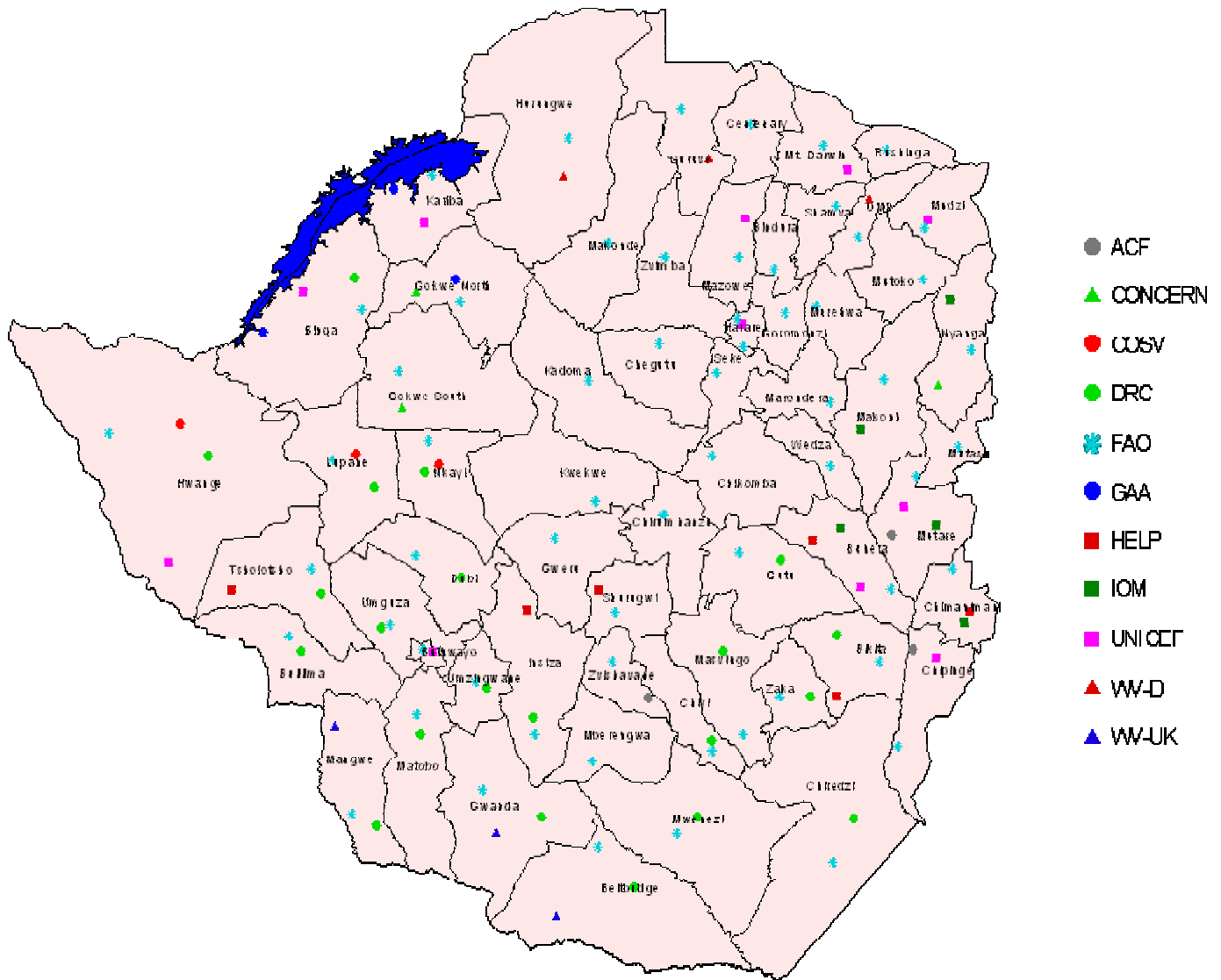
Key

Name of Partner	Intervention sector
ACF	Nutrition/Watsan
Concern	Seeds Distribution
COSV	Seeds Distribution
DRC	Home Based Care
FAO	Seeds Distribution
GAA	Water and Sanitation
GOAL	Seeds Distribution

Name of Partner	Intervention sector
HELP	Seeds Distribution
IOM	IDPs
UNDP	Co-ordination
UNICEF	OVC's
WW-D	Water and Sanitation
WW-UK	Seeds Distribution

Source: ECHO Zimbabwe Country Office.

MAP 2: ZIMBABWE
Partners and Intervention Districts for DG ECHO Humanitarian Aid Decision 2005



Key

Name of Partner	Intervention sector
ACF	Water and Sanitation
Concern	Food Security
COSV	Food Security
DRC	Home Based Care
FAO	Food Security/Coordination
GAA	Water and Sanitation

Name of Partner	Intervention sector
HELP	Food Security
IOM	IDPs
UNICEF	OVC's
WW-D	Water and Sanitation
WW-UK	Food Security

Source: ECHO Zimbabwe Country Office.

ABBREVIATIONS

ACF	Action Contre La Faim
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
AREX	Agricultural Research and Extension
BCC	Behavioural Change Communications
BRAC	Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee
CAP	Consolidated Appeal
CBOs	Community Based Organisations
CONCERN	Concern Universal Worldwide
COSV	Cooperativa de Seguros de Vida
DDF	District Development Fund
DFID	Department for International Development
DG	Directorate General
DRC	Danish Red Cross
DVS	Department of Veterinary Services
EC	European Commission
(DG) ECHO	Directorate General for Humanitarian Aid of the European Commission
EDF	European Development Fund
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FBOs	Faith Based Organisations
FMD	Foot and Mouth Disease
FSBL	Food Security Budget Line
FTLRP	Fast Track Land Reform Programme (FTLRP)
GAA	German Agro Action
GoZ	Government of Zimbabwe
HBC	Home Based Care
HELP	Hilfe zur Selbsthilfe e.V.
HIV	Human Immuno Virus
IMCI	Integrated Management of Childhood Illnesses
ICRISAT	International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics
IDPs	Internally Displaced Persons
IEC	Information, Education and Communication strategy
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IPs	Implementing Partners
LATUPIREP	Livestock based Asset Transfer to the Ultra Poor and Infrastructure Rehabilitation Programme
LIDEP	Livestock Development Programme
LRRD	Linking Relief, Rehabilitation and Development
LTDP	Long Term Development Programme
MSs	Member States (of the European Union)
MT	Metric Tonnes
NFIs	Non-Food Items
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
NR IV	Natural Agro-ecological Region Four
NR V	Natural Agro-ecological Region Five
NSAs	Non-State Actors
OPVs	Open Pollinated Varieties

ORO	Operation Restore Order/Murambatsvina
OVC	Orphans and Vulnerable Children
PHHE	Public health and hygiene education
PLWHAs	People Living with HIV/AIDS
PMTCT	Prevention of Mother-to-Child Transmission of HIV-AIDS
PoS	Programme of Support
SMART	Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-based Indicators
TFCs	Therapeutic Feeding Centres
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNOCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VCT	Voluntary Counselling and Testing for the detection of HIV-AIDS
WES	Water and Environmental Sanitation
WFP	World Food Programme
WVI-UK	World Vision International-United Kingdom
WVI-D	World Vision International-Deutschland
ZIMVAC	Zimbabwe Vulnerability Assessment Committee
ZRCS	Zimbabwe Red Cross Society

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

I. Introduction

In 2000 ECHO began channelling relief to Zimbabwe to save lives and alleviate the suffering caused by Cyclone Eline. With the onset of a severe and well publicized drought in 2002, ECHO stayed and eventually opened an office in January 2003. With land reform, other political and economic developments, and another drought in 2005 the crisis evolved but continued to be primarily characterized by: (i) severe shortages of staple food, drugs, water, fuel and energy; (ii) hyperinflation (200-1,200%); (iii) the collapse of government funded services and social safety nets; and (iv) deepening rural and urban poverty. Equally ECHO's portfolio evolved guided by the changing nature of the crisis and by responses based upon best practices in humanitarian aid (HA). So far, five DG ECHO humanitarian aid decisions have benefited Zimbabwe with a total commitment of Euro 80.26 million of which the first two decisions (totalling Euro 38.26 million covering the period 2002 – 2003) have since been positively evaluated in 2004.

II. Purpose and Methodology

Purpose

The subject of this Evaluation are the ECHO-funded humanitarian operations in Zimbabwe during the period 2004 and 2005, to which Euro 30 million was committed through two Decisions each with a budget of Euro 15,000,000: (i) ECHO/ZWE/210/2004/01000; and (ii) ECHO/ZWE/210/2005/01000. Total expenditure from these two decisions was Euro 29,160,758.22 (Euro 14,223,254.22 for 2004 and Euro 14,937,404.00 for 2005) apportioned approximately per sector as follows: food security 35%; food aid 15%; water, sanitation, health and nutrition 42%; IDPs 6%; HA coordination (1%); and ECHO country programme management 1%.

The evaluation fulfils Article 18 of Regulation (EC) 1257/96 which requires the Commission to “regularly assess humanitarian aid operations financed by the Community” in order to (a) establish whether they have achieved their objectives and (b) produce guidelines for improving the effectiveness of subsequent operations. The evaluation addresses these two issues at three levels of ECHO's strategy: Global; Operational; and Sector.

Methodology

The evaluation team started its mission in Brussels with a full briefing by DG ECHO, AIDCO and DG DEV during the period 3 – 6 July 2006. An in-country phase followed from 7 – 28 July 2006 during which the experts held in-depth meetings with the ECHO Technical Team, the Head of the EU Delegation to Zimbabwe and relevant professionals within the EC Delegation. Interviews were held with 13 ECHO Partners, half of which were subsequently randomly selected for detailed project follow-up through beneficiary interviews in targeted districts. At least two partners per thematic area and one district per partner were randomly selected for these field visits. Homogeneity in packages of assistance offered per thematic area enabled the team to emphasise depth, as opposed to breadth of coverage of operations. At the end of the country visit, the Team shared their preliminary findings and recommendations with ECHO Partners through a Workshop. Their comments enriched this Report.

III. Main Conclusions

Global Objective

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; (iv) declining capacity for service provision in the public sector; and (v) consequences of Operation Restore Order/Murambatsvina (Annex 1).

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 well aligned with Articles 1 and 2(b) of the Council Regulation (EC) No 1257/96 of 20 June 1996 concerning humanitarian aid. Article 2(b) in particular 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 this situation of protracted humanitarian crisis and declining state service delivery capacity. Hence not just ECHO but other donors (USAID and DFID) pursued similar protracted relief and recovery operations.

ECHO’s change in strategy in 2004-5 from classic relief to a value-adding package of instruments geared at addressing both short-term needs and the link to rehabilitation and development, was aligned with its objective to improve aid effectiveness, reduce vulnerability and prepare for exit which was achieved to some extent in agriculture.

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 (DDF, AGRITEX, etc) and compromised programme delivery, aid effectiveness and sustainability of results.

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 (Section 6.3).

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,

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 the context of partly frozen EC and other donor aid, by continuing with its operations in 2004-5, **ECHO filled a practical gap in both humanitarian and developmental aid**. In the rural water sector, ECHO was the largest single source of support. In agriculture, ECHO (in collaboration with FAO and ICRISAT) was first to complement relief with productivity enhancement packages that other donors have begun scaling up, eventually enabling ECHO to exit.

New initiatives in water, food security and OVC sectors, funded by the EC and/or other donors, 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 further reducing its allocation for Zimbabwe** as it concentrates on "unmet needs" and "areas of distinct comparative advantage and value-addition".

The analysis or formula used by ECHO to allocate resources between sectors is not clear. Some **flexibility to reallocate resources** between sectors on the basis of actual demand through Partners could be incorporated into future Humanitarian aid 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 information is useful for a macro-level picture but lacks district level disaggregation which is critical in matching aid response to actual need (see Section 3.3 on water and sanitation). Due to politicisation of HA information in Zimbabwe 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 specialised UN Partners proved valuable. 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.

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, a mechanism to **formalise and strengthen 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.

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, through tested approaches such as food-for-asset creation.

Added Value and LRRD: ECHO added value to humanitarian programmes by funding their coordination. By jumpstarting technology adoption in smallholder 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. In the water sector, the necessary LRRD effect could not be generated as it 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.

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.

Operational Strategy

Due to the short-term mandate of ECHO, the focus at sector level was on achieving outputs. Many Partners **exceeded 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. In future more outcome focused M&E systems are needed.

The specific timing of **ECHO's window** (March to Feb) did not allow for post-harvest impact assessment in the case of emergency agricultural programmes nor was it appropriate for WATSAN projects especially in cases of delayed signature of Agreements in Brussels. 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 consider **adjusting its implementation window for water and sanitation projects to October to September**.

Although geographic targeting was good, less attention was paid to sharpening precision of individual targeting. In agriculture, the noble objective to target assistance to those able to use new technologies lacked an upper limit of inclusion for some of the interventions. 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, land ownership, household headship, marital status, or the burden of orphans (Section 3.1.2). **Sharper instruments for targeting need to be developed** on the basis of new empirical evidence on coping mechanisms especially when dealing with highly mobile and politicised groups (like IDPs).

With the high staff turnover in humanitarian NGOs, slow adaptation to relief by development NGOs and the emergence of relief NGOs with no experience working in Zimbabwe, the pool of dependable partners remained small for ECHO. ECHO faces 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).

Sector Strategy

Food security: ECHO's interventions in this sector during 2004 and 2005 filled a critical but non-conventional humanitarian gap, as most donors 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 and impact of its traditional instruments. However, ECHO's financing window was too short for drip kits, conservation farming, capacity building for local seed multiplication systems, and some elements of livestock rehabilitation and development. ECHO innovated by providing relief assistance to livestock-dependent communities but **missed the opportunity** to also restore assets of the ultra-poor (Section 6.1.1).

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, ECHO partners may need to weigh the suitability of this technology vis-à-vis others in relation to natural abilities of women to carry spares and fix the broken down components (Section 6.1.2). In addition, as the scarcity and cost of spares continues escalating, the question of **economic-appropriateness of the bush pump** needs re-examination, as does the issue of **the future role of the government**, especially DDF (Section 3.3.6). Priority should now be given to identifying and testing appropriate, affordable technologies, which have lower operation and maintenance requirements. As support to government is outside ECHO's mandate, **the necessity of other EC instruments** to rebuild service provision in the water sector becomes apparent (Section 6.1.2).

Internally Displaced Persons: 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 (Sections 3.5.1, 3.5.4, 3.5.5, 3.5.6). Whilst support to IDPs fits squarely within ECHO's mandate, three challenges confront ECHO. First is **determining the nature and magnitude of need** both in terms of the old case load of ex-commercial farm workers and the new caseload brought about by Murambatsvina. The **situation of rural IDPs is different from that of urban IDPs with the latter generally being in more acute situation than rural IDPs that have been getting humanitarian assistance for the past few years and some have been offered land and have gradually integrated into mainstream agricultural and/or other economic activity**. The needs of both quickly evolve even in a short space of time depending on income earning opportunities and forthcoming support from relatives. IDPs are highly mobile and even **ECHO partners lack precise information on the location**

of some and the exact size of the case load, partly due to absence of a robust tracking system (this would be politically sensitive). The main shortcoming of previous assistance to IDPs has been the absence of interventions to take care of their health needs. Whilst some of the IDPs are in designated camps in urban areas and their needs can be quantified others have reintegrated with their extended families, or settled on state land scattered in various parts of the country. Those that are not in camps also need support but are more difficult to find and target. Second, is **defining a clear exit strategy for support to IDPs to avoid the risk that they end up** better off than hosting communities (Section 6.1.3). 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 for urban/peri-urban IDPs.

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 water tanks, etc); 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 (doctors who volunteer to provide a service but with logistical and other forms of support from the ECHO partner) 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 others provide the permanent shelter, **confining itself to minimum conditions** (superstructure and roofing materials) whilst others complement ECHO by providing brick moulding assistance to the IDPs. 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.

Home-based Care for PLWHAs: 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.

Orphans and Vulnerable Children: 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 (Section 6.1.5).

Many **needs of OVCs remain unmet** as about 4 out of every 10 OVCs still lack access to essential food aid, health or education (UNICEF 2004 Survey). The mandate to reduce extreme vulnerability can be expected to be met when ECHO starts managing EU Food Aid operations, 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 school-based feeding of 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 unmet needs** 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, consistent with its mandate during a chronic humanitarian emergency (Sections 3.6.1 through 3.6.6). 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.

Prevention and Treatment of Severe Malnutrition in Children below 5 years of age: 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 confirms that **household food security is essential to sustain the gains of nutritional therapy** once the child has recovered and been discharged from a TFC. Current work by the EC, ECHO, DFID, FAO and others to reinforce household food and nutrition security strategies as well as access to safe water and the mitigation of HIV-AIDS impacts is a positive step towards reducing extreme vulnerability. 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**, following the Malawi model (3.4.1 to 3.4.6).

By funding coordination of 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, ECHO reinforced the link between nutrition and HIV-AIDS interventions. One community malnutrition pilot site is linked to an NGO providing PMTCT by sharing EC-funded transport resources. The experience has shown 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 be

required to reinforce with all adults the measures to reduce HIV risk, and can only be achieved through longer term programmes.

IV. Main Recommendations

Global Objective

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.

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.

Operational Strategy

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.

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.

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 feasibility of **adjusting its implementation window for water and sanitation projects to "October to September"**.

Sector Strategy

Specific 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 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.

Specific Recommendations for the Water and Sanitation Sector

Recommendation 10: 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 11: 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.

Specific Recommendations for Cross-Cutting Themes of Management of Malnutrition, IDPs, OVCs

Recommendation 12: 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.

Recommendation 13: 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. ECHO 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.

Recommendation 14: 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.

V. Main Lessons Learned

1. In food security crises, emergency livestock support programmes are as essential to livestock-dependent vulnerable communities as seed and other types of support are to crop cultivating communities, such needs should be identified and incorporated into relief.
2. Agricultural relief and recovery programmes can be a fast and effective vehicle for promoting large-scale technology adoption if farmer capacity building can be incorporated into the relief.
3. In a complex emergency, UN coordination can play a crucial role in confidence building between policy makers, implementers and donor agencies resulting in greater humanitarian space.
4. Capacity building of state institutions that provide direct support to the community such as the District Development Fund is necessary if relief is to graduate into recovery and development. This calls for a closer partnership between DG ECHO and DG DEV in water projects than hitherto achieved.
5. Under guidance and training from a competent Partner, local NSAs (FBOs and CBOs) can master sufficient practices and procedures for bringing organised humanitarian services, food and NFIs to mobile vulnerable populations.
6. 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.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 ZIMBABWE'S HUMANITARIAN CHALLENGES

The onset of Cyclone Eline from 8th – 22nd February 2000 marked the beginning of an unprecedented and - what would turn out to be - a protracted humanitarian crisis in Zimbabwe. Subsequently conditions were created for a deep-seated social and economic crisis affecting most of the population as a result of: (i) the droughts of 2001/2 and 2004/5 agricultural seasons coupled with (ii) the implementation of the Government's ambitious but controversial Fast Track Land Reform Programme (FTLRP) that paralysed commercial agriculture; and (iii) the cumulative toll of the HIV/AIDS pandemic affecting all Zimbabweans that has left 1.8 million people infected and a growing number (now at 1.3 million) of children orphaned and made vulnerable by AIDS.

The adverse impact of these developments has manifested itself in a rapid contraction of the economy (cumulative 40% GDP decline), a rising domestic food gap (between 0.3m – 1.2m MT of staple food every year since 2002), hyperinflation (of the order of 120%-1,200% between 2004-2006), and an acute shortage of foreign exchange which has drastically affected imports of essential commodities such as fuel, energy, medicines, agricultural inputs, water treatment chemicals and spare parts. Both the quality of and access to basics social services have consequently declined considerably, urban and rural vulnerability has deepened and the risk of adoption of negative coping mechanisms that undermine recovery continues to rise.

During the 2005/6 consumption season, between 2.9 - 5.0 million people were in need of emergency food aid (Statement by James Morris, the United Nations Special Envoy and Executive Director of the World Food Programme (WFP), 29 May 2005, Johannesburg). The humanitarian situation was further compounded by the Government's Operation Murambatsvina/Restore Order (from May to July 2005) that targeted what the Government considered to be illegal housing structures and informal businesses. The operation led to rapid growth in the number of internally displaced and homeless people (IDPs). Based on Government estimates that 133,000 households were evicted during the Operation, the U.N. Special Envoy for Human Settlement Issues in Zimbabwe estimated that some 650,000-700,000 people were directly affected through the loss of shelter and/or livelihoods and 2.4 million others were affected indirectly. This newly displaced population added to an already large vulnerable population of ex-commercial farm workers that had been displaced earlier by the FTLRP. A Constitutional Amendment in 2005 further triggered new farm evictions and displacements. The critical mass of mobile and vulnerable persons is growing due to the forced repatriation of Zimbabweans in search of employment that had crossed illegally into South Africa (up to 600 are returned per day) and into Botswana (up to 200 returnees per day).

The burden of these events in the context of an unfavourable political and economic environment and worsening urban and rural poverty has triggered large scale emigration (legal and illegal), often dangerously depleting ranks of needed professionals. This continues to pose a sizeable challenge for the missions of both development and relief agencies.

Moreover the country is rapidly eroding its gains in water and sanitation. With a shrinking resource base, the institutional capacity set up by Government and at community level to service and maintain the water infrastructure is collapsing. The rural water supply situation has been exacerbated by recurrent droughts that have contributed to the depletion of surface and groundwater. Hence, although Zimbabwe's water coverage statistics are high, actual

access is at crisis levels especially when the complications of high HIV and AIDS burden are added.

Since 2000, DG ECHO has been responding in various ways to the above humanitarian needs. At the outset, ECHO stepped into Zimbabwe in 2000 to provide assistance to the victims of Cyclone Eline. However, as the severe drought which affected most of Southern Africa took its toll also on the Zimbabwean population ECHO remained and subsequently opened its office in January 2003. Since then its programme has evolved according to new needs arising out of new developments which are precipitating a humanitarian situation not of war but of comparable scale. The economy has not recovered from its slump brought about by droughts and land reform. It is in its eighth consecutive year of decline. As a result, statistics produced by WFP, FAO and FEWSNET further confirm that from 2002 till to-date at least 4 million people have been at risk of food insecurity every year at the peak of the hunger season (January).

1.2 OBJECTIVES OF THE EVALUATION

The mission evaluates ECHO-funded humanitarian operations in Zimbabwe during the period 2004 and 2005, to which Euro 30 million was committed. The evaluation fulfils Article 18 of Regulation (EC) 1257/96 which states that: *“(t)he Commission shall regularly assess humanitarian aid operations financed by the Community in order to establish whether they have achieved their objectives and to produce guidelines for improving the effectiveness of subsequent operations”*.

More specifically, the Evaluation seeks to answer questions at three levels of ECHO’s strategy: Global; Operational; and Sector. At the Global Strategy Level, the analysis is about the development of the humanitarian situation in Zimbabwe and the extent to which DG ECHO was able to adapt its strategy. It also assesses the degree to which the funded actions maximised on coordination, coherence, complementarities and value-addition with respect to other donor and government instruments and draws conclusions and recommendations on future LRRD strategy. At the operational level, the question is about the intervention logic vis-à-vis the objectives of the specific decisions taken. Issues of management and monitoring capacity are also examined. Finally, at the sectoral level, the study assesses adequacy of results achieved by the funded operations against stated objectives.

1.3 METHODOLOGY OF THE EVALUATION

The evaluation team started its mission in Brussels with a briefing by DG ECHO, AIDCO and DG DEV during the period 3 – 6 July 2006. ECHO briefed the team on (i) the scope of the evaluation, (ii) the history of ECHO humanitarian aid interventions in the country, (iii) ECHO’s mandate and the challenges of designing its HA strategy vis-à-vis the protracted nature of Zimbabwe’s crisis, and (iv) the financial decisions and Framework Partnership Agreement (FPA). At AIDCO the team was updated on the EC restructuring process and various EC financial instruments operating in Zimbabwe. At DG DEV, the team was apprised of the on-going EC-GoZ policy dialogue and the 10th EDF programming process. During the briefings, the team was provided with key background documents for review.

An in-country phase followed from 7 – 28 July 2006. During this phase, the experts held three in-depth working sessions with the local ECHO Technical Team. They also met the Head of the EU Delegation, and other professionals working in the Delegation including the Head of the Social Sector Programmes and the manager of the EC Food Security/Food Aid Budget line. In addition, in-depth interviews were held with 13 ECHO Partners that received ECHO

funds under the two Decisions. At the end of this consultation, an Inception Report was prepared to update ECHO on emerging issues and fieldwork plans.

For field visits, each expert spent 7-11 days in the field interviewing beneficiaries and implementers. At least two partners per thematic area and one district per partner were randomly selected. The team visited Buhera, Bulawayo and Mangwe districts for food security interventions; Binga, Hurungwe and Bulawayo districts for water and sanitation; and Gweru Rural, Bulawayo, Tsholotsho, Makoni and Mutare for Home Based Care, nutrition, IDP, and OVC interventions. The methodology emphasised depth, as opposed to breadth, of coverage of operations because of homogeneity in packages of assistance offered per thematic area. At the end of the country visit, the Team prepared a PowerPoint Workshop Aide Memoir to share with Partners preliminary findings and recommendations. Valuable comments were received and have enriched this Report.

Table 1: Sampled districts for the ECHO project evaluation

District	Intervention	Implementing partner to be evaluated
Mangwe	Food security	WV-UK
Buhera	Food security	Help-D
Bulawayo	Food Security	WV-UK (Regional Office)
Tsholotsho	Health/Nutrition	UNICEF, Ex-IPs on Nutrition Interventions
Gweru	Health/OVCs	UNICEF
Binga	WATSAN	GAA
Hurungwe	WATSAN	WV-D
Bulawayo Urban	WATSAN	WV
Mutasa	Health/IDPs	IOM
Mutare	Health/IDPs	IOM

Finally, at the end of the country visit phase, the Team prepared a PowerPoint Workshop Aide Memoir to share its preliminary findings and recommendation with ECHO Partners. This was presented at a well-attended Workshop facilitated and organised by the ECHO Technical Team at the EC Delegation Offices on 28 July 2006. Valuable comments and additional contributions were made by the participants and enriched the Evaluation Report.

1.4 REPORT STRUCTURE

The Evaluation report has seven chapters the first two of which present background information and the methodology. The third chapter assesses sector strategy and results, whilst the fourth covers cross-cutting issues. Lessons learned are presented in Chapter 5, Conclusions in Chapter 6 and recommendations in Chapter 7. Other pertinent information is annexed, including individual assessments of sampled partners.

2 DG ECHO ACTIONS IN ZIMBABWE

The Humanitarian aid decisions that have benefited Zimbabwe so far have a total commitment of Euro 80.26 million (Table 2).

Table 2: Humanitarian aid decisions that have benefited Zimbabwe to-date

Year	Decision Number	Amount, Euro
2002	ECHO/ZWE/210/2002/01000, ECHO/TPS/210/2002/16000	38,262,192
2003	ECHO/ZWE/210/2003/01000, ECHO/TPS/210/2003/12000	
2004	ECHO/ZWE/210/2004/01000	15,000,000
2005	ECHO/ZWE/210/2005/01000	15,000,000
2006	ECHO/ZWE/210/2006/01000	12,000,000
Total		80,262,192

2.1 2004 AND 2005 HUMANITARIAN AID DECISIONS

DG ECHO allocated Euro 30 million through two aid decisions during the period 2004-2005. The actions on the ground were implemented through several NGOs and UN partners (Table 2) who responded by submitting detailed project proposals in line with the format and guidelines for ECHO. The partners were as diverse as the type of interventions that were envisaged under the objectives of the decisions. Three main sectors were covered: (1) water and sanitation where ECHO funded borehole repairs, a few new drillings and a smaller component of environmental hygiene and sanitation education; (2) food security, consisting of a package of which introduced improved technologies (OPVs, disease free sweet potato and drip kits) and new methods of farming (such as conservation farming, seed multiplication and fertiliser micro-dosing) adding value to conventional distribution of seed and seed and fertiliser; and (3) health and other cross-cutting interventions (which encompassed support to OVCs, community based nutrition therapy; and Internally Displaced Mobile and Vulnerable Communities mostly in the form of NFIs). The interventions were nationwide (Maps 1 and 2).

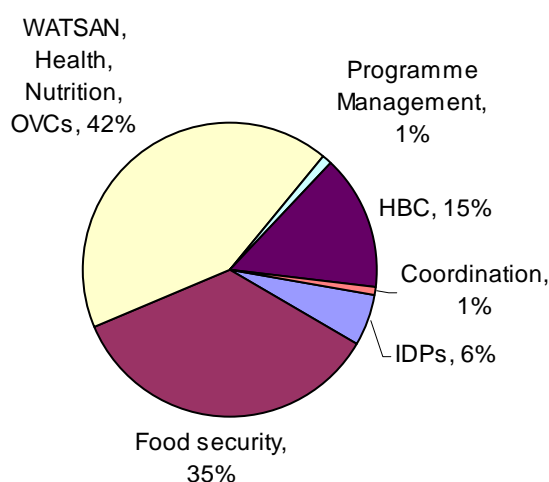


Figure 1: ECHO-Zimbabwe Expenditure by Sector (2004-2005)

Total expenditure from these two decisions was Euro 29,160,758.22 (Euro 14,223,254.22 for 2004 and Euro 14,937,404.00 for 2005) apportioned approximately per sector as follows: food security 35%; food aid/HBC 15%; water, sanitation, health, nutrition and OVCs 42%; IDPs 6%; HA coordination (1%); and ECHO country programme management 1% (Figure 1).

2.2 RECENT DECISIONS

Zimbabwe has benefited from another Decision to the tune of Euro 12 million which is funding an adjusted portfolio of activities in the same sectors as those in 2004 and 2005. This evaluation takes note of the changes that ECHO has already made to its programme based on the implementation experience of 2004 and 2005.

2.3 OTHER EC PROGRAMMES

The EC Delegation implemented a programme of about Euro 70 million per year in the last two years through various instruments and funded by different budget lines of the European Commission. The programmes were coordinated with ECHO to varying degrees due to the difference in programming cycles. Full details on the interventions and what they entailed is at Annex 2. Of importance to coordinate with the ECHO programmes were the restructured EDF programmes (Zimbabwe Microprojects Programme and the ZDCP), and agricultural programmes (such as the Stabex 1994 and 1995 Facilities, and the NGO Call For Proposals Facility funded through the EC Food Security/Food Aid Budget Line) plus several programmes in health and water that were affected by the EC Council Decision of February 2002, which no longer provide direct government budget support, and have been restructured to provide support directly to the targeted communities.

3 ASSESSMENT OF SECTOR STRATEGY

3.1 ASSESSMENT OF ECHO INTERVENTIONS IN THE FOOD SECURITY SECTOR

3.1.1 Relevance

Emergency agricultural recovery interventions funded by ECHO in 2004 and 2005 in Zimbabwe did not fit the classic definition of relief but were clearly needed. The population in need of food aid had risen to 5 million in 2003/4 marketing year with noticeable impact on child nutrition as the quality of the diet deteriorated, especially among the most vulnerable groups (such as under-fives and orphans). Household coping capacities had been depleted by recurring droughts and inappropriate macroeconomic and financial policies of government. By March 2004 the minimum wage was 16 % of the average monthly household expenditure for a family of 6 in an urban setting with an unemployment rate of 80 % (UNDP Needs Assessment for Humanitarian Information Coordination Project, 2004). Although the EC through its Food Security Budget Line (1292/96) and other donors (DFID, USAID, etc) had pledged significant resources towards WFP's food aid pipeline, the high cost of this instrument and the donor dependency syndrome it creates, made such food handouts only temporary respite. Agricultural recovery assistance offered more lasting solutions but following the EU Council Decision on Zimbabwe of February 2002, large scale development programmes were impeded as these could hardly be implemented only by non-state actors. ECHO was therefore both innovative and complementary in using large scale relief to support vulnerable groups in a manner that rebuilds their food production capacity and regain their food self-sufficiency status.

An acute shortage of critical farming inputs, especially seed and fertiliser, was crippling any efforts by these households to recover from drought. For example, while the country was self-sufficient in hybrid maize seed in 2000, only 13,000 MT of this input was available for the 2004/5 planting season against a national demand of 35,000MT (FAO Special Report 5 Jul

2004)¹. The causes of this shortage were many but the results showed the cumulative effect of a severe and protracted drought, land reform which destroyed commercial agriculture together with the commercial seed industry, controlled prices that discouraged local production, and a fall in export earnings which hindered importation of agricultural inputs ahead of electricity and fuel.

In addition, inflation (120-600%) was rapidly eroding the purchasing power of farm incomes to a level where smallholder farmers could not afford food or inputs on local markets.

In 2004 and 2005, ECHO moved away from its traditional “drop and run” seed and fertiliser approach to a rich mix of interventions, by adding software aspects (farmer training and new farming techniques) to its hardware (seed, fertiliser and drip kits). The diversified portfolio was necessary to attend to two most critical concerns of farmers: (i) declining soil fertility; and (ii) inadequate rainfall. Cereal yields in the communal sector had dropped to about half their peak in the 1990’s. The introduction of conservation farming, fertiliser micro-dosing technique and drip irrigation technology was informed by careful technical assessment and appraisal (by FAO and ICRISAT) of available options for improving yields in the communal farming sector. These new techniques provide direct answers to challenges of soil fertility and water management. The addition of Open Pollinated Varieties (OPVs) for maize and sorghum in the seed packs was relevant as it created the needed LRRD effect which prepares ECHO for eventual phasing out of Zimbabwe. Macia sorghum variety and disease-free sweet potato seedlings were all suitable to the diverse agro-ecology and socio-cultural conditions of rural Zimbabwe.

ECHO support towards the coordination role of FAO was necessary to reduce the high overlap in relief assistance in the sector. During 2002/3, about 17% of beneficiaries received seed and fertiliser from more than one source (ICRISAT Monitoring Surveys). ECHO also continued to fund specially targeted gap-filling seed and fertiliser programme through FAO and this support targeted most vulnerable groups that had been left out by mainstream implementing partners, the majority of whom chose breadth ahead of depth of coverage in a district².

Drip kits appeared too sophisticated or resource intensive for some beneficiaries (more than 50% of beneficiaries in some districts). Some beneficiaries needed to first establish gardens. Whilst the Protocol on Drip Kits developed by FAO gave clear operational guidance to implementers, successful application of the protocol required more staff resources and longer time in beneficiary selection, capacity building and monitoring than could be possible under an emergency programme, particularly in wards where Partners did not have parallel long-term development programmes. Supply of good quality kits was another problem and Partners had to make important adaptations to the technology to reduce clogging by salty water in Natural Regions IV and V. ECHO can learn lessons from this experience as these results are not new (a similar programme to promote drip kits funded by USAID also encountered the same challenges). An independent evaluation of the dript kit experience already commissioned through FAO will provide a good starting point in this learning with the view to possibly handing over the technology to a more appropriate EC or other donor instrument. ECHO could still use its strength in procurement but let another complement with more long term capacity building inputs at Partner and beneficiary level.

¹ After two consecutive years of price decontrol, the seed supply situation has once again improved and in 2006 the country has enough maize seed on the market.

² A number of partners tended to spread themselves too thinly by trying to cover all wards in a district instead of targeting a few most needy wards and covering all the vulnerable households within those selected wards.

Rationale for dip tank rehabilitation was sound³, but targeting was questionable as some of the rehabilitated dip tanks did not have any water supply. Furthermore, seeing as a majority of the rural poor does not own livestock (up to 75% in some provinces); most cattle owners targeted directly by the programme are wealthier members and would not fit ECHO's definition of "vulnerable". Some of the targeted with small herds were vulnerable. To a limited extent, poor households with no cattle benefited indirectly from draft power, milk or manure from benevolence of cattle owners or through normal market transactions. However the poor often get the draft power access late when everyone else has planted. Given the high incidence of tick borne diseases, the ECHO support reduced further cattle deaths, and prevented the risk of those with cattle losing more cattle and eventually becoming vulnerable as well. To have more direct impact on the vulnerable groups, however, a livestock-based asset transfer component to restore livelihoods of those without livestock should have complemented the dip tank rehabilitation programme (opportunity missed). Many of the ultra poor today lost their livestock to recurrent droughts and the plethora of economic and social problems being faced in present day Zimbabwe.

In response to equity concerns raised by district level partners, some Partners also distributed seed (including maize) and fertiliser in NR V where rainfall is too low for dryland maize. At below 400 mm per year, rainfall is too low for maize and farmers consider fertiliser application too risky (ICRISAT / COSV Fertiliser Distribution Monitoring Survey, 2006). The Evaluation of ECHO Operations in Zimbabwe (2002-2003) recommended rationalization of the seed pack but in practice this was not easy since it required a fundamental shift in the mindset of both Partners and the recipients. Unavailability of quality seed for pearl millet, groundnuts and cowpeas restricted the diversity of the seed packs programme and its ability to cover the needs at household level.

3.1.2 Efficiency

Once the contracts were signed by ECHO the pace of implementation was generally adequate to complete interventions on time. Most Partners met (if not exceeded) their output targets within the specified budget, especially in 2005. ECHO procurement rules, as set out in the FPA, ensured competitive procurement of supplies which helped to partially offset the negative impact of inflation and overvalued currency on operational costs. During the period under review ECHO reduced the number of its food security partners in preference for scale economies and to be able to provide the selected ones adequate technical advice and supervision. These changes greatly enhanced partner performance.

In the 2004/5⁴ cropping season, returns to ECHO's investment in Zimbabwe's food security sector were dampened by a general crop failure caused by inadequate precipitation and late plantings due to the unexpected introduction of the Seed Protocol. However, due to good rainfall received in 2005/6, the cost-effectiveness of agricultural recovery interventions in that year clearly outweighed that of food aid (FAO Computations, 2006). The intervention with the lowest investment cost per beneficiary appeared to be dip-tank rehabilitation because of a high multiplier effect, but the erratic supply of dipping chemicals significantly compromised returns to this investment⁵. The highest payoffs came from investments that introduced new technology and farming techniques (such as disease free sweet potato seedlings, the new

³ ECHO supported partial rehabilitation of dip tanks starting with a pilot programme in 2004 and then scaling it up in 2005 in order to boost farm animal disease control as a contribution to national herd rebuilding efforts and the safeguarding of livelihoods of livestock dependent communities.

⁴ Staple food production in 2004/5 dropped below that of 2003/4.

⁵ Whilst in 2003, the Department of Veterinary Services was able to procure 95% of the national requirement for dipping chemicals and recommended that ECHO Partners drop chemicals from their package of assistance, the capacity of the DVS has dropped sharply to 75%, 60% and 40%, in 2004, 2005 and 2006, respectively. This year the shortage of chemicals is acute due to inability by local manufacturers to access foreign currency for importation of the active ingredient.

sorghum seed variety (Macia), and conservation farming) which increased yields by about fifty percent and appear sustainable in the medium term. Micro-dosing fertiliser had similarly positive results except in Natural Region V where, unless the district received above normal rains, a general crop failure was registered, resembling a loss both to ECHO and to the farmer who had invested his/her labour and draft power. Generally, the gross under-utilization of drip kits estimated at more than 60% in some districts probably constituted a waste of ECHO's resources, but perhaps the few successful cases that were reported (for example, in Beitbridge and Gwanda, to mention but a few) could still offer an important learning experience⁶ for longer-term development programmes that have an interest in continuing to promote this technology.

Although duplication of assistance was greatly reduced by improved coordination of ECHO's food security interventions (through FAO and its Relief and Recovery Unit) some residual duplication with government programmes was experienced during the period under review. In addition, at times the pace of implementation was also too fast and the absence of harmonized targeting criteria and approaches across ECHO's partners resulted in seed and fertiliser leakage of the order of 3% to 35% depending on the district and partner⁷. The introduction of a protocol on targeting would greatly reduce this in future. In the meantime, 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.

The shortage of improved varieties for groundnuts, millet and cowpea on local markets seriously affected seed distributions in both 2004 and 2005.

3.1.3 Effectiveness

Whilst effectiveness of agricultural assistance provided in 2004 was reduced by late distributions and poor rainfall, most quantitative output targets were met or exceeded in the 2005 programme. By and large ECHO's 2005 agricultural support package was suitable and managed to provide a start-up to agricultural recovery. The assistance reached (and was productively used by) a large majority of needy households although targeting effectiveness could still have been improved. Above normal rains in 2005/6 and better timing of seed and fertiliser distributions resulted in effective use of the inputs. New farming techniques such as fertiliser dosing and conservation farming were generally well received by farmers. Conservation farming, especially, helped farmers to spread out their labour profile and plant on time. At the same time, ECHO support with 6-12 months of dipping chemicals for each rehabilitated dip tank in 2004 enabled livestock owners to restart dipping their cattle and reduced incidence of tick-borne diseases. Although the supply of dipping chemicals has since become erratic, the rehabilitated dip tanks continue to support other mainstream functions of the Department of Veterinary Services, such as cattle branding, disease inspections, cattle census and, most importantly, the vaccination of cattle against Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) which has since been intensified by a regional programme coordinated by FAO (e.g., 40,000 cattle were vaccinated in Shurugwi district and vaccinations are underway in 3 districts of

⁶ Largely, the intervention failed either because: (i) the water source was too far (more than 500 m); (ii) the water supply was seasonal; (iii) beneficiaries lacked the means to transport the water (wheel barrows, containers and draft power); (iv) competition for water between humans and livestock was too strong; or (v) the technology was at a lower scale than required by those targeted (some had much larger commercial gardening operations that they needed technology of a larger scale, e.g., treadle pump as opposed to drip kits).

⁷ Due to the high HIV and AIDS prevalence, the rapid deterioration of the macro-economy and the increasing role played by remittances, the vulnerable groups can no longer be identified simply by the condition of their house or traditional indicators like household headship, marital status, or orphan hood status. Sharper instruments of targeting need to be developed on the basis of empirical evidence.

Matabeleland South)). Sweet potato seedlings were very much appreciated especially under individual plots.

On the contrary, some of the drip kits distributed in 2005 are yet to be installed. High temperatures and water scarcity in September and October also prohibited the use of drip kits especially in NR V.

3.1.4 Impact

Although the Zimbabwe Vulnerability Assessment Committee (ZIMVAC) Final Report has not yet been released, preliminary estimates indicate a national cereals output of 1.2-1.4 million MT for 2005/6 (FAO Estimates), up from 550,000 MT in 2004/5. In addition to this dried cereal output, many farmers reported having consumed at least two months of their cereal requirements in the form of green mealies at the height of the hunger season (January and February 2006). Detailed post-harvest evaluations carried out by many partners confirm that the ECHO programme has supported directly a cereal production equivalent to 6-12 months of consumption requirements of the targeted beneficiaries⁸. These households will have enough until about October 2006 after which they start running out of supplies. This is a much improved position from that of 2005/6 consumption season when many did not harvest in March 2005 and needed immediate food assistance. Consequently, this is expected to reduce WFP's non-core Vulnerable Group Feeding programme by about 60% during the 2006/7 marketing season⁹.

The WFP pipeline is expected to support households that start running out of food after the six months as well as others that did not manage to produce at all. Despite the above achievements, there are still pockets of severe food shortages. Some areas experienced draught power shortages and planted late. Subsequently, a mid-season drought spell or excessive rains contributed to total failure of these late planted crops (e.g., Chimanimani district - Wards 9, 17, 19, and 20; Buhera South Wards 29, 30 and Shurugwi Wards 5, 7, 8 and 10). Hence, as ECHO will be taking over the management of the EC food aid budget line with effect from January 2007, **it is essential that early consideration be made of this need within the WFP pipeline to extend assistance during the period October 2006 to March 2007.**

The dip tank rehabilitation projects bolstered livestock disease control and reduced cattle mortality, albeit only temporarily in so far as tick borne diseases are concerned. Most notably, by preventing further loss of cattle, the livelihoods of livestock dependent communities were protected. Families that received small stock (e.g., chickens) increased their income earnings and invested in other livestock or bought grain to supplement their production.

The sweet potato seedlings had a high multiplier effect. For every immediate beneficiary, evidence exists of 40-60 other non-targeted members having benefited through local level propagation in some districts (Buhera and Mangwe). Seed multiplication projects injected needed liquidity into the rural economy and have strengthened local seed supply systems.

One of the most notable impacts of ECHO's agricultural recovery programme (2004-2005) is the adoption of improved crop varieties by smallholders which has revolutionized their farming. *Macia* variety for sorghum, *Nyanda* for G/nuts, *Black Eyed Bean* cowpeas, and OPV maize (e.g., Kalahari Early Pearl, ZM421 and 521) are a few examples of new varieties whose

⁸ Although attribution is difficult in the wake of parallel Government input distributions, most of the latter were targeted at the newly resettled farmers and the government pipeline was fraught with shortages especially of fertiliser.

⁹ WFP Appeal in 2005/6 was for 300,000 MT of which 250,000 MT was financed. For 2006/7, the Appeal is likely to be for 120,000 MT (WFP Country Director).

adoption by farmers has been accelerated by the handouts. Knowledge about conservation farming and fertiliser micro-dosing has increased and farmers now prefer the new approaches over conventional tillage and broadcasting fertiliser. The combination of new seed varieties, improved farming techniques and above normal rains increased smallholder staple crop yields by at least 50%, albeit from a low base. The impact on nutrition is yet to be measured but believed to be significant in the 2006/7 consumption season. Drip irrigation though had mixed results.

3.1.5 Sustainability

Unlike the 2002-3 programmes there are clear prospects for sustainability for ECHO's package for 2004-5. Proven benefits of improved OPV seed and local seed multiplication schemes can sustain adoption of the techniques provided rainfall allows farmers to continue to harvest a surplus and retain seed. Farmer-to-farmer extension incorporated into conservation farming will provide a sustainable substitute for government's collapsing extension services.

However, ECHO's handouts suffer from the traditional weakness that they create parallel channels of input distribution which over time undermine viability and capacity of local agro-input traders. The ECHO financial regulations do not permit the use of vouchers or cash, which would otherwise allow the application of more market-supportive income transfer approaches such as input trade fairs that ICRISAT and FAO have successfully tested with DFID funding. ECHO may need to commission a study on the feasibility of adopting this approach in the context of possible challenges of using cash or vouchers in Zimbabwe's hyperinflationary environment, and recommend possible amendments to the FPA that may be necessary to allow application of more market-compatible and sustainable approaches to emergency aid delivery.

Sustainability of most of ECHO's achievements in Zimbabwe hinges not only on natural factors like rainfall, but also on the ability of the Government to restore macro-economic stability. An improvement in the supply of foreign exchange is critical to sustain the impact of ECHO's investment in the livestock sector as well as in micro-dosing fertiliser. In addition, local seed multiplication will not continue to guarantee access by the poor unless their incomes are protected from hyper-inflation. Sweet potato varieties which have a lifespan of 3 generations before losing disease resistance need to be replaced with fresh seed once in every three years. Hence sustainability depends on the strength of the linkage between farmers and plant breeders much of which will rest on the knowledge and financial strength of the farmers which at present remain weak.

3.2 HOME-BASED CARE OF THE CHRONICALLY ILL AND OVCs: DISTRIBUTION OF FOOD AID

3.2.1 Overview

Since 2004 the Partner had been conducting an Integrated HIV-AIDS, Emergency Food and WES Project, targeting 16,000 PLWHAs and 50,000 OVCs at 27 project sites in 8 provinces. Actions included: Home-based care for the chronically ill, food aid, peer education of youth on HIV-AIDS prevention. Within the larger project, the Partner used ECHO funds in 3 districts to provide food aid to 20,367 persons, consisting of households with PLWHAs, OVCs¹⁰ and their care-givers. Within the 20,367 beneficiaries were 375 HBC facilitators and 1,875 of their family members, representing 11 percent of all beneficiaries.¹¹

¹⁰ A customary operational definition of the term "OVCs" is cited in the extended Footnote 10 of Annex 9.

¹¹ The IP made a decision in 2005 to discontinue providing food aid to family members of HBC facilitators.

3.2.2 Relevance

The need appraisals drew upon: (i) the data gathered from long-running projects of the Partner and its IPs in the same geographic areas; and ii) first hand assessment by IPs. HIV-AIDS prevalence rate has dropped from 24 percent of adults to 21.3 percent from 2000-2004. Still about 3,000 Zimbabweans die per week due to the disease. This speaks to a continuing need for compassionate personal care in the homes of the dying. Access to supplemental food is indispensable for adequate nutrition for PLWHAs fighting infections and for the growth of OVCs. The design had a flaw: PLWHA- and OVC-households received scaled-down rations in several months a year, a GoZ directive assuming adequate post-harvest food supplies. Vulnerable clients reduced food intake at critical periods. The design quality met a lesser standard for not overcoming this flaw by sustained advocacy to exempt the vulnerable clients.

3.2.3 Efficiency

HBC, operating with ECHO funds, was defined as providing food aid to the vulnerable within a larger Integrated HIV-AIDS project that received multi-year funds from two MSs, bilateral and multi-lateral agencies. The ECHO-funded actions met food aid needs in 3 districts for 20,367 persons during 2004 and 2005, noting the scaled-down response described above. No food was distributed in August 2004 due to an interrupted food pipeline. The Partner consistently over-estimated forward requirements, thus accumulating a food surplus that was carried over into 2004 and 2005. Logistics planning was inefficient. Providing food aid to 1,875 family members of HBC volunteers in 2004 was seen as an inefficient use of resources. If the Partner had advocated with GoZ and secured the permitted exemptions from the scale-down directive, that food ought to have been distributed to PLWHA and OVC households in which there is no able-bodied adult to grow food or to earn adequate cash to purchase food.

3.2.4 Effectiveness

HBC Facilitators provided a package of services to mitigate the impact of HIV-AIDS: home-care to PLWHAs/other chronically ill persons and their families, counselling OVCs, food aid. This held true for households headed by children and particularly in homes headed by grandmothers in which there is no able-bodied adult to earn an income and/or produce food. In a sample Ward visited, the 18 Facilitators meet some of the needs of 350 families with chronically ill persons and 300 OVCs, providing home nursing care, help with household chores, counselling children. The female-to-male ratio of Facilitators in the ward visited was 17:1. Urban youth appear to benefit from the town-located Youth Centre and nearby services in the district visited, but a majority of rural school-aged and out-of-school youth are not consistently reached for IEC and BCC reinforcement to prevent HIV-AIDS.

3.2.5 Impact

Valued HBC care was rendered continuously to 6,300 core clients during 2004 and 2005.. Noted were actions to educate families about HIV-AIDS prevention when they collected food at fixed sites. As local databases on the number of PLWHAs contain sensitive data, and could not be accessed in the short-term, no estimate could be given of the percentage of coverage by Facilitators of the total number of affected households that would benefit from HBC. Since 2003 the IPs report that the identical number of core clients for HBC in the 3 districts had been helped. The Partner failed to give a credible exit strategy to wean the project from cyclical external funding. With new external support, including from the EC Delegation, the Partner continues to provide HBC, food aid, various kinds of support to PLWHAs and OVCs in the same targeted villages. It might be expected that the number of those receiving HBC and food aid fluctuates as the terminally ill die and newly identified PLWHAs and families take their places, but the number reported as being served by the IP remained the same. This may indicate an internal weakness of the IP in maintaining an accurate client database.

3.2.6 Sustainability

Interviewed political and local health officials confirmed that mitigation of PLWHA vulnerability had occurred during 2004-05 in the IP project areas. The food aid component is continuing but is now tied to a multi-donor-sourced budget. When the lead Partner completed the 2005 ECHO grant, the Partner replaced it with EC Delegation funds to move towards pursuing the LRRD transition.

3.3 WATER AND SANITATION

3.3.1 Overview

Statistics from the Wash Inventory Atlas Zimbabwe (2004) were indicating that up to 30 to 70 % of water points had fallen into disrepair. Two main challenges were being faced by Zimbabwe's water sector, namely: (i) declining local capacity for maintenance; and (ii) falling water tables as a result of recurrent droughts. Sanitation coverage dropped from 30% in 2001 to 24% in 2004. About 80% of case load for hospitals was directly a result of WATSAN related problems. Hunger and a lack of clean water severely compromised those living with HIV and AIDS and further affected agricultural production. To help the suffering communities, ECHO supported four Partners who implemented programmes in 25 rural districts and one urban area to improve health and livelihoods of communities through provision of safe water and adequate sanitation facilities. A number of boreholes were rehabilitated with a few new boreholes drilled and some latrines constructed for schools and vulnerable households.

3.3.2 Relevance

ECHO probably went beyond its mandate by going into drilling of new boreholes and addressing sanitation issues but this was justified. ECHO's water infrastructure rehabilitations were aligned with its policy and complemented that of GoZ. The targeted districts are those in arid and semi-arid regions, which have low annual rainfall (<600mm) and had drying water points, which were forcing communities to resort to unprotected water sources and exacerbate diarrhoeal outbreaks (cholera and dysentery). The lack of domestic water increased the pressure on communities already struggling with food shortages and the compounded effects of HIV and AIDS. All the implementing partners attempted to involve communities in project implementation but the community probably needed more capacity building than could be provided by ECHO's partners.

3.3.3 Efficiency

Rehabilitation of existing boreholes was preferred ahead of drilling new ones because on average, the latter cost about Euro 9,000 per facility which is up to six times more expensive than the average cost of repairs. In terms of cost per beneficiary, the operation benefited approximately 10% of the Zimbabwean population, which represents a cost average of 12 Euro per person, a great achievement given the value of water. For new drillings, there are other low-cost pumps that can be tested for deep wells.

With the same resources rehabilitation reached more people and distances were significantly reduced. Some partners used the DDF warehouse for storage at a minimal cost or no cost, with DDF storekeeper managing the stocks, thus making a saving on both staff and storage costs. Communities contributed priceless labour that collected and delivered locally available resources such as water, sand and stones as beneficiary contribution to the projects. They also provided the food that was consumed by the trained pump minders during the time when they

were repairing the broken down water points. Communities also provided unskilled labour for such activities as digging when required. Training was conducted within the community, making a saving on accommodation. Government extension workers such as environmental health technicians and nurses conducted all environmental hygiene and sanitation education at no cost but effectively. This was a significant contribution by government seeing as other NGOs involved in such projects often rely on paid consultants for this service.

However, scarcity of materials on the local market delayed some projects, eventually forcing partners to rush through their projects to meet deadlines when they eventually secured supplies. Delivery of imported parts, especially imported ones was also a problem, not just in terms of delays but quality assurance. Implementation during the rainy season was generally a challenge due to impassable roads (some for up to three months) and most partners suspended their operations during the rains, thus adding to their pressure as they approached contract deadlines.

3.3.4 Effectiveness

According to information provided by the implementing partners, over 10% of the rural Zimbabwe population was reached by the ECHO supported water and sanitation projects which when completed provided immediate relief to target communities. All the planned number of water points for rehabilitation were achieved or exceeded in some cases. However it is difficult to estimate if adequate safe water was made available all-year-round as there were no records of borehole yield. However, post-rehabilitation breakdowns were frequently reported some of which take some time to repair. About 75% of the water points visited were reported to have low water tables and 40% of these were now rationing water. In some areas affected by the perennial problem of seasonal drying up of boreholes, even after rehabilitations, communities still queued at the boreholes very early in the mornings to try and be the first to get the scarce water. Some committees were resorting to limiting the quantity of water drawn from the borehole to 40 litres a day per household. For a normal sized Zimbabwean rural family this is less than 5 litres /person /day and far below the SPHERE standard of 15 litres/day/person. About 50% of the water point committees reported they need to drill and fit an extra pipe in order to solve this problem.

3.3.5 Impact

There were no impact indicators (e.g. incidence of water-related diseases); hence it is difficult to estimate the impact of the project on the health and hygiene situation of the target population. Anecdotal evidence collected from health institutions in the target areas points to a decline in the incidence of diarrhoea and to some extent scabies. However it is not easy to conclusively attribute impact to the project in the presence of many confounding factors and the absence of a proper baseline that has a long enough longitudinal data to enable isolation of the impact of rainfall and other factors. In Zimbabwe cases of diarrhoea are known to decline after the rainy season usually from February onwards. However, access to sanitation has significantly increased. In some schools that benefited from school latrines, the number of children using one squat hole reduced from 66 to 22. There is generally an increase in knowledge of hygiene but practices lag behind. Health facilities in the target areas also benefited from improved water supplies and are now able to secure and retain staff.

3.3.6 Sustainability

Partners tried to ensure sustainability of the projects through training of water point committees as well as the training of pump minders. Pump minders were equipped with tools for operation and maintenance of the boreholes and some spare parts to last for a year or so were left with the DDF. Communities contribute towards the payment of the pump minder

each time he has to repair a broken down borehole. However the DDF reports a major transport crisis (fuel shortage and vehicle breakdowns) and they are unable to deliver big spare parts from district stores to water points. Some partners did not leave any spare parts for the project. As a result of the problem of spares and the seasonality of the water tables, it is estimated that in the districts visited between 20%-40% of the rehabilitated boreholes are not operational.

3.4 PREVENTION AND TREATMENT OF MALNUTRITION IN YOUNG CHILDREN

3.4.1 Overview

Credible prevalence rates of severe childhood malnutrition have not yet been updated since 2003. One source in 2005 reported increases in the general malnutrition rate for children <5 from 14 percent to 17 percent¹². A general malnutrition rate combines the rates of severe and moderate malnutrition in children less than 5 years. By 2004 selected Partners, helped MoH to establish therapeutic feeding centres (TFCs) at district hospitals to treat severe malnutrition. During 2004 EDF funds enabled WFP and NGOs to provide school feeding in 17 districts and supplemental food to PLWHAs and OVCs. Thus EC Delegation funds complemented ECHO support to Partners working with TFCs to treat severe malnutrition. Two Partners withdrew from this intervention area for reasons explained in Annex 9.

3.4.2 Relevance:

Partners designed their interventions using data from the 2003 National Nutrition Survey that, after the drought and famine, pointed to severe malnutrition rates in children.¹³ Assumptions were not borne out that TFC treatment alone would reduce child mortality, particularly when the child arrived late for care and was already HIV-infected. Child mortality rates in Zimbabwe due to all causes doubled between 1989 and 2004, whilst the general malnutrition rate estimated in 2003 was normative for the Southern African Region. The last official statistic for the rate of severe malnutrition in children < 5 was estimated at 2 percent (2003).¹⁴

3.4.3 Efficiency

ECHO Partners provided 50 percent of the therapeutic milk and micronutrient supplements supplied to establish (during 2004-05) 75 district TFCs and (in 2006) eight pilot community-level sites nearer to the homes of malnourished children. Partners were efficient at channelling to work sites the milk, vitamins, blankets, initial training in malnutrition treatment, M/E training. Initially surplus milk stock accumulated due to duplicated procurement and lower utilisation levels as detected cases of severe malnutrition resulted in lower numbers than projected. The lead Partner produced an Atlas showing stakeholders working on malnutrition interventions. The district-by-district Atlas, with GIS-type maps, displays “Who Does What and Where?” and assists stakeholders in avoiding overlap and in getting information on potential collaboration partners in the targeted districts.

3.4.4 Effectiveness

The vitamin-enriched milk and other nutritionals purchased when combined with training of care-givers by nurses to improve nurturing of sick children, all contributed to the recovery of severely malnourished children < 5 years old that were: (i) not HIV-AIDS-compromised; and (ii) brought to an appropriate treatment centre in time to achieve recovery. Reviewing

¹² “2nd Food and Nutrition Surveillance Report” Food/Nutrition Council March 2005 (See Extended Footnote 12 in Annex 9).

¹³ See Annex 9 for comments on lack of current national data on severe malnutrition

¹⁴ Ibid.

January-May 2006 TFC outcome data on-site at a large Regional Hospital, the effectiveness of ECHO support was seen in that three-fourths of severely malnourished children recovered. Sick children arriving at TFCs very late in their illness and already HIV-AIDS infected had lowered chances of surviving. The 2003 DG-ECHO evaluation suggested piloting of village-based malnutrition treatment units. With UNICEF, the MoHCW set up 8 pilots sites in 2006. A visit to a CBNCP pilot site pointed up that there are “niche” opportunities for the health centre nurse and outreach workers mobilising prevention and treatment of severe malnutrition benefitting from value-added to their work by an EU-funded NGO that offers to transport ill children and parents to the district TFC for treatment, as well as enabling district nurse supervisors to travel to health centres whilst the NGO supports VCT and PMTCT services at the same sites. This is an example of a mutually reinforcing link of the malnutrition prevention work with HIV-AIDS interventions as required by the ECHO Decisions 2004 and 2005. The coordination role of the lead partner is seen as effective in: (i) frequent technical assistance to TFCs and CBNCP sites in taking forward innovative treatment steps, and (ii) the well-circulated Nutrition Atlas is used to monitor activities of implementers working to prevent and treat severe malnutrition and for the programming of future interventions.

3.4.5 Impact

The national impact of malnutrition treatment from Partner interventions, after 1 to 2 years had transpired since ECHO funds were used, could not be measured due to lack of MoHCW data. At mid-2006, only 13 of 75 district TFCs (17%) were reporting data regularly. From interviewing professionals, it was noted that recovery rates at TFCs are driven by the severity of illness of the child upon arrival, the stock of nutritionals available and the responsiveness of staff assigned. One hospital’s TFC data (2006) gives a partial picture: 76 percent of admitted cases recovered. Of the remaining 24 percent, in 73 percent of these cases children died (N=17) due to the synergy of severe malnutrition in the presence of HIV-AIDS. Even with a bigger configuration of therapeutic and technical inputs from ECHO or other donors, it is judged as unlikely that these outcomes could have been successfully reversed unless prior steps had been in place for the Primary Prevention of the HIV-AIDS infection in the parents¹⁵.

3.4.6 Sustainability

Short-term, time-sensitive benefits secured with ECHO funds cannot flow indefinitely. Substantial funding and technical resources are needed from donors whose mandates enable multi-year funding to secure outcomes such as preventing all levels of childhood malnutrition. The coordination role of the Partner is known to continue through technical assistance to help stakeholders implement Well Child (IMCI) services endorsed by GoZ. Support from the MoHCW has been weak in policy, funding and in practice for TFCs. When ECHO begins to manage EU Food Aid operations in 2007, it is logical to expect that vulnerable families with malnourished children ought to enjoy expanded access to food aid pipelines. GoZ was slow to authorise importing the ECHO-funded European-manufactured fortified peanut butter. A home-made peanut butter is now successfully used in neighbouring Malawi to promote weight gain in severely malnourished children. This model could meet needs in Zimbabwe.¹⁶

3.5 INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS (MOBILE VULNERABLE POPULATION)

3.5.1 Overview

Two groups of IDPs are attended: (a) rural people displaced since 2001 comprising 160,000 ex-commercial farm workers and families; and (b) urban people, estimated between 700,000 and 2,000,000 that were evicted during ORO in April -May 2005. Access to IDPs by the

¹⁵ The data are politically sensitive. Refer to details of qualification contained in Extended Footnote 15 Annex 9.

¹⁶ See Extended Footnote 16 (Annex 9) that underpins Recommendation 22 for a home-made fortified peanut butter.

groups delivering emergency relief, is periodically restricted by GoZ, but the groups continue working despite the risks. The EU Delegation, IOM, several EU Member States, a few UN agencies have come forward as champions advocating for the rights of IDPs. Members of this voluntary coalition offered to serve as “honest brokers” to leverage a resolution by GoZ. To date little progress has been registered against these brokerage offers. GoZ has by and large been in denial concerning the issue.

3.5.2 Relevance

The design of the interventions built upon the global track record of the Partner working with migrant populations. The Partner used Decision 2004 funds to mobilise aid to the ex-commercial farm worker group that constitutes a majority of the displaced in rural areas. Through FBOs and CBOs, ECHO assisted 2,000 ex-farm worker families in Manicaland. The 2005 ECHO Decision furthered this help to the ex-farm worker population as well as enabled bringing emergency relief to IDPs displaced by ORO. The 700,000 to 2 million IDPs affected by ORO account for the majority of evictions in cities and towns. Forcible evictions in urban and peri-urban areas continue but on a smaller scale than April-May 2005. During the ECHO evaluation the team was briefed by clergymen about police actions near Bulawayo to remand to jail 53 previously evicted IDP families. Continued ECHO funding is needed to aid IDPs. The main challenge is keeping track of the exact location and nature and magnitude of their needs seeing as this group is highly mobile and there does not so far exist a robust IDP tracking system to monitor their movements.

3.5.3 Efficiency

The Partner managed risks associated with GoZ displeasure for aiding IDPs and possibility of physical harm to the Partner staff and volunteers. Prime examples of efficient use of ECHO funds included the creation of a database on IDPs, the timely distribution of food, NFIs, shelter materials and agricultural implements to IDPs training in livelihoods and provision of HIV-AIDS prevention and VCT services. the capacity of IPs to carry out standardised humanitarian relief procedures and to reinforce local ownership of the interventions. The Partner used ECHO funds to build local capacity and reinforced ownership of the interventions by 7 FBOs/CBOs in Manicaland that form part of a force of 27 groups nationally that deliver humanitarian aid. To do this, the Partner wrote procedural manuals, mobilised trainings and provided intensive TA¹⁷. Further training is to be held so that the groups raise their aid delivery skills to the level of a known performance standard. There is no comparable scenario, globally, for this type of displacement in order to judge the value-for-money of the interventions.

3.5.4 Effectiveness

The Partner and IPs secured emergency funds and disaster-type of NFIs from many sources. Churches were the first place that IDPs sought refuge. The Churches were effective at: (i) securing access to the IDPs to bring immediate relief; and (ii) using their convening authority to mobilise resources. The Partner’s Migration Health Unit, financed by ECHO provides timely, although under-resourced, surveillance of routine illnesses as well as rapid onset disease outbreaks reported amongst the IDPs. As new resources permit, the Partner is moving incrementally towards standards in providing IDPs health services and HIV-AIDS prevention education and referral for treatment. These steps are guided by the Partner’s own International Standard and DG-ECHO Guidelines on HIV-AIDS Prevention and Care for IDPs¹⁸. In phases the Partner and IPs are working to establish links between the HIV-AIDS prevention and VCT work funded through ECHO and GoZ service sites to which IDPs ought to have access.

¹⁷ See Extended Footnote 17 (Annex 9) citing a retrospective Joint Donor Review (2003-2006) of the Partner’s Operations.

¹⁸ Refers to SMART (Specific, Measurable, Accurate, Realistic, Timely) outcome-based indicators of impact.

3.5.5 Impact

To date no mutually acceptable resolution has been reached for the relocation of the displaced farm worker families and for addressing the needs of the estimated 700,000 persons evicted during the ORO campaign. The Partner and IPs provided immediate humanitarian relief: food, NFIs, spiritual comfort, HIV-AIDS education and VCT care to 2,000 ex-farm worker families in Manicaland. ECHO Decision 2005 granted to the Partner 500,000 Euros for six months to address mobilising resources in support of 500,000 beneficiaries of the 700,000-2,000,00 displaced in cities and towns. Where the IPs are consistently able to bring services and if not hampered by GoZ disruptions, IDPs receive food aid, health education/VCT, livelihoods training and essential services. Tools used for the 2006 ECHO evaluation were not sensitive enough to capture evidence of a long term impact of the use of the IDP database, relief aid, NFIs, training, HIV-AIDS education/VCT and related services provided to IDPs. The Partner trained heads of households of both urban and rural IDP groups in livelihoods techniques and gave them food-production tools. Food production results from use of these inputs by the ex-farm worker IDP group are modest in scale. An elusive missing factor to effect a lasting resolution that enables production of food is lack of permanent access to land for the IDPs.

3.5.6 Sustainability

A lasting response to the humanitarian needs attended cannot be brokered without GoZ willingness to dialogue with the IDPs themselves and those pursuing implementation of a phased political resolution on their behalf. The EC uses as incentives all available EDF funds, with suitable safeguards, to bring forward GoZ's willingness to discuss the IDP crises. The deteriorating economic context in which IDPs are embedded is summarised Annex 1. Multiple sources report that the number of the mobile vulnerable continues to grow¹⁹. Well-informed persons in Zimbabwe that follow closely the IDP issues²⁰ offer the opinion that the GoZ is in denial. It does not recognise the displacements as a crisis needing GoZ resolution. An answer to the IDPs must be given through dialogue amongst all stakeholders. Meanwhile the Partner secures resources to strengthen health/HIV-AIDS care, to guide IDPs towards meeting a portion of food production needs and to enable IPs to meet a known standard in performing planning and management tasks in implementing the delivery of emergency humanitarian relief to IDPs.

3.6 ACCESS TO SERVICES BY CHILDREN ORPHANED AND MADE VULNERABLE BY HIV-AIDS (OVCs)

3.6.1 Overview

A baseline OVC²¹ survey was conducted by the lead Partner in 21 districts in 2004. As compared with non-OVCs, only 30 percent of OVCs were able to access health services. Whilst school enrolment rates are reported to be at 90 percent nationally, the economic deterioration and the toll of HIV-AIDS are seen in a current statistic of 25 percent of primary school-aged children do not complete schooling²².

3.6.2 Relevance

The partner mobilised a Stakeholder Working Group of Officials that produced the National Plan of Action (NPA) for OVCs. Design of the ECHO actions was built upon evidence that assessed needs and conditions to serve the requirements of the evolving number of OVCs.

¹⁹ See Extended Footnote 19 (Annex 9) for citations of estimates that the number of mobile vulnerable is increasing.

²⁰ Personal communication with the most senior level of a European diplomatic mission in Harare, July 2006.

²¹ Please refer to the inclusive definition of vulnerable children as given in Extended Footnote 10 Annex 9.

²² Confirmed in both the Partner's Final report and UNOCHA, Consolidated Appeals Process: Zimbabwe 2006,

Children were included amongst those consulted in designing the ECHO projects and their needs were taken into account. The Partner channelled two-thirds of donor funding received to increase access by OVCs to health, education, psychosocial support, justice and other services and for implementing the “block grant” improvements that were bartered with School Districts to waive fees for OVCs²³.

3.6.3 Efficiency

As an indicator of efficient use of ECHO resources the Partner reported that 48 percent of the 48,000 OVC beneficiaries were able to have access to safe water and hygiene facilities in their villages and at schools, the result of ECHO-funded physical works. The WES improvements were negotiated with School District Committees in exchange for school fee waivers for OVCs. Pooled financing, from ECHO and other donors, supported a short-stay camping experience for OVCs and training sessions to raise awareness on OVC needs by their care-givers and community advocates. Nationwide, estimates record that 55 percent of OVCs are between the ages of 12 and 17 years old²⁴. Through similar pooled funding the Partner and IPs helped these OVCs to stay in school as well as trained teachers and community people to counsel the out-of-school OVCs to return and assisted them to locate the means to do so. Using non-ECHO sources, several IPs paid for school fees, uniforms, shoes, stationary, toiletries (part of a “Passport” for a child to attend school on an equal basis with peers). In the future, coverage of such “Passport” needs by ECHO funding might be joined up to the new Programme of Support to OVCs (PoS)²⁵. The EC Delegation is one of the continuing financiers of PoS, contributing 1 million Euros in 2006 to be followed by 10 million Euros.

3.6.4 Effectiveness

Fifty-seven ECHO-funded “block grants” helped 1,980 OVCs continue schooling through agreements to waive school fees in exchange for school infrastructure improvements... Long-term monitoring is required to see that the OVCs remain in school under this arrangement. Village residents, mainly women, supplied labour and raw materials for the physical works. The IPs complimented this with finished materials and skilled labour. In addition to newly built latrines, boreholes were repaired under WES projects again tapping women’s labour. One assumes that all residents benefited from access to safe water. But attention was judged as inadequate to have helped women to participate effectively in local decision-making such as women’s presence on School Development Committees. In one ward visited, no women ever participated in School Committee decisions, despite a majority of women having laboured for the WES improvements, guided by the local IP for several years. Attention to a Women’s Rights-based Approach was absent in the block grants mobilised by certain IPs²⁶. Evidence from elsewhere where women’s rights based approaches (Bangladesh rural land policy programmes) have been tried shows that it is best articulated as a long term development programme which seeks to empower women interest groups to lobby for a common cause. This may be beyond the immediate mandate of ECHO but shows an area of potential collaboration between ECHO Partners and those promoting Rights-Based Approaches in project delivery.

²³ The Partner’s Final report of 2005 and UNOCHA CAP: 2006 op. cit, page 28.

²⁴ UNICEF, Survey on OVCs in Rural/Urban High Density Zimbabwe 2004/2005.

²⁵ See Extended Footnote 25 for a detailed description of the new Programme of Support for OVCs (PoS).

²⁶ Personal observations made by ECHO Evaluators during visits to IP project implementation areas within districts in Binga and Matabeleland Provinces during the period 17.07.06 through 26.07.06.²⁶ See comments on Women’s Rights-based Approach in Section 4.3 on “Gender” and Extended footnotes 26 and 30.

3.6.5 Impact

The evaluation was not resourced to capture hard data, over the project period, on a lasting impact for OVCs remaining in school, being nurtured by food aid, counselling, NFIs and WES services provided. In 7 districts in which the Partner identified a target of 5261 OVCs, ECHO 2005 funding enabled 38 percent of targeted girl OVCs (977/2532) and 36 percent of boy OVCs (1003/2729) to attend school, exchanging WES improvements for their school fees²⁷. IPs provided punctual opportunities for OVCs to benefit from “grief-counselling,” using effective play therapy and child-assessment. Interventions were limited to a two-weeks-duration “camping” experience led by IP staff. Whilst beneficial in the short-run, long term impact from such brief interventions is not measurable. UN agencies and an EU Member State are at work to create an OVC-counselling framework response in the long-term that may enable OVCs to cope with grief, to succeed in school work and to become productive citizens.

3.6.6 Sustainability

Given that EU food aid resources (including to OVCs) will be managed by ECHO and is expected to expand in coverage, then the new Programme of Support to OVCs appears as a likely resource to tap an LRRD approach to assist OVCs in the long term. The PoS will fund NSAs to help OVCs to access education, health, social, justice and other services at local levels. EC Delegation funds are now pledged to the pooled start-up of the PoS. ECHO might add value to this, specifically by procuring NFIs for OVCs: clothing, shoes, toiletries and other items as was done for the IDPs with ECHO funds. Partners accessing PoS funds for longer-term approaches to meet OVC needs for essentials services might complement that approach with requests for ECHO to secure the NFIs in the short term. The short term ECHO procurement would be best joined-up to the multi-donor PoS funding.

4 CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

4.1 COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

The challenge for ECHO’s emergency programme (2004-2005) was in balancing speed of implementation to provide quick relief in the short window of implementation with adequate participation of beneficiaries in needs identification and programme formulation. In the food security sector, the start of the rainfall season added a special natural deadline on completion dates of distributions for seed and fertiliser as any late distribution would compromise the results. To address this challenge, most Partners planned at the district level with local authorities, councillors and government technical departments representing the communities and then implemented in consultation with local leaders at ward level. Community participation was maximized especially where local materials were required for rehabilitations. The consequence of the absence of communities in planning was lack of ownership of the process as well as the results. Sometimes interventions were poorly timed and communities could not participate due to competing dryland farming activities.

4.2 HIV/AIDS

Mainstreaming of HIV and AIDS was achieved directly through the HBC, OVC and nutrition interventions. The main deficiency was the absence of ARVs in ECHO’s HBC and nutrition packages, understandably so due to the long term nature of such engagement and absence of clear exit points with respect to LRRD. In addition, the fact that it might require implementation through state systems which are best placed for such social welfare type support further hindered the possibility of ECHO intervention in this area. Although

²⁷ Final report of the Implementing lead Partner, 2006. See Extended Footnotes 27 in Annex 9.

PLWHAs were not an explicit target group for agricultural assistance programmes, they benefited from blanket targeting of the dip tank rehabilitations provided they had some livestock and labour to take the livestock for dipping. ECHO targeted its crop assistance programme (especially drip kits, sweet potato multiplication and vegetable seed) to those households with the capacity (land and labour) to produce, hence labour-deficient households may not have benefited directly from this assistance, but probably indirectly through a general improvement in food availability and strong social networks in the rural setting which permit local sharing of the surplus produce through donations and remittances. Targeting of WATSAN interventions to vulnerable households and the reduction in the distance to the nearest water source, may have produced direct benefits to PLWHA, although for some, this benefit was short-lived because of residual problems with spares for maintenance of the pumps and other natural constraints (e.g., low water table).

4.3 GENDER

There is merely tolerance but not enforcement for the rights and protection of women in many African nations. Since 2003 Zimbabwe has been a signatory to the “Protocol on the Protection of Human and Peoples’ Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa” that calls for eliminating discrimination against women and integrating gender perspectives in policy decisions, legislation and development plans. Projects seen during this evaluation gave little proof of translating into practice EU policies on Gender Mainstreaming in the LRRD context. Several IPs that mobilized the energies of women and men to help improve access to water points or for school latrines paid no demonstrable heed to the policy. In Ndebele-speaking districts, women and girls were recruited as convenient manual labourers for WES infrastructure projects that ought to have done more to help women meet their strategic needs for gender equity in local decision-making affecting their lives. Gender Parity and elimination of domestic based violence receive theoretical attention in both ECHO- and non-ECHO-projects but do not appear to be widely practiced in Zimbabwe nor throughout Sub-Saharan Africa. EC sources direct that, when beginning the Project Cycle, visible and explicit gender equality targets need to be set at each activity level. Designing women-specific interventions could lead to securing outcomes that may influence local conditions of unequal gender relations²⁸. ECHO may want to consider commission a study to establish best practice internationally on this issue.

4.4 CHILD-HEADED HOUSEHOLDS (CHH) AND THE ELDERLY

Along with the handicapped, child- and female-headed households, the elderly are considered amongst the vulnerable benefiting from ECHO projects (WES and food aid). The 2004 survey in 21 districts found few CHH (0.5%), suggesting that family networks do care for OVCs. Two-thirds of female-headed households cared for an OVC. A grandparent caring for OVCs was noted in 61 percent of the households surveyed.²⁹ Cash transfers for assistance to the elderly are nil. NGOs with resources have now replaced GoZ agencies for dispensing relief.

4.5 INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY

4.5.1. Partners

Both new and existing developmental NGOs that applied for ECHO funding had staffing capacity gaps which manifested later in operations. In general, there was a marked disparity between scale of coverage and staffing capacities of Partner institutions. As a consequence, Partners over- relied on already poorly resourced government departments such as DDF,

²⁸ See Extended Footnote 28 in Annex 9 for source documents that underpin the commentary given here.

²⁹ Survey on Orphans and Other Vulnerable Children in Rural/Urban High Density Zimbabwe 2004/2005. UNICEF (2005), pp14-16.

AREX, and the DVS³⁰ to fill the gap, especially for training and distributions. Reliance on AREX personnel without providing logistical and subsistence support, in particular, not only slowed down progress but affected the quality of aid as these frontline cadres are poorly paid, lack motivation and transport, and their workload is too high (staff ratios such as 800 – 9,000 farmers per Extension Worker were common). As a result, some beneficiaries of seed and fertiliser packs and drip kits did not receive the planned training and this was at the expense of impact. As ECHO looks into the future, stronger assessment of partner capacity is needed so that funding levels are in tandem with what the Partner can deliver as opposed to just the beneficiary needs. More attention to this aspect will increase the quality and impact of aid delivered. In the event that Partners plan to use government personnel, then Partners need to be innovative in supporting these personnel so that they are able to carry out the envisaged activities and result in programme success.

4.5.2 ECHO Country Team

Given the generally weak knowledge of PCM in both humanitarian and relief NGOs, success of the ECHO programme during 2004-5 can be attributed to the adequate technical guidance provided by the ECHO Technical Team to Partners. During 2004-2005, ECHO reduced by half the number of its implementing partners to match its own capacity to provide the necessary technical assistance and supervision. The ECHO Harare Office received also sound technical backstopping from the ECHO Regional Office in Nairobi which from time to time sent subject matter specialists to visit the Zimbabwe operations and provide useful reflections on possible improvement of the country's portfolio. Strong technical support is also provided by FAO and ICRISAT who are contracted to carry out independent monitoring and evaluation studies on behalf of ECHO and other donors. Partners implementing food security programmes are satisfied with the technical capacity within ECHO, especially as the Head of Office has a strong rural development background. Technical support provided by ECHO to other sectors was also widely appreciated by Partners.

4.6 COORDINATION (FAO, UNDP, UNICEF AND IOM)

ECHO investment into coordination of humanitarian programmes has had high payoffs. That for agricultural recovery programmes has set an example for other sectors (water and nutrition). The duplication in agricultural assistance has significantly been reduced from 15-17% in 2002-2003 to as low as 3% in 2004-2005 in some districts. Pockets of duplication still exist but at lower scale and are often confined to programmes of the Red Cross and the Government. Well attended monthly coordination meetings are ensuring consistency among implementers. The Guidelines for Agricultural Relief Programmes are useful to implementing partners (although not always fully followed, e.g., the protocol on drip kits) and are being regularly updated on the basis of implementation experience which is also constantly monitored and documented. Various protocols have been developed to guide relief, which have been vital for confidence building with Government and have gone a long way in protecting beneficiaries.

Coordination was extremely valuable to the response to the victims of the May-July 2005 Operation Murambatsvina, as at the zenith of the programme, leading Partners met daily, sharing updated information, and brokering resources.

³⁰ Some partners did not want to create parallel structures to those of government so they relied on AREX and the DVS to provide training to farmers. However, most implementing partners failed to provide these departments with logistical support and this negatively affected delivery of training.

4.7 GOVERNANCE

Governance in an LRRD context might refer to “rules, processes and behaviour that affect the way in which state powers are exercised, particularly as regards openness, participation, accountability, effectiveness and coherence.”³¹ Poor governance is cited by the donor community as part of the Triple Threat keeping many of the Southern African nations in their current fragile economic and political state. Zimbabwean NSAs (several are ECHO partners) compete through Calls for Proposals issued by EC DELEGATION under the EIDHR aiming at “Fostering a Culture of Human Rights,” or “Promoting Democratic Processes.”

Sustainability of most of ECHO’s achievements in Zimbabwe hinges not only on natural factors like rainfall but bold steps to resolve the governance crisis. The present humanitarian situation is to some extent associated with inappropriate macro- and sectoral policies. Sub-optimal pricing of fertiliser and staple food crops for instance is perpetuating chronic food insecurity in the country. The challenges being faced in supply of fertiliser and livestock inputs (dipping chemicals, vaccines, etc) are to do with the supply of foreign exchange and this will require positive steps (on both sides) towards rebuilding the country’s relations with the international community.

4.8 LRRD

With the exception of a few projects, many financed through ECHO Humanitarian Aid Decisions 2004 and 2005 were unable to join up emergency relief actions with a strategy for longer term development. Three major reasons accounted for this: (i) the short implementation timeframe of the interventions which limited choice of feasible actions; (ii) unfavourable macro-economic environment; and (iii) the absence of large scale long-term development programmes in many of the sectors to takeover from the achievements of the relief programmes. To some extent, clever use of relief assistance in the food security sector managed to jump-start the link to recovery by promoting nationwide introduction of improved seed and agricultural practices. Especially needed are interventions that build the capacities of farmers and their extension services providers in the application of the new technologies introduced. Dip-tank rehabilitations, presented a perfect opportunity for ECHO to link with other regional livestock disease control programmes which have prospects of sustainability as they are funded by stable governments that place a premium value on their livestock and have an interest in preventing further disease outbreaks. These new initiatives continue to use the rehabilitated facilities to vaccinate more cattle against Foot and Mouth Disease and Anthrax. However, what is needed is a programme for complementing this by addressing issues of community empowerment and the supply of dipping chemicals. With the unveiling of the FSBL NGO Call for Proposals Facility, it can be possible to further refine and consolidate ECHO’s food security actions and instruments, with a view to scaling them up on a more sustainable basis.

In the water sector, the role of government is still central to LRRD and increasing isolation and declining capacity of government are major stumbling blocks to guaranteeing the link to recovery. At the same time creating capacity at the local level to manage and repair water points on a sustainable basis is hindered by a harsh macro economic environment. The answer to LRRD in the nutrition sector rests in the strengthening of community-nutrition initiatives seeing as gains made at referral Therapeutic Feeding centres can quickly be lost once children are discharged. Absence of a large scale programme to promote community-level production of therapeutic feeding formulae leaves a gap in the process of trying to link

³¹ Roderick Rhodes, “The New Governance: Governing without Government” (1996), in *Political Studies*, Vol. 44, page 652

hospital based therapy with home-based nutrition practices which otherwise is essential for sustainable management of malnutrition in children.

5. LESSONS LEARNED

ECHO continues to learn from its implementation experience. The main lessons that emerge from ECHO's 2004-5 programme are the following:

1. The prior presence of development NGOs in a crisis torn region does not necessarily imply ability to swiftly scale up relief as development work and humanitarian assistance delivery require different sets of institutional capacities such that adequate time should be budgeted for institutional adaptation.
2. Protracted relief in a state of economic collapse can build an irreversible dependency syndrome linked to perpetual worsening of underlying vulnerability of the country's population.
3. In food security crises, emergency livestock support programmes are as essential to livestock dependent communities as seed and other types of support are to crop cultivating communities. Special needs of population groups whose livelihoods are mainly derived from livestock should be identified and incorporated into relief.
4. Agricultural relief and recovery programmes can be a fast and effective vehicle for promoting large-scale technology adoption if farmer capacity building can be incorporated into the relief.
5. The short timeframe of the ECHO relief window imposes a limit to the type of agricultural interventions that can realistically be promoted with respect to LRRD. In general, interventions that require radical changes in mindset of the beneficiaries or intensive capacity building and monitoring to promote social acceptability are likely to be unsuccessful.
6. In a complex emergency, UN coordination can play a crucial role in confidence building between policy makers, implementers and donor agencies resulting in greater HA space.
7. Capacity building of state institutions that provide direct support to the community such as the District Development Fund is necessary if relief is to graduate into recovery and development. This calls for a closer partnership between DG ECHO and DG DEV in water projects than hitherto achieved.
8. Therapeutic Feeding Centres are as needed as an emergency local resource as much as rescue, fire and police protection is needed. Their continued presence in districts, and even at community-based nutrition intervention sites now being piloted, ought to be strengthened and supported by GoZ and donors.
9. For water-related emergencies, centralised/coordinated procurement (e.g., bulk purchasing through ECHO recognised Humanitarian Procurement Centres) is critical in improving the efficiency of supply of water and sanitation materials to implementing partners-independent procurement is expensive and slow. Since these are mostly based in Europe, ECHO could consider disseminating adequate

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.