

# **Evaluation of the European Union's humanitarian interventions in India and Nepal, 2013-2017**

## **Final Report**

**February 2018**

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*The opinions expressed in this document represent the authors' point of view which is not necessarily shared by the European Commission or by the authorities of the concerned countries.*

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# Abstract

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This report is an independent evaluation of the European Union's humanitarian interventions in India and Nepal during the period 2013-2017, as managed by the European Commission's Directorate-General for Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO). The evaluation draws upon evidence from project data, interviews, field visits and a literature review.

The evaluation concludes that ECHO country programmes succeeded in achieving most project output objectives, with mixed results at an outcome level due to various factors. Better outcomes have been achieved in Nepal than in India due mainly to a less challenging operating environment. Community-based disaster risk reduction (DRR) projects in Nepal in the education and health sectors have been scaled up at to a national policy level contributing to improved resilience of communities with the education intervention providing a good practice example of collaboration.

Five strategic recommendations targeted primarily at ECHO include 1) improving the timeliness and predictability of funding decisions for quick-onset disasters, 2) promoting a programme-based approach for DRR activities, 3) improved cooperation with development actors, 4) using the current transition in Nepal as an opportunity to build on ECHO's previous DRR work and 5) exploring alternative models for future cooperation with India.



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## List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

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ADE	Analysis for Economic Decisions
CBI	Connecting Business Initiative
CMAM	Community-Based Management of Acute Malnutrition
CTP	Cash Transfer Programming
DCC	District Coordination Committees
DDC	District Development Committees (replaced by DCC during 2017 as part of the restructuring process in Nepal)
DDRC	District Disaster Relief Committees
DEOC	District Emergency Operations Committee
DEVCO	European Commission's Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development
DFID	Department for International Development (UK)
DIPECHO	Disaster Preparedness ECHO programme
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
EC	European Commission
ECHO/ ECHO	European Commission Directorate General for Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection
EEAS	European External Action Service
eSF	ECHO Single Form
EQ	Evaluation Question
EU	European Union
EUR	Euro
FCA	Forgotten Crisis Assessments
FICCI	Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
IAF	Integrated Assessment Framework
GDP	British Pounds
GoI	Government of India
GoN	Government of Nepal
GGOPHA	General Guidelines on Operational Priorities for Humanitarian Aid
HIP	Humanitarian Implementation Plan
HOPE	ECHO Operations Database (Humanitarian Office Programme Environment)
HQ	Headquarters
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IFRC	International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent
INFORM	Index for Risk Management
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organisation
IOM	International Office for Migration

LRRD	Linking Relief, Rehabilitation and Development
NFI	Non-food items
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NRCS	Nepal Red Cross Society
NRRC	Nepal Risk Reduction Consortium
OCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OFDA	Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (USA)
PDM	Post Distribution Monitoring
RUTF	Ready to use therapeutic food
SSDP	School Sector Development Plan
TOR	Terms of Reference
UK	United Kingdom
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNISDR	United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction
VDC	Village Development Committee (Nepal)
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WFP	United Nations World Food Programme
WHO	United Nations World Health Organisation

# Executive Summary

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## Evaluation Subject, Purpose and Scope

The evaluation covered humanitarian interventions in India and Nepal during the period 2013-2017 funded by the European Commission's Directorate-General for Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO). It included the different sectors in which support was provided, notably Shelter/Non-Food Items (NFIs), Water and Sanitation, Health, Food Assistance, Protection, Recovery and Disaster Risk Reduction.

The evaluation purpose is two-fold. Firstly, it aims to provide aims at providing an assessment of ECHO's strategy/approach and provide strategic recommendations. Secondly, relevant results will help to inform ECHO's future funding decisions in both countries and, at a global level, by feeding into a comprehensive evaluation of the European Commission's humanitarian aid covering the period 2012-2016.

## Methodology

The evaluation was divided into three-phases; inception, data collection and synthesis. The data collection phase included both desk and field work covering the 10 evaluation questions in the terms of reference (TOR) for this evaluation. The team conducted visits to Nepal and India during 15 days at the end of August 2017, including to selected project sites in each country. The team interviewed a total of 156 stakeholders, either face-to-face, over Skype or by phone, including representatives from European Commission (EC) headquarters, ECHO field offices, European Union (EU) Delegations, government officials, bilateral donors, United Nations (UN) Agencies, national and local authorities, international and local Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), and representatives of beneficiary communities. This included also on-site visits. The team reviewed hundreds of documents, including policy and strategy documents, evaluations, reviews, studies and other documents. Details of eighty documents that were particularly relevant to the evidence base for the evaluation are attached as an annex.

Preliminary findings and emerging conclusions were presented to ECHO field staff at debriefing sessions with field staff at the end of each country visit. In Nepal, ECHO partners also participated in the debriefing. Feedback from ECHO field staff and partners was considered when drafting the Progress Report that was presented to the Steering Group for this evaluation in September. A workshop was held following circulation of the draft report where staff from ECHO and, in Nepal, from partners were given the opportunity to provide high level feedback on the draft report and provide perspectives on the relevance and achievability of the recommendations.

## Summary of Findings

A summary of findings based on the judgement criteria agreed during the inception phase for each of the 10 evaluation questions is described below.

### Needs Assessments

ECHO and partners in both India and Nepal had access to relevant needs assessment data of sufficient quality. ECHO only occasionally participated in partners' needs assessment but played an important role in relevant processes, both at a strategic and operational level. ECHO needs assessments were multi-layered. First phase assessments drawing on data from ECHO's Index for Risk Management (INFORM) and Forgotten Crisis Assessments (FCA) were relevant and coherent. Data collected during the second phase were less coherent.

Needs assessments by partners were carried out in multiple phases and progressively focused on identifying priority needs and target groups. This approach resulted in good quality assessments. Most partners regularly consulted with communities during needs during assessments, apart from some projects in Jammu and Kashmir, mainly due to political sensitivities.

Needs assessments of ECHO and partners were appropriate and timely, including assessments by ECHO staff immediately following a disaster event to inform modifications to Humanitarian Implementation Plans (HIP). Assessments for disaster risk reduction (DRR) actions included a mapping of stakeholder roles and responsibilities in line with ECHO guidelines.

### Entry and Exit Strategies

ECHO developed strategies adapted to the specific needs and contexts in each country taking account of their vulnerability to natural disasters and need to strengthening people's resilience, particularly in mitigating the impacts on marginalised groups.

As part of ECHO's preparedness plan, disaster events in both countries were entry points for ECHO and its partners to develop intervention strategies and/or as triggers to scale up operations.

Exit strategies that were not over-reliant on government ownership proved more viable. An example of good practice was a school safety project in Nepal that emphasised community mobilisation while also engaging with other donors and the government. In India, ECHO's strategy has focused on improving access to services by conflict-affected populations, but these have been challenged by the government's general lack of ownership.

The Government of Nepal (GoN) has been more willing to work with international humanitarian agencies although ECHO's strategy has been to engage with the government and other stakeholders by working through partners and relevant networks. Entry strategies for DRR activities in Nepal have followed a national → district → community process to gain approval at national level and move down the ladder gaining approval and promoting ownership at each stage. The exit strategy is a reverse process, with an aim of influencing policy and practice at different levels. Strategies were regularly adjusted by modifying the HIP and reallocating funding.

Exit strategies have faced challenges in both countries due to several factors including the relatively short duration of ECHO projects, operationalising LRRD with development actors and inadequate strategies for replicating and scaling up pilot projects. There are nevertheless several examples of replication of DRR activities in Nepal where the GoN has integrated good practice into guidelines, strategy and local development planning processes.

ECHO lacked an exit strategy for their country programme in India and the phase out during 2017 was done largely on an *ad hoc* basis without much support from ECHO to smooth the transition for its partners. Based on relevant indicators, it is difficult to justify ECHO's suspension of their programme in India based on unmet needs, although ECHO's limited value-added in the Indian operating context meant that it did not make sense to continue without a substantial revision of the operating model.

### Alignment with ECHO Policies

ECHO country strategies and operations were coherent with ECHO's broader policy framework. ECHO-supported operations in Nepal were coherent with sectors and approaches described in the HIP. Sectoral interventions in India were broadly consistent with ECHO policies but, due to the operating context, ECHO found itself at the edge of its mandate since many of the activities it supported were bordering on development.

Awareness of ECHO's policies amongst partners was uneven in each country and fairly limited. A combination of ECHO's "hands on" monitoring approach combined with advice and quality assurance provided by Europe-based staff of ECHO partners helped to align interventions with ECHO policies. However, the understanding and application of humanitarian principles by partners and other stakeholders was inconsistent due in part to the relationships with governments in each country.

Resilience and Gender-Age Markers were useful as they helped to clarify ECHO's policy commitments and allowed ECHO staff to make transparent and evidence-based judgements on compliance with related ECHO policies on ECHO funded interventions.

### Articulation with other Actors

There was a lack of articulation between ECHO and the European Commission's Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development (DEVCO) in DRR and resilience programming in both countries. One good practice example of collaboration with DEVCO in the education sector in Nepal nevertheless did demonstrate that it was possible to achieve impressive positive outcomes despite institutional and system challenges.

There was little evidence of joint action by the EU Civil Protection and the ECHO antenna office in Nepal during the deployment for the Nepal earthquake response. However, the co-location of staff within the EU Delegation office did facilitate regular information-sharing during the earthquake response.

ECHO's role in facilitating coordination between partners in Nepal improved programme effectiveness. ECHO made use of sector-wide partnerships with implementers, donors and other stakeholders active in supporting DRR and resilience. This helped to improve efficiency and effectiveness of ECHO interventions through better alignment and harmonisation of donor approaches to fill gaps and reduce duplication in addition to facilitating knowledge management

ECHO's HIP for Nepal has been developed in consultation with other humanitarian actors, and other donors and was in line with the sectoral priorities and needs identified. In India, the HIP was mainly developed by ECHO without much consultation with partners, although partners they found it relevant. There was no evidence of direct involvement of government actors in the development of the HIP in either country.

ECHO's relationship with governments in both countries usually has been indirect, either through its partners or the EU delegation. ECHO missions tend to interact mainly at a local government level. In Nepal, ECHO was an active participant in national DRR dialogues, where it has been viewed as a major player by the international community.

Channelling ECHO funds through consortia have improved efficiency and effectiveness in some cases, providing they are well-managed and resourced.

ECHO was well-informed about interventions of other humanitarian actors, particularly in Nepal, where ECHO regularly participated in collaborative activities with other donors, including joint assessments.

#### **EU Added-Value**

Partners were unanimous in their appreciation of the “demanding and hands-on” approach of ECHO with their partners that helped them to focus on results and improve quality. Compared to its peers, as a donor ECHO was seen by partners as the most knowledgeable of the situation on the ground and thus in a good position to provide useful and timely feedback. This “hands on” approach has also resulted in ECHO being perceived by other donors with a presence in the countries as a useful resource for advice about the situation on the ground. For EU members who do not maintain a permanent humanitarian presence in either country, information from ECHO has been a critical element for their analysis of needs, risk and vulnerability to guide their programmes.

More than a decade of investment in DRR and resilience in Nepal has positioned ECHO as a recognised thematic expert. This has led to expectations by partners and local governments that ECHO will make an important contribution in supporting the transition process to the new governance system. ECHO's successes in improving the understanding of DRR and resilience in Nepal has highlighted gaps in LRRD as communities try and find for funds to retrofit unsafe buildings identified when drawing up hazard maps.

The lack of direct engagement with GoI and GoN has made it easier for ECHO to work independently, which should be value-added for ECHO. However, the lack of direct government engagement has limited their ability to meet ECHO commitments relating to humanitarian principles, notably the impartial provision of assistance to marginalised populations.

Value-added of the EU's humanitarian assistance model in the Indian operating context has been limited, even though partners confirmed the relevance of ECHO's programme while emphasising that ECHO has been virtually the only donor regularly supporting and visiting conflict areas.

### Achievement of Objectives

ECHO Strategies in both countries include maintaining an adequate level of preparedness to be able to respond to disasters that exceed the capacity of national actors to address humanitarian needs. While DRR interventions supported by ECHO have contributed to increased resilience of affected communities, delays in ECHO funding decisions following quick-onset emergencies have reduced the effectiveness of ECHO's interventions.

The strategic objectives as formulated in each country were consistent with ECHO's mandate, although the contribution of ECHO actions in India was limited by various constraints. In India, ECHO's strategy mainly focused on improving inclusion and quality in service delivery for conflict-affected communities in northern India and Jammu and Kashmir. ECHO's strategy in Nepal had a specific focus on building resilience in hazard-prone areas.

A review of a sample of fifteen ECHO-funded projects<sup>1</sup> found a 80-90% success rate in achieving, or exceeding, planned outputs in terms of beneficiaries reached and sectoral assistance delivered. Results for outcomes were mixed, with more positive examples from Nepal regarding use and replication of interventions.

### Advocacy and Communication

ECHO advocacy and communications strategies were appropriate and consistent with HIP objectives in each country. In Nepal, there has been a primary focus throughout the evaluation period on advocacy towards the formulation of a "National Strategy for Disaster Management in Nepal". In India, advocacy efforts for inclusion and quality improvements in service delivery in India were viewed as a key component of ECHO's interventions.

ECHO did not have formal advocacy and communication strategies, although some partners had developed their own that incorporated ECHO projects. Partners viewed ECHO's role more as one of providing useful technical support rather than conducting advocacy.

In India, ECHO's scope for advocacy has been extremely limited due a constrained operating environment. ECHO's influence in Nepal, notably in thematic areas related to DRR, was more significant than would be expected from the level of investment. This influence can be attributed to several factors, including ECHO's status as a thematic "expert" in DRR, ECHO's active participation the Humanitarian Coordination Team "Plus". The Nepal Risk Reduction Consortium (NRRC) offered a useful forum for ECHO and their partners to share lessons and influence through joint advocacy.

### Efficiency - Transfer Modalities

There has been a positive evolution in both countries since 2013 in more systematic consideration and adoption of cash-based modalities by ECHO's partners. However, this has not been the same for all sectors and needs identified and this has not been based on a consistent and rigorous analysis.

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<sup>1</sup> The 15 projects collectively represent approximately 20% of ECHO's total project portfolio budget for both countries.

ECHO has been a 'quiet facilitator' of this evolution, funding cash transfer programming (CTP) interventions that were proposed by partners for response and recovery without issue, and in some cases suggesting addition of or substitution to cash modalities for more effective programming.

In both countries, and particularly in Nepal, given its vulnerability to recurrent natural disasters, increased investment in cash preparedness activities (both technical assistance and support to policy/institutions) as part of broader DRR work could have reduced some of the barriers to selection and implementation of the most efficient and effective modalities for response and recovery.

Features that ECHO-funded programmes that have contributed to the efficient use of resources include increasing use of cash-based modalities, working through consortia, strong coordination and knowledge management, coordination with governments and donors, decisions on operational based both on cost efficiency and cost effectiveness considerations.

ECHO's practice of channelling funds through multiple layers of partner agencies may reduce cost-efficiency, but this is balanced by qualitative benefits that improve effectiveness.

### Sustainability

Main categories of stakeholders targeted to help achieve sustainability of ECHO-supported interventions were governments, communities, local NGOs and development donors. Partners used different methods to promote ownership; including capacity building, co-funding, joint planning and implementation.

Sustainability for DRR and conflict-related interventions was often linked to a robust exit strategy, and many of the same influencing factors apply (e.g. short project time frame and uncertain follow up funding, lack of clarity about exit strategies and protocols, lack of government ownership).

Gaining the necessary level of buy-in from government has been one of the main challenges to achieving sustainability, particularly in India. Despite the challenges in India, there have been some examples of activities continuing with GoI support. Nepal, where GoN has been more open to collaboration with international humanitarian partners, provides more examples of sustainable interventions. ECHO partners and their local partners have placed emphasis community mobilisation to help promote ownership and sustainability.

There is a strong demand for ECHO-supported interventions from national stakeholders. The Ministry of Health in Nepal has decided to replicate and scale up the emergency health preparedness activities and ECHO partners have received requests for training from newly-elected local authorities in western Nepal for training in DRR and humanitarian response.

## Conclusions

The section on conclusions begins with an overall statement on ECHO's interventions in India and Nepal during 2013-2017. Four of the conclusions support recommendations by providing a concise summary of findings and analysis at a project and programmatic levels. The first conclusion relates specifically to Nepal. Given the specific context of India, ECHO's operating model in India was found to have been more reactive rather than strategic. The second conclusion is thus based on discussions with stakeholders regarding



alternative business case options to support the final strategic recommendation. The last three conclusions are relevant to both country programmes, especially Nepal, and may also potentially relevant to other ECHO country programmes.

### Overall Statement on ECHO's interventions in India and Nepal during 2013-2017

ECHO has invested a total of some EUR 50 million in the two countries during 2013-2017, of which 60% was allocated to Nepal. During this period ECHO supported responses to Cyclone Phailin India, two severe floods and the 2015 earthquake in Nepal. The earthquake, the approval of a new Constitution in Nepal, the emergence of India as a humanitarian donor in its own right along with the passing of legislation to regulate activities of civil society organisations in both countries all had a significant influence on ECHO country programmes. In India, the main effect has been to call into question ECHO's operating model, even while unmet needs still remain, and ECHO's intervention strategy continued to be relevant. In Nepal, evidence indicates that these changes increased ECHO's relevance as the earthquake highlighted the relevance of the work in DRR and resilience by ECHO and others. These events in Nepal also provided the necessary momentum to endorse a much-anticipated Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act where ECHO's contribution has been widely recognised by partners.

The team estimated that, measured in terms of assistance delivered and people reached, 80-90% of the project portfolio in both countries achieved their objectives. Both country programmes have been highly relevant to priority needs and ECHO's mandate. ECHO received high marks from partners and other humanitarian stakeholders for its in-depth understanding of the situation on the ground, its facilitation and technical oversight role that many partners recognise as contributing to the quality of their projects.

Due in large part to the external influences described above, project outcomes have been very different in each country. In Nepal, ECHO's contributions during the evaluation period had a positive transformative effect at both community and at a national level. In contrast, in India ECHO has struggled to address unmet humanitarian needs in conflict-affected areas in a way that an international impartial humanitarian actor can add value.

### On ECHO's potential role in DRR and resilience during the transition in Nepal

Investments by ECHO and other donors in DRR and resilience over the past decade have yielded results in terms of increased awareness, organisation at a community and district level and improved capacities at all levels. The recent restructuring of the government that shifted authority to elected leaders at a municipality level is a potential opportunity for ECHO and other humanitarian actors to institutionalise resilience into policies and ways of working. The relatively low level of investment, the change in partners for DRR projects in western Nepal and low level of collaboration with DEVCO has reduced ECHO's ability to support this transition and risks to undermine sustainability of prior interventions.

### On business case options for ECHO in India

ECHO has had a more reactive, gap-filling, approach than a strategic programme. Working with civil society partners in conflict-affected areas has been in line with ECHO's core mandate but, in the increasingly constrained regulatory environment in India for civil society, ECHO has had limited added value measured in terms of outcomes. While ECHO could

potentially help in addressing unmet humanitarian needs, particularly in conflict-affected areas or in a response to a mega disaster event, findings indicate there would be a need for a new operating model in India for ECHO to add value. The option where there was a strong consensus amongst a range of interviewees was that the private sector in India should play a much more substantive role in DRR and disaster response and could benefit from learning from private sector networks, such as those in Europe.

#### **On the timeliness and appropriateness of ECHO funding decisions for a response**

There has been a pattern during the scoping period of ECHO funding decisions being taken weeks, or even months, after quick onset disasters which lack high media visibility. Even for large disasters, grant amounts have tended to be relatively modest in comparison with other major donors, rarely exceeding a total of EUR 1-3 million. In practice, this has meant that partners have had to rely on other sources of funding which was then either reimbursed when they receive ECHO funding, or the funds were used for early recovery activities. While this has helped to fill gaps, the lack of predictability of ECHO funding has compromised the ability of some partners to optimise their interventions.

#### **On the importance of a programme approach**

Project funding timelines puts pressure on partners to design resilience projects which often have unrealistically short timeframes instead of being based on realistic assessment of the timeframe for sustainable outcomes. Short project duration without a programmatic approach, lack of alignment with LRRD and project-based approach by partners have hampered efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability of ECHO supported interventions. Some ECHO partners have been using a programme approach that has made it easier for them to achieve intermediate and long-term outcome objectives. However, there was still a prevalence of a project-based approach and examples were seen in both countries where an unexpected suspension in ECHO project funding forced partners to downsize their activities while searching for alternative donors to achieve planned outcomes. Exit strategies did not always include planning for learning and scale up of pilot projects and there have been some good practice examples from the health and education sectors that demonstrate how this can be done. While the HIPs highlight priorities, many of the associated outcome objectives cannot realistically be achieved within an annual cycle and ECHO has no multi-annual strategy that provides relevant guidance.

#### **On achieving coherent LRRD**

ECHO, DEVCO and the European External Action Service (EEAS) have had successes in some countries in jointly operationalising the humanitarian-development nexus to strengthen resilience and LRRD but only one example around the theme of safer schools in Nepal stood out as a significant achievement. While ECHO and DEVCO continue their efforts to better align their systems, the experience with safer schools in Nepal has some important learning about how a combination of risk-sharing, strategic partnership and more flexible use of existing tools and instruments has facilitates LRRD.

## Summarized Recommendations

Five strategic recommendations targeted primarily at ECHO appear at the end of this report. The first three recommendations are not only common to both countries, but also potentially applicable to ECHO operations more generally. The list below is a concise summary.

- R1.** ECHO should improve the timeliness and predictability of decision-making processes for quick onset disasters.
- R2.** ECHO should encourage partners to adopt longer term programmatic approach with realistic and sustainable resilience outcomes.
- R3.** ECHO and DEVCO should encourage more consistent application of LRRD to strengthen the effectiveness and sustainability of their investments in resilience and DRR.
- R4.** ECHO should use the current window of opportunity that has recently opened in Nepal due to the change in governance and planned roll out of the newly-approved Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act to support effective use and strengthen sustainability of ECHO investments in resilience and DRR.
- R5.** ECHO should explore the potential value-added and feasibility of business case options and alternative operating models for emerging humanitarian actors such as India.



# Résumé Exécutif

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## Objectif, contexte et portée de l'évaluation

L'évaluation a couvert des interventions humanitaires en Inde et au Népal au cours de la période 2013-2017 financées par la direction générale de l'aide humanitaire et de la protection civile (DG ECHO). Elle comprenait les différents secteurs ayant bénéficié d'une assistance, en particulier les Abris / Articles Non Alimentaires, l'Eau et Assainissement, la Santé, l'Assistance Alimentaire, la Protection, le Relèvement et la Réduction des risques de Catastrophe.

L'objectif de l'évaluation est double. Tout d'abord, elle entend fournir une évaluation de la stratégie / l'approche d'ECHO et de formuler des recommandations stratégiques. Ensuite, les résultats pertinents aideront à informer les futures décisions de financement d'ECHO dans ces deux pays, et, au niveau mondial, à alimenter une évaluation globale de l'aide humanitaire de la Commission européenne au cours de la période 2012-2016.

## Méthodologie

L'évaluation était subdivisée en trois phases : démarrage, collecte de données et synthèse. La phase de collecte de données comportait un travail documentaire et de terrain, couvrant les 10 questions d'évaluation des termes de référence pour cette évaluation. L'équipe a effectué des visites au Népal et en Inde durant 15 jours fin août 2017, avec la visite de sites sélectionnés dans chaque pays. L'équipe a interviewé un total de 156 parties prenantes en face à face, par Skype ou par téléphone, et comprenant des représentants du siège de la Commission européenne (CE), des bureaux extérieurs d'ECHO, de délégations de l'Union européenne (UE), d'officiels du gouvernement, d'agences des Nations Unies (NU), des autorités locales et nationales, des organisations non gouvernementales (ONG) locales et internationales, et des représentants des communautés bénéficiaires. Cela comprenait également des visites sur place. L'équipe a analysé des centaines de documents, en ce compris des documents de politique et de stratégie, des évaluations, des revues, des études et d'autres documents. Les détails de quatre-vingts documents particulièrement pertinents comme bases factuelles pour l'évaluation figurent en annexe.

Les constats préliminaires et les conclusions émergentes ont été présentées au personnel de terrain d'ECHO lors des sessions de débriefing au terme de chaque visite de pays. Au Népal, les partenaires d'ECHO ont également participé au débriefing. Les commentaires du personnel de terrain d'ECHO et des partenaires a été pris en considération lors de la rédaction du rapport d'avancement présenté au Comité de Pilotage en septembre. Un atelier a été organisé après diffusion du rapport provisoire, et le personnel d'ECHO ainsi que les partenaires au Népal ont eu la possibilité de fournir des commentaires stratégiques quant à ce projet de rapport, mais aussi de donner leur vision quant à la pertinence et à la faisabilité des recommandations.

## Résumé des constats

Un résumé des constats basé sur les critères de jugement convenus lors de la phase de démarrage pour chacune des 10 questions d'évaluation est présenté ci-dessous.

### Evaluations des besoins

ECHO et ses partenaires en Inde et au Népal avaient accès à des données d'évaluation des besoins de qualité suffisante. ECHO n'a participé qu'occasionnellement à l'évaluation des besoins des partenaires, mais a joué un rôle important dans des processus pertinents au niveau stratégique et opérationnel. Les évaluations des besoins d'ECHO étaient multicouches. Les évaluations de la première phase basées sur des données de l'Indice de Gestion du Risque d'ECHO (INFORM) et les Evaluations des Crises Oubliées étaient pertinentes et cohérentes. Les données collectées au cours de la seconde phase étaient moins cohérentes.

Les évaluations des besoins auprès des partenaires ont été effectuées au cours de plusieurs phases, se concentrant progressivement sur l'identification des besoins prioritaires et des groupes cibles. Cette approche a débouché sur des évaluations de bonne qualité. La plupart des partenaires ont régulièrement consulté les communautés durant les évaluations des besoins, à l'exception de certains projets à Jammu et dans le Cachemire, principalement en raison de sensibilités politiques.

Les évaluations des besoins d'ECHO et des partenaires étaient appropriées et opportunes, comprenant des évaluations par le personnel d'ECHO juste après une catastrophe afin de documenter les modifications apportées aux Plans de Mise en Œuvre Humanitaire (HIP). Les évaluations des actions de réduction des risques de catastrophe (RRC) comprenaient une modalisation des rôles et des responsabilités des parties prenantes conformément aux directives d'ECHO.

### Stratégies d'entrée et de sortie

ECHO a développé des stratégies adaptées aux besoins et aux contextes spécifiques de chaque pays, en tenant compte de leur vulnérabilité face aux catastrophes naturelles et du besoin de renforcer la résilience de la population, principalement en atténuant les impacts sur les groupes marginalisés.

Dans le cadre du plan préparatoire d'ECHO, les catastrophes survenues dans les deux pays constituaient les points d'entrée pour ECHO et ses partenaires en vue du développement de stratégies d'intervention et/ou comme déclencheurs pour l'intensification des opérations.

Les stratégies de sortie qui n'étaient pas trop dépendantes du gouvernement se sont avérées plus viables. Un exemple de bonne pratique est celui d'un projet de sécurité des écoles au Népal, mettant en avant la mobilisation de la communauté tout en faisant appel à d'autres donateurs et au gouvernement. En Inde, la stratégie d'ECHO se concentrait sur l'amélioration de l'accès aux services au sein de populations touchées par des conflits, mais elle a été mise à mal par le manque d'appropriation général du gouvernement.

Le gouvernement du Népal était davantage désireux de travailler avec des agences humanitaires internationales, bien que la stratégie d'ECHO était de s'engager avec le gouvernement et d'autres parties prenantes en travaillant par le biais de partenaires et de réseaux pertinents. Les stratégies d'entrée pour les activités RRC au Népal ont suivi un processus national → district → communauté afin d'obtenir une approbation au niveau national pour ensuite redescendre et obtenir l'approbation et promouvoir une appropriation à chaque niveau. La stratégie de sortie est un processus inverse, qui vise à influencer la politique et les pratiques à différents niveaux. Les stratégies ont régulièrement été adaptées en modifiant le HIP et en réallouant des fonds.

Les stratégies de sortie ont été confrontées à divers défis dans les deux pays, en raison de plusieurs facteurs, en ce compris la durée relativement courte des projets d'ECHO, l'opérationnalisation du LRDD avec les acteurs du développement et des stratégies inadéquates pour la reproduction et l'intensification des projets pilotes. Il y a toutefois plusieurs exemples de réplique des activités RRC au Népal où le gouvernement népalais a transposé des bonnes pratiques en directives, stratégies et en processus de planification du développement local.

Il manquait à ECHO une stratégie de sortie pour le programme national en Inde, et la cessation progressive en 2017 s'est en grande partie faite sur une base *ad hoc*, avec un soutien d'ECHO trop limité pour permettre une transition en douceur pour les partenaires. En fonction des indicateurs pertinents, il est difficile de justifier la suspension par ECHO du programme en Inde sur la base de besoins non comblés, bien qu'en raison de la valeur ajoutée limitée d'ECHO au contexte opérationnel indien, cela n'avait pas de sens de continuer sans révision substantielle du modèle opérationnel.

### **Alignement avec les politiques d'ECHO**

Les stratégies et les opérations nationales d'ECHO étaient cohérentes avec le cadre politique plus vaste d'ECHO. Les opérations bénéficiant du soutien d'ECHO au Népal étaient cohérentes avec les secteurs et les approches décrits dans le HIP. Les interventions sectorielles en Inde étaient largement cohérentes avec les politiques d'ECHO, mais en raison du contexte opérationnel, ECHO s'est retrouvé à la limite de son mandat, car de nombreuses activités soutenues confinaient au développement.

La connaissance des politiques d'ECHO parmi les partenaires était inégale dans chaque pays, et assez limitée. Une combinaison de l'approche pratique de suivi d'ECHO avec les conseils et l'assurance qualité fournis par les bureaux européens des partenaires d'ECHO a aidé à l'alignement des interventions avec les politiques d'ECHO. Toutefois, la compréhension et l'application des principes humanitaires par les partenaires et les autres parties prenantes étaient incohérentes, en partie en raison des relations avec les gouvernements de chaque pays.

Les marqueurs de Résilience et de Sexe et Age ont été utiles, car ils ont permis de clarifier les engagements politiques d'ECHO et ont permis à son personnel d'établir des jugements transparents et fondés quant à la conformité avec les politiques d'ECHO pour les interventions financées par ECHO.

### Coordination avec d'autres acteurs

Il y avait un manque de coordination entre ECHO et la Direction générale du développement et de la coopération de la Commission européenne (DEVCO) pour la RRC et la programmation de la résilience dans les deux pays. Un bel exemple pratique de collaboration avec DEVCO dans le secteur éducatif au Népal a toutefois démontré qu'il était possible d'obtenir des résultats positifs impressionnants malgré les défis institutionnels et systémiques.

Peu d'éléments laissent supposer une action conjointe par la Protection Civile de l'UE et l'antenne d'ECHO au Népal durant le déploiement pour le tremblement de terre. Toutefois, la colocalisation du personnel dans les bureaux de la délégation de l'UE a permis de faciliter un partage d'informations régulier durant les interventions d'urgence mises en place suite au tremblement de terre.

Le rôle d'ECHO dans la facilitation de la coordination entre les partenaires au Népal a amélioré l'efficacité du programme. ECHO a recouru à des partenariats sectoriels, avec des exécutants, des donateurs, et d'autres parties prenantes actives dans le soutien à la RRC et à la résilience. Cela a permis d'améliorer l'efficacité des interventions d'ECHO, grâce à un meilleur alignement et une meilleure harmonisation des approches des donateurs, afin de combler les lacunes et de réduire la duplication tout en facilitant la gestion des connaissances.

Le HIP d'ECHO pour le Népal a été développé en collaboration avec d'autres acteurs humanitaires et d'autres donateurs, et était conforme aux priorités sectorielles et aux besoins identifiés. En Inde, le HIP a été principalement développé par ECHO, sans véritable consultation des partenaires, bien que les partenaires trouvaient ce HIP pertinent. Rien ne prouve une implication directe d'acteurs gouvernementaux dans le développement du HIP dans chaque pays.

La relation d'ECHO avec les gouvernements des deux pays a généralement été indirecte, passant soit par ses partenaires, soit par la délégation de l'UE. Les missions d'ECHO tendent à interagir principalement au niveau du gouvernement local. Au Népal, ECHO a été un participant actif aux dialogues RRC nationaux, dans le cadre desquels il était considéré par la communauté internationale comme un acteur majeur.

L'affectation des fonds d'ECHO par le biais de consortiums a permis d'améliorer l'efficacité et l'efficacité dans certains cas, pour autant qu'ils soient bien gérés et approvisionnés.

ECHO était bien informé des interventions des autres acteurs humanitaires, en particulier au Népal, où ECHO a régulièrement participé à des activités collaboratives avec d'autres donateurs, en ce compris des évaluations conjointes.

### Valeur ajoutée de l'UE

Les partenaires étaient unanimes quant à leur appréciation de l'approche « pragmatique et exigeante » d'ECHO avec ses partenaires, qui les a aidés à se concentrer sur les résultats et sur l'amélioration de la qualité. Comparé à ses pairs, ECHO était perçu en tant que donateur comme étant le plus au fait de la situation sur le terrain, et donc en bonne position pour fournir un retour utile et opportun. Grâce à son approche pragmatique, ECHO a également



été perçu par les autres donateurs présents comme une source précieuse de conseils sur la situation sur le terrain. Pour les membres de l'UE qui ne maintiennent pas une présence humanitaire constante dans ces pays, les informations d'ECHO sont cruciales pour leur analyse des besoins, des risques et de la vulnérabilité, afin d'orienter leurs programmes.

Plus d'une décennie d'investissements de RRC et de résilience au Népal ont positionné ECHO comme un expert thématique reconnu. Cela a entraîné, dans le chef des partenaires et des gouvernements locaux, des attentes quant à une importante contribution d'ECHO visant à soutenir le processus de transition vers le nouveau système de gouvernance. Les réussites d'ECHO en matière de compréhension des RRC et de résilience au Népal ont permis d'identifier des lacunes en LRDD lorsque les communautés tentent de trouver des fonds pour moderniser des bâtiments dangereux identifiés lors de la cartographie des risques.

Le manque d'engagement direct avec les gouvernements indien et népalais a permis à ECHO de travailler de manière plus indépendante, ce qui devrait être source de valeur ajoutée pour ECHO. Toutefois, le manque d'engagement gouvernemental direct a limité leur capacité à respecter les engagements d'ECHO en matière de principes humanitaires, comme la fourniture d'une assistance impartiale aux populations marginalisées.

La valeur ajoutée du modèle d'assistance humanitaire de l'UE dans le contexte indien a été limitée, même si les partenaires ont confirmé la pertinence du programme d'ECHO tout en soulignant qu'ECHO a pratiquement été le seul donateur assurant un soutien régulier et se rendant dans les zones de conflit.

### Réalisation des objectifs

Les stratégies d'ECHO dans les deux pays comprennent le maintien d'un niveau adéquat de préparation, afin d'être en mesure de réagir en cas de catastrophe dépassant la capacité des acteurs nationaux et de satisfaire les besoins humanitaires. Alors que les interventions RRC soutenues par ECHO ont contribué à une amélioration de la résilience des communautés touchées, des retards dans les décisions de financement d'ECHO dans les situations d'urgence ont réduit l'efficacité des interventions d'ECHO.

Les objectifs stratégiques tels que formulés dans chaque pays étaient cohérents avec le mandat d'ECHO, bien que la contribution des actions d'ECHO en Inde était limitée par diverses contraintes. En Inde, la stratégie d'ECHO ciblait principalement l'amélioration de l'inclusion et de la qualité de la fourniture de services pour les zones touchées par les conflits dans le nord de l'Inde, à Jammu et dans le Cachemire. La stratégie d'ECHO au Népal ciblait spécifiquement le développement de la résilience dans les zones à risque.

La revue d'un échantillon de quinze projets financés par ECHO<sup>2</sup> donne un taux de réussite de 80-90% pour l'obtention, voire le dépassement, des résultats envisagés en termes de bénéficiaires touchés et d'assistance sectorielle fournies. Le constat est plus nuancé

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<sup>2</sup> Les 15 projets représentent collectivement environ 20% du budget total du portefeuille de projets pour les deux pays.

concernant l'obtention d'effets, avec des exemples plus positifs pour le Népal quant à l'utilisation et la réplique des interventions.

### **Mobilisation et communication**

Les stratégies de mobilisation et de communication d'ECHO étaient appropriées et cohérentes avec les objectifs HIP dans chaque pays. Au Népal, tout au long de la période d'évaluation, la mobilisation pour la formulation d'une « Stratégie Nationale pour la Gestion des Catastrophes au Népal » a bénéficié d'une grande attention. En Inde, les efforts de mobilisation en vue de l'inclusion et de l'amélioration de la qualité de la fourniture de services ont été perçus comme un composant majeur des interventions d'ECHO.

ECHO ne disposait pas de stratégies de mobilisation et de communication formelles, bien que certains partenaires aient développé des stratégies propres, incorporées aux projets d'ECHO. Les partenaires ont davantage considéré le rôle d'ECHO comme portant sur la fourniture d'une assistance technique utile plutôt que sur la mobilisation.

En Inde, la portée de la mobilisation d'ECHO a été très limitée, en raison d'un environnement d'exploitation restreint. Au Népal, l'influence d'ECHO, notamment dans les domaines thématiques en relation avec la RRC, a été plus importante que prévu au niveau de l'investissement. Cette influence peut être attribuée à divers facteurs, en ce compris le statut d'ECHO comme expert thématique en RRC et la participation active d'ECHO à l'Equipe de Coordination Humanitaire « Plus ». Le Nepal Risk Reduction Consortium (NRRC) a offert un forum utile à ECHO et à ses partenaires pour le partage de leçons apprises, mais aussi pour exercer une influence par le biais d'une mobilisation conjointe.

### **Efficacité – Modalités de transfert**

Il y a eu une évolution positive dans les deux pays depuis 2013, avec une prise en considération et une adoption plus systématiques des modalités de transfert monétaire par les partenaires d'ECHO. Toutefois, il n'en a pas été de même pour tous les secteurs et les besoins identifiés, et cela ne reposait pas sur une analyse cohérente et rigoureuse.

ECHO a été un facilitateur silencieux de cette évolution, finançant des programmes de transfert monétaire (PTM) proposées par des partenaires pour le relèvement des populations, et suggérant dans certains cas l'ajout ou le remplacement de modalités monétaires en vue d'un programme plus efficace.

Dans les deux pays, et en particulier au Népal – en raison de sa vulnérabilité aux catastrophes naturelles récurrentes – un investissement accru dans des activités de préparation (assistance technique et assistance sur le plan politique / aux institutions) dans le cadre d'une RRC plus vaste aurait pu limiter certains obstacles à la sélection et à la mise en œuvre des modalités les plus efficaces pour l'intervention et le redressement.

Les caractéristiques des programmes financés par ECHO qui ont contribué à l'utilisation efficace des ressources comprennent l'utilisation croissante des modalités monétaires, le recours aux consortiums, une forte coordination et la gestion des connaissances, la coordination avec les gouvernements et les donateurs, et les décisions opérationnelles basées sur la rentabilité.

La pratique d'ECHO visant l'affectation des fonds par le biais de couches multiples d'agences partenaires peut réduire la rentabilité, mais cela est contrebalancé par des avantages qualitatifs bénéfiques à l'efficacité.

### Durabilité

Les principales catégories de parties prenantes ciblées pour parvenir à la durabilité des interventions soutenues par ECHO étaient des gouvernements, des communautés, des ONG locales et des donateurs d'aide au développement. Les partenaires sont utilisés plusieurs méthodes pour promouvoir l'appropriation, en ce compris le développement des capacités, le cofinancement, et la planification et mise en œuvre conjointe.

La durabilité des interventions RRC et dans le cadre de conflits était souvent liée à une solide stratégie de sortie, et bon nombre des même facteurs d'influence s'appliquent (courte durée du projet et financement incertain du suivi, manque de clarté quant aux stratégies et protocoles de sortie, manque d'appropriation par le gouvernement).

Obtenir le niveau d'engagement nécessaire du gouvernement était l'un des principaux défis pour parvenir à la durabilité, particulièrement en Inde. Malgré les défis en Inde, il y a eu quelques exemples d'activités se poursuivant avec le soutien du gouvernement indien. Le Népal, dont le gouvernement était plus ouvert à une collaboration avec des partenaires humanitaires internationaux, a fourni davantage d'exemples d'interventions durables. Les partenaires d'ECHO et leurs partenaires locaux ont souligné la mobilisation de la communauté pour aider à la promotion de l'appropriation et de la durabilité.

Il existe une forte demande pour des interventions soutenues par ECHO dans le chef des parties prenantes nationales. Le Ministère de la Santé népalais a décidé de répliquer et de développer les activités de préparation à une urgence sanitaire et les partenaires d'ECHO ont reçu des demandes de formation sur les interventions RRC et humanitaires pour les autorités locales nouvellement élues dans l'ouest du Népal.

## Conclusions

La section des conclusions commence par un bilan global des interventions d'ECHO en Inde et au Népal entre 2013 et 2017. Quatre de ces conclusions soutiennent des recommandations en fournissant un résumé concis des résultats et de l'analyse au niveau des projets et programmes. La première conclusion concerne spécifiquement le Népal. En raison du contexte spécifique de l'Inde, le modèle d'exploitation d'ECHO pour l'Inde s'est avéré davantage réactif que stratégique. La deuxième conclusion repose par conséquent sur des discussions avec les parties prenantes sur les options alternatives afin de soutenir la dernière recommandation stratégique. Les trois dernières conclusions sont pertinentes pour les programmes des deux pays, en particulier le Népal, et peuvent être potentiellement pertinentes pour les programmes d'ECHO dans d'autres pays.

### Déclaration générale sur les interventions d'ECHO en Inde et au Népal entre 2013 et 2017

ECHO a investi un total de 50 millions d'euros dans ces deux pays entre 2013 et 2017, et 60% de cette somme ont été affectés au Népal. Au cours de cette période, ECHO a soutenu des actions suite au passage du cyclone Phailin en Inde, dans le cadre de deux inondations importantes et du séisme de 2015 au Népal. Le séisme, l'approbation d'une nouvelle constitution au Népal, l'émergence de l'Inde en tant que donateur humanitaire de plein droit et l'adoption d'une législation visant à réguler les activités des organisations de la société civile dans les deux pays ont eu une influence significative sur les programmes nationaux d'ECHO. En Inde, le principal effet a été la remise en question du modèle d'exploitation d'ECHO, alors même que des besoins n'étaient pas encore satisfaits, et que la stratégie d'intervention d'ECHO demeurait pertinente. Au Népal, tout porte à croire que ces changements ont souligné la pertinence d'ECHO, car le séisme a mis en évidence la pertinence des interventions RRC et sur la résilience par ECHO et d'autres intervenants. Ces événements au Népal ont également fourni la dynamique nécessaire à l'approbation d'un Traité de réduction des risques de catastrophe et de gestion des risques de catastrophe très attendu, pour lequel la contribution d'ECHO a été largement reconnue par les partenaires.

L'équipe a estimé qu'en termes d'assistance fournie et de personnes touchées, 80 à 90% du portefeuille du projet ont atteint leurs objectifs dans les deux pays. Les programmes des deux pays ont été très pertinents par rapport aux besoins prioritaires et au mandat d'ECHO. ECHO a reçu d'excellentes appréciations de ses partenaires et d'autres parties prenantes humanitaires, en raison de sa compréhension approfondie de la situation sur le terrain, sa facilitation et son rôle de surveillance technique reconnu par de nombreux partenaires comme ayant contribué à la qualité de leurs projets.

Les résultats des projets ont été très différents dans chaque pays, principalement en raison des influences externes susmentionnées. Au Népal, les contributions d'ECHO durant la période d'évaluation ont un effet transformateur positif au niveau national et communautaire. En Inde, par contre, ECHO connu des difficultés pour satisfaire les besoins humanitaires dans les zones de conflit d'une manière appréciable pour un acteur humanitaire international impartial.

### A propos du rôle potentiel d'ECHO dans les interventions de RRC et la résilience durant la transition au Népal

Les investissements d'ECHO et d'autres donateurs pour la RRC et la résilience au cours de la décennie écoulée ont donné des résultats en termes de prise de conscience accrue, d'organisation au niveau de la communauté et du district, et d'amélioration des capacités à tous les niveaux. La récente restructuration du gouvernement, avec un glissement de l'autorité à des leaders élus au niveau municipal constitue une opportunité potentielle pour ECHO et d'autres acteurs humanitaires pour l'institutionnalisation de la résilience dans les stratégies et les méthodes. Le niveau d'investissement relativement faible, le changement des partenaires pour les projets de RRC dans l'ouest du Népal et le faible taux de collaboration avec DEVCO a mis à mal la capacité d'ECHO de soutenir cette transition, avec le risque de saper la durabilité des interventions antérieures.

### A propos des options de modèle opérationnel pour ECHO en Inde

ECHO a plutôt une approche réactive et complémentaire qu'un programme stratégique. Travailler avec des partenaires de la société civile dans des zones de conflit cadre avec le mandat de base d'ECHO, mais dans l'environnement réglementaire de plus en plus restreint de l'Inde pour la société civile, la valeur ajoutée d'ECHO est limitée en termes de résultats. Alors qu'ECHO pouvait potentiellement aider en comblant des besoins humanitaires, en particulier dans des zones de conflit ou suite à une grosse catastrophe, les résultats indiquent qu'il faudrait un nouveau modèle opérationnel en Inde pour ECHO en vue d'apporter de la valeur. L'option pour laquelle il y a eu un fort consensus parmi les personnes interrogées était celle selon laquelle le secteur privé indien devait jouer un rôle nettement plus substantiel en RRC et en réactions aux catastrophes, et pourrait tirer profit d'un échange avec les réseaux des secteurs privés, et notamment européens.

### A propos de la rapidité et de la pertinence des décisions de financement d'ECHO en cas de catastrophe

La tendance, durant la période d'évaluation, pour la prise de décisions de financement d'ECHO portait sur des semaines, voire des mois après des catastrophes soudaines, avec un manque de visibilité médiatique. Même pour les grosses catastrophes, les montants de subvention étaient relativement modestes par rapport à d'autres donateurs importants, et ne dépassaient que rarement un total d'un à trois millions d'euros. Dans la pratique, cela exigeait des partenaires qu'ils se fient à d'autres sources de financement, avec un remboursement ultérieur une fois les fonds d'ECHO reçus, à moins que les fonds ne soient utilisés pour les activités de redressement rapide. Bien que cela ait aidé à combler les lacunes, le manque de prévisibilité des fonds d'ECHO a compromis la capacité de certains partenaires à optimiser leurs interventions.

### A propos de l'importance de l'approche programmatique

Les calendriers du financement des projets poussent les partenaires à concevoir des projets de résilience dont la durée est souvent irréaliment courte, plutôt que d'être basée sur une évaluation réaliste de la durée pour des résultats durables. La courte durée du projet sans approche programmatique, le manque d'alignement avec le LRRD et les approches basées sur les projets des partenaires ont entravé l'efficacité et la durabilité des interventions soutenues par ECHO. Certains partenaires d'ECHO appliquaient une approche programmatique facilitant l'obtention des objectifs à moyen et long terme. Toutefois, il y avait toujours une prévalence d'une approche basée sur les projets, et il y a eu dans les deux pays des exemples où la suspension inattendue du financement d'un projet d'ECHO a forcé les partenaires à réduire leurs activités tout en recherchant des donateurs alternatifs pour obtenir les résultats prévus. Les stratégies de sortie n'incluaient pas toujours la planification pour l'apprentissage et l'intensification des projets pilotes, et il y a eu des exemples de bonnes pratiques dans le secteur de la santé et de l'enseignement, montrant comment procéder. Alors que les HIP soulignaient les priorités, bon nombre des objectifs associés aux résultats ne pouvaient être atteints au cours d'un cycle annuel, et ECHO ne dispose pas d'une stratégie multi-annuelle fournissant une guidance pertinente.

## A propos de la réalisation du LRRD

ECHO, DEVCO et le Service européen pour l'action extérieure (SEAE) ont enregistré des réussites dans certains pays par l'opérationnalisation conjointe du lien entre l'humanitaire et le développement, afin de renforcer la résilience et le LRRD, mais un seul exemple sur le thème des écoles plus sûres au Népal se démarque comme réalisation majeure. Alors qu'ECHO et DEVCO poursuivent leurs efforts d'alignement de leurs systèmes, l'expérience des écoles plus sûres au Népal comporte d'importantes leçons quant à la façon dont une combinaison de partage des risques, de partenariat stratégique et d'une utilisation plus flexible des outils et des instruments existants facilite le LRRD.

## Synthèse des recommandations

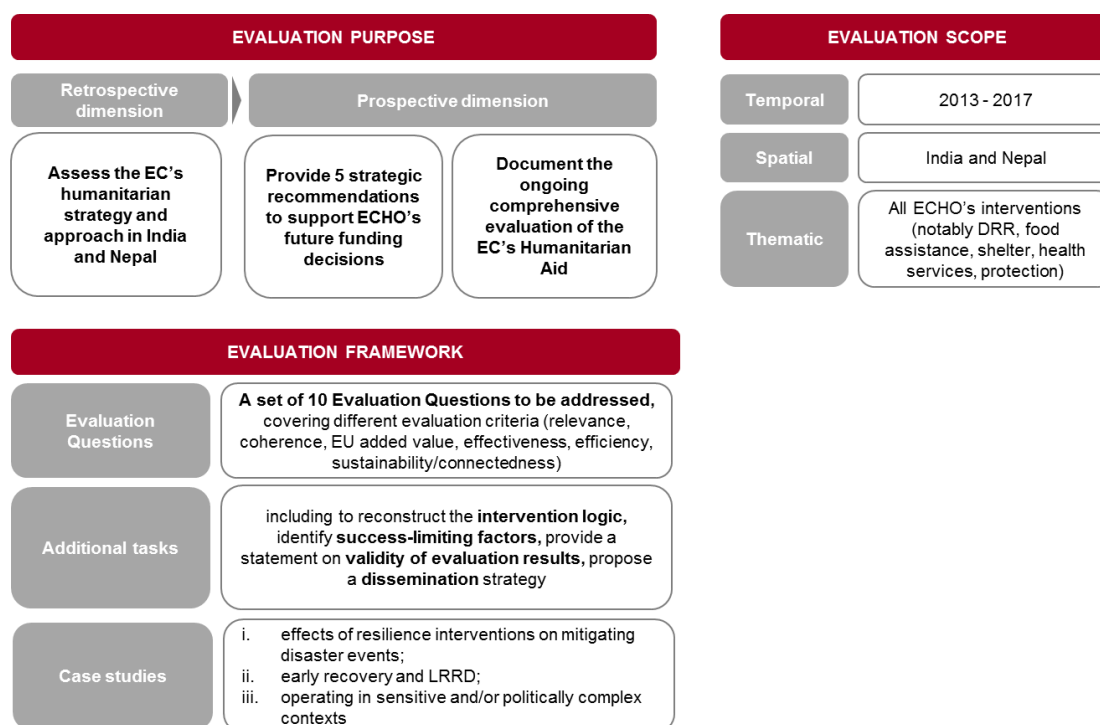
Cinq recommandations stratégiques ciblant principalement ECHO figurent à la fin de ce rapport. Les trois premières recommandations sont non seulement communes aux deux pays, mais aussi potentiellement applicables aux opérations d'ECHO de manière plus générale. La liste ci-dessous en présente un bref résumé.

- R1.** ECHO devrait améliorer la rapidité et la prévisibilité des processus décisionnels pour les catastrophes soudaines.
- R2.** ECHO devrait encourager les partenaires à adopter une approche programmatique à plus long terme, avec des résultats réalistes et durables en termes de résilience.
- R3.** ECHO et DEVCO devraient encourager une application plus cohérente du LRRD afin de renforcer l'efficacité et la durabilité de leurs investissements dans la résilience et la RRC.
- R4.** ECHO devrait utiliser la fenêtre d'opportunité qui s'est récemment ouverte au Népal suite au changement de gouvernement et au déploiement du Traité de réduction des risques de catastrophe et de gestion des risques de catastrophe afin de soutenir une utilisation efficace et de renforcer la durabilité des investissements d'ECHO dans la résilience et la RRC.
- R5.** ECHO devrait explorer la valeur ajoutée potentielle et la faisabilité des options de modèles d'exploitation alternatifs pour les acteurs humanitaires émergents tels que l'Inde.

# 1. Introduction, Structure and Purpose

This is the Evaluation Report of the ECHO-funded operations in India and Nepal during the period 2013-2017. Figure 1 summarises its subject, purpose and scope.

**Figure 1 – Evaluation subject, purpose and scope**



Source: ADE

The **evaluation scope** covers ECHO-funded operations in India and Nepal during the period 2013-2017. It encompasses the different sectors in which support was provided, notably Shelter/NFIs, Water and Sanitation, Health, Food Assistance, Protection, Recovery and Disaster Risk Reduction.

The **evaluation purpose** is twofold:

- **Retrospective:** to provide accountability for the portfolio of funds channelled through ECHO in India and Nepal over the evaluation period. The assessment will cover the evaluation issues of relevance, coherence,<sup>3</sup> EU added value, effectiveness, efficiency (including cost-effectiveness) and sustainability;
- **Forward-looking:** its results should fit into ECHO's future funding decisions and the already ongoing comprehensive evaluation of the European Commission's humanitarian aid, 2012-2016.

<sup>3</sup> Coherence will also consider the alignment between ECHO's crisis response and Civil Protection.





## 2. Evaluation Context

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### 2.1. Timing of the evaluation

Launched in mid-2017, the evaluation came at a time when earthquake recovery operations in Nepal were phasing out and, in India, there were questions about ECHO's value-added in humanitarian operations due to a combination of their significant response capacities and government attitudes regarding international actors working in areas of civil strife.

It also comes after a period of reallocation of ECHO's funding. At the beginning of the evaluation scoping period, ECHO had an active programme in India, with an injection of funds for the response to cyclone Phailin that struck north-eastern India in October 2013. In Nepal, following a long period without a significant disaster event, the bulk of ECHO resources were being channelled to DRR in recognition of Nepal's vulnerability to natural disasters. While the 2014 floods and, especially, the 2015 earthquake in Nepal led to an increase in funding, in India no new project funding to partners was provided after 2016.

### 2.2. Operating Context

There has been a significant evolution in operating context for ECHO and their partners in both countries during 2013-2017. In India, a combination of reprioritisation of resources by ECHO at a global level combined other factors, including India's emergence as an international humanitarian actor in its own right, resulted in the phase out of virtually all of ECHO-supported project activities in 2017. In 2015, in Nepal the earthquake caused extensive loss of life and extensive damages and this was followed by the adoption of Nepal's 2015 Constitution that set the stage for a decentralised government structure. ECHO's work with civil society organisations has also been impacted by increasingly restrictive regulatory environments in both countries.

#### Key context elements: India

India, the second-most populous country in the world (with over 1.2 billion people), is highly vulnerable to floods, cyclones, earthquakes and drought (see table below). Flooding associated with the summer monsoon is an annual event in different parts of the country.<sup>4</sup> Persistent inequality is reflected in the low human development attainments of the country's most marginalized groups including scheduled castes, which were the most impacted by these natural disasters.

Hunger has been dropping at a moderate rate since 1990 in India, but malnutrition still affects 194.6 million people, i.e. one quarter of all undernourished people and a third of children in the world (WFP, 2016). 39% of children under the age of 5 were stunted and 15% were wasted (UNICEF, Southern Ontario Water Consortium 2016).

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<sup>4</sup> HIP India 2013, p.3

**Table 1 – Main type of disaster in India, 2013-2017**

	Total deaths	Total affected	Total damage (US million)
Flood	8.608	28.861.432	22.314
Storm	557	14.296.668	9.964
Drought		330.000.000	3.000
Earthquake	109	70.728	195
Extreme temperature	3.285		
Transport accident	914	907	
Technological	744	3.957	

Source: ADE, based on CRED database

India is considered as a high-risk country according to the Index for Risk Management Mid 2017 (INFORM). India is highly vulnerable to natural disaster (7.9) and experiences a high-level of man-made hazards exposure (projected conflict risk).

The Indian authorities have progressively improved their preparation and coping capacity to natural disasters, as demonstrated by their reaction to the 2013 Cyclone Phailin: Odisha residents were evacuated before the storm, and food and medicine were moved close to the affected areas. Those preparations were credited with the large reduction in casualties (47 deaths) in comparison with the last storm as powerful who hit India (the 1999's Cyclone Orissa which killed 10,000 people) (IFRC, 2014).

The country also faces frequent situations of instability and violence, which generate significant humanitarian needs. In the state of Jammu and Kashmir (North), the intensity of the 1947 partition-related conflict showed a decrease 2010 until 2016, when there was an upsurge of violence with a resulting rise in civilian casualties. Central India, particularly southern Chhattisgarh, also experienced sporadic bursts of violence in recent years (Naxalite crisis), as well as the north-eastern states which experience insurgencies.

### Key context elements: Nepal

Nepal is a landlocked central Himalayan country of 27 million inhabitants, facing frequent natural disasters that affect lives, livelihoods and infrastructures (see table below). The earthquake in 2015 (see box below) was the most powerful to strike Nepal since the 1934 Nepal–Bihar earthquake. Every year, around 1,000 people are killed by landslides and floods during the monsoon season. Nepal also still hosts over 12 000 refugees from Bhutan, who live in camps and are almost entirely dependent on international humanitarian assistance. During the scoping period, Nepal experienced three major disaster events; the 2015 earthquake along with severe flooding during 2014 and again in 2017.

Nepal is considered as a high-risk country according to the Index for Risk Management Mid 2017 (INFORM)<sup>5</sup>. It has a lower global vulnerability to natural disaster than India (5.5) but its vulnerability to earthquakes is extremely high. The level of man-made hazards exposure

<sup>5</sup> Each type of risk is ranked from 0 (low risk) to 10 (high risk).

(projected conflict risk) is high. Nepal also faces a lack of national coping capacity (5.9), notably in terms of governance and institutional capacities. Nepal was one of the Flagship Countries that fell under the EU Resilience Action Plan.<sup>6</sup>

In Nepal, there were two key events during 2015 that significantly altered the operating environments for international agencies. One was the magnitude 7.8 earthquake in April, followed by a magnitude 7.3 aftershock three weeks later that collectively killed nearly 9,000 people, injured another 25,000 and resulted in extensive damage to both infrastructure and livelihoods. The other major event was the adoption and promulgation of Nepal's 2015 Constitution. One of the main resulting changes was that administrative divisions in Nepal were restructured in March 2017 so that all former municipalities and villages (more than 3,900 in total) were restructured and amalgamated into 753 urban and rural Municipalities. The former district development committees (DDC) have been replaced by 77 District Coordination Committees (DCC). Local elections were held in Nepal during 2017 over three phases; 14 May, 28 June and 18 September, were the first local elections in two decades.

The earthquake highlighted deficiencies in Nepal's disaster management legal framework<sup>7</sup> and corresponding institutional capacities, something that had been foreseen prior to the earthquake based on an analysis<sup>8</sup> of Nepal's outdated national disaster legislation.<sup>9</sup> In 2017, a long-anticipated bill relating to the disaster risk reduction and its management was approved. As a result, a National Disaster Management Authority has been established that will have an independent head, although still under the Ministry of Home Affairs.<sup>10</sup> This authority has a centralised structure which is widely seen as a challenge for operation within the new federal structure and associated devolution of power to local governments.

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<sup>6</sup> 2016 Humanitarian Implementation Plan for South Asia

<sup>7</sup> <http://reliefweb.int/report/nepal/nepal-s-horrific-earthquake-international-community-doing-too-much-prepare>

<sup>8</sup> IFRC (2011) International Disaster Response Law (IDRL) in Nepal: A study on strengthening legal preparedness for international disaster response

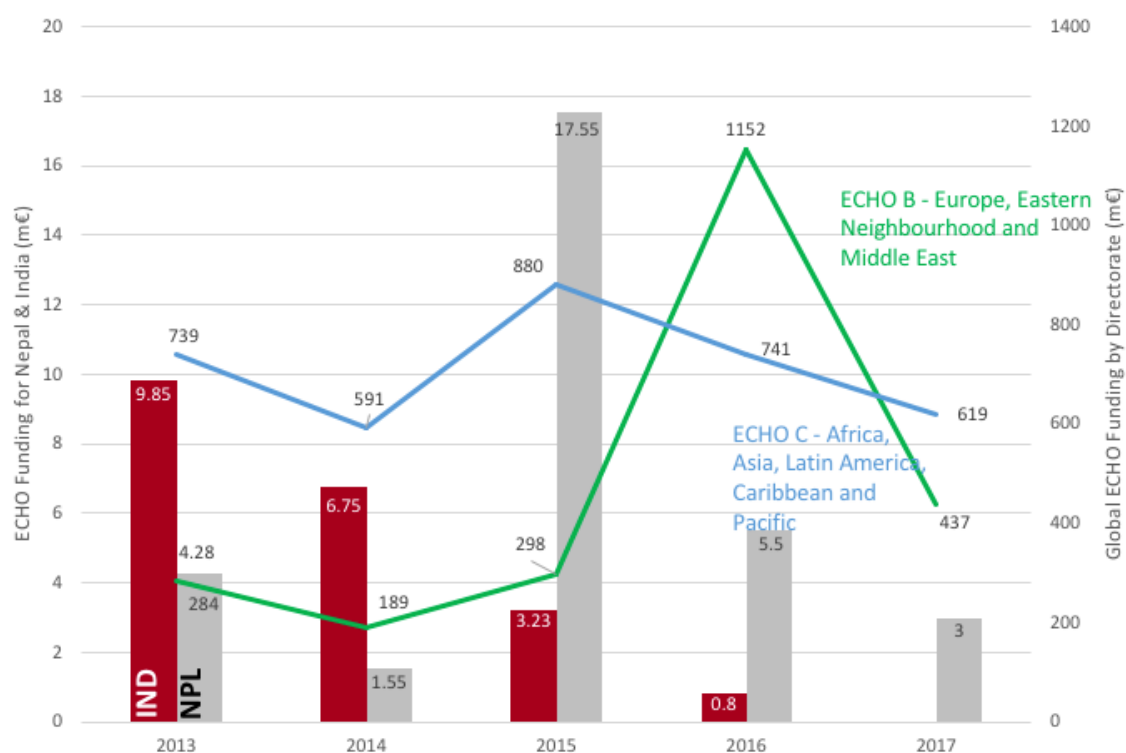
<sup>9</sup> His Majesty's Government of Nepal (1982) Natural Calamity (Relief) Act, 2039 (1982 A.D.) <http://saarc-sdmc.nic.in/pdf/nepal/file1.pdf>

<sup>10</sup> Kathmandu Post (2017) Bill on disaster risk reduction and management registered. September 11, 2017 <http://kathmandupost.ekantipur.com/news/2017-09-11/bill-on-disaster-risk-reduction-and-management-registered.html>

### 2.3. ECHO support to Nepal & India

2013-2017 coincided with the period when ECHO's resources were reprioritised to address humanitarian impacts in the Middle East and Europe (Figure 2 below).

Figure 2 – ECHO Funding Trends 2013-2017



ECHO has had a presence in India since 1995. The last strategic Humanitarian Implementation Plan (HIP) dated October 2013 specific to India<sup>11</sup> aimed mainly to support the victims of the cyclone Phailin. More broadly, ECHO strategy in India focuses on the most vulnerable segments of the society (children, marginalized communities, and displaced people), disproportionately affected by disasters and not always reached by local aid responders. Since 2013, ECHO's focus has shifted to conflict-affected and displaced communities in the north-east and Jammu and Kashmir. As an example, in 2016 ECHO provided €500,000 to fund a project focusing on access to education for displaced children in Assam and €3.4 million to people affected by conflict in Jammu and Kashmir.

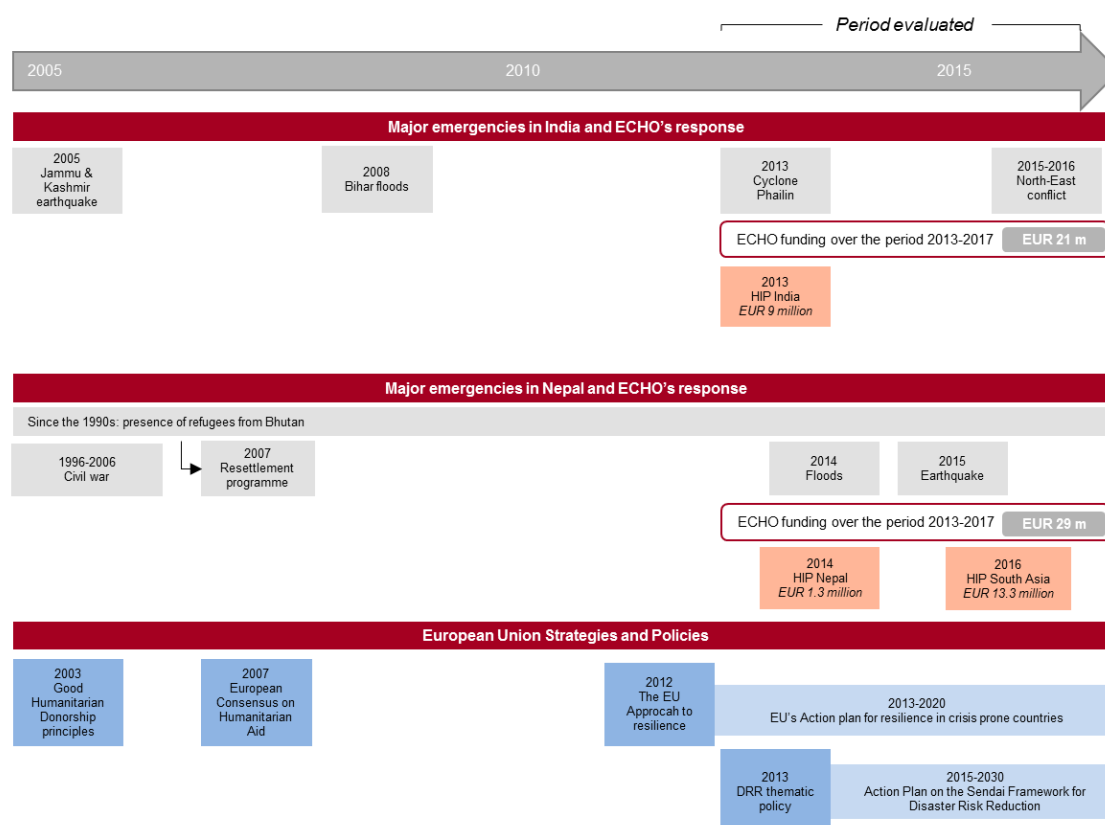
In Nepal, the last HIP (dated 2014) aims to support refugees from Bhutan (around 38,000 in 2013). The last HIP South Asia (dated July 2016) highlighted the importance of the 2015 earthquake and its implications for Nepal. For example, ECHO allocated €3.1 million to Nepal for disaster-preparedness efforts in 2016.

<sup>11</sup> After 2013, India had HIP allocation in 2014 and 2015 included under the South Asia HIP. Nepal was also included

At regional level, ECHO strategy focuses on disaster preparedness, disaster risk reduction and resilience. This approach is inspired from ECHO overall policy documents on resilience (2012) and DRR (2013).

In terms of funding, the EU allocated approximately EUR 21 million during the period 2013-2017 to India, and EUR 29 million to Nepal. ECHO has a field presence in India through a Regional Office (New Delhi) and in Nepal with an antenna (Kathmandu). ECHO recently decided in mid 2017 to downgrade its office in New Delhi to an antenna.

**Figure 3 – Timeline of ECHO Projects in India and Nepal 2013-2017**



Source: ADE

## India

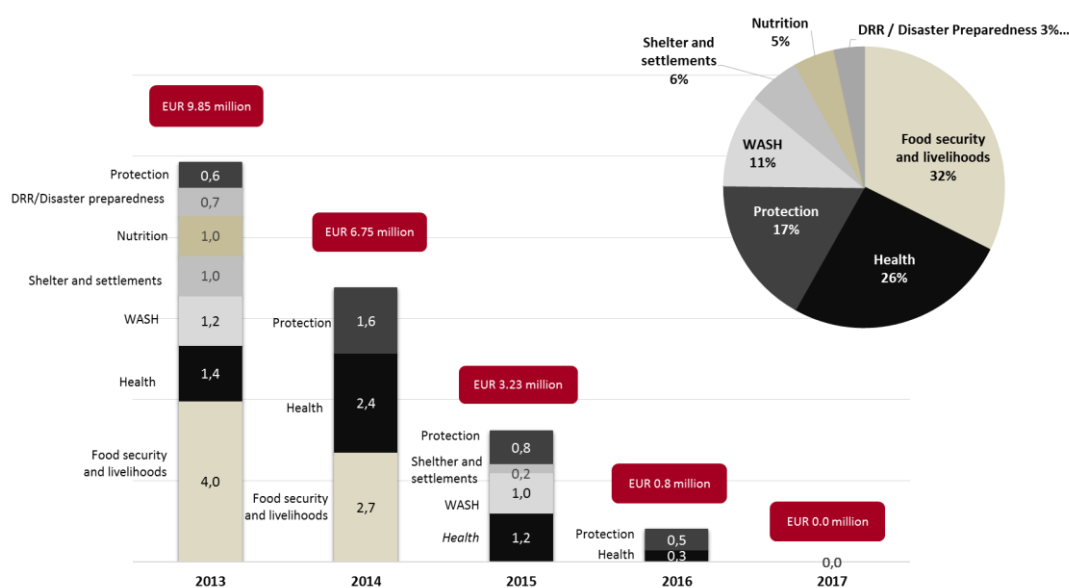
Many donors, including the EU, have withdrawn funding in recent years due to India's status as a middle-income country which is thus ineligible for bilateral assistance. ECHO was the top humanitarian donor in India from 2013 to 2015 according to OCHA's Financial Tracking System (FTS), but its interventions have been gradually phased out over the period, from nearly 10 million in 2013 (in food security and livelihoods, health, water, sanitation & hygiene, etc.) to less than 1 million in 2016 (protection and health). No EU funding was allocated to India so far in 2017.

ECHO's interventions focused on three major areas: food security and livelihoods (above EUR 6 million), health (above EUR 5 million), and protection (above EUR 3 million) - including in contexts of forgotten crises such as the conflicts in Jammu and Kashmir, districts

of central India, and in the north-eastern states. These three major areas represent in total 75% of ECHO's interventions over the period.<sup>12</sup>

As part of its Disaster Preparedness ECHO Programme (DIPECHO), the Commission supported vulnerable communities in reducing the impact of floods, cyclones and other natural disasters through early warning systems and the building of adapted physical infrastructure (EUR 700.000).

**Figure 4 – EU funding to India, by sector and by year**



Source: ADE, from ECHO data (HOPE and EVA database)

## Nepal

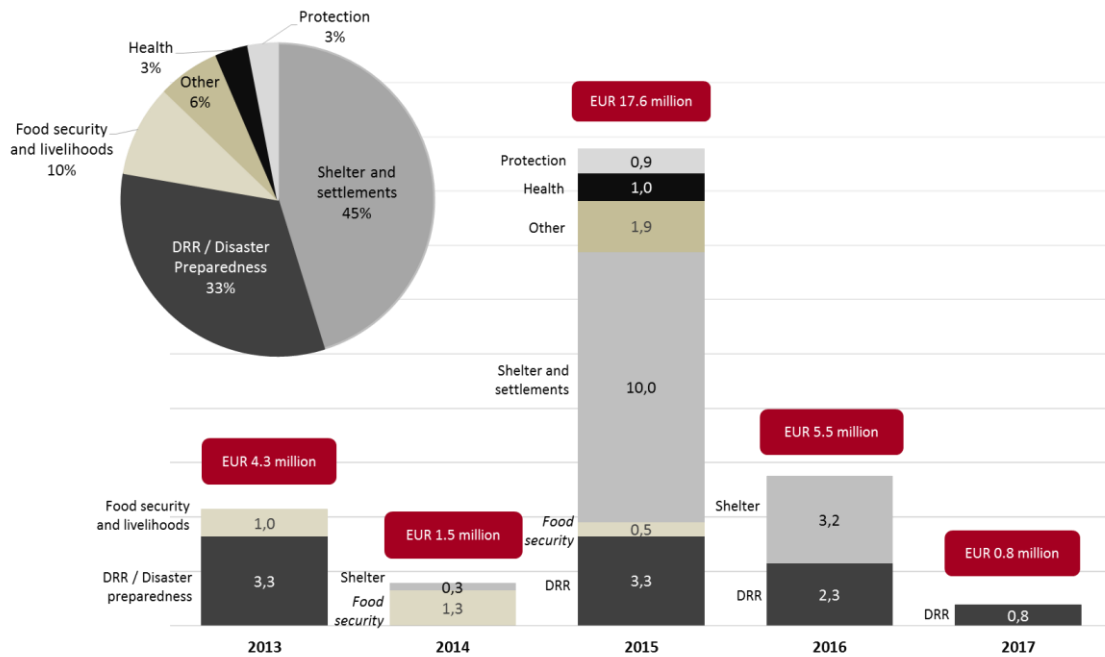
ECHO has been a significant player in the international response to the humanitarian needs of the 2015 earthquake in Nepal. However, over the period 2013-2017 ECHO funding remains well below that of the top donors (Asian Development Bank, United Kingdom, USA, etc.).

In Nepal, annual ECHO funding was usually less than 5 million during the period 2013-2016 (see Figure 5) though it increased to more than EUR 17 million in 2015 in response to the 2015 earthquake. ECHO's funding following the 2015 earthquake represents about 60% of the total envelope spent in Nepal during the period under review.

During the evaluation period, ECHO's funding to Nepal focused on three major areas: shelter and settlements (more than EUR 13 million), disaster risk reduction (around EUR 9.5 million), and food security and livelihoods (more than EUR 2.5 million). These three major areas represent in total more than 85% of ECHO's interventions over the period.

<sup>12</sup> It is anticipated that sectors can be better defined with data gathered during the research phase from ECHO's EVA database and other sources.

**Figure 5 – EU funding to Nepal, by sector and by year**



Source: ADE, from ECHO data (HOPE and EVA database)





## 3. Methodology

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### 3.1 Evaluation Phases

The evaluation was divided into three-phases; inception, data collection and synthesis. Key milestones during the evaluation process were the inception report, a progress report presented to the Steering Committee for this evaluation following completion of field visits and a workshop facilitated by the Team Leader following circulation of the draft report to review findings, conclusions and recommendations in an interactive forum.

### 3.2 Data Collection and Analysis

The team carried out a desk review during the inception phase and during the brief interval between the approval of inception report and departure of the team on the field visit. In addition to the single form and annexed documents available on the HOPE database, the team collected additional documents from partners during field visits including country strategies, assessment reports, monitoring reports, presentations, evaluations and lessons learned reviews. Desk reviews were supplemented by interviews with selected ECHO and partner staff to help in understanding different stakeholder perspectives on the purpose and anticipated use of the evaluation. Preliminary discussions with field-based staff also helped ensure that the field visits proceeded relatively smoothly, despite challenges posed by the flooding.

Field visits to Nepal and India took place during August 14-31 where the team divided into two sub-teams to increase coverage.<sup>13</sup> Challenges due to weather, logistics and time constraints due to the monsoon season had been anticipated. The team arrived in western Nepal immediately following the worst floods in more than a decade resulting in delays and cancelling of planned visits to some beneficiary communities due to inaccessibility. At the same time, the visit to western Nepal provided an opportunity to observe the government-led interagency response in “real-time”, including partner performance and the return on ECHO’s investments in DRR over previous years.

The team facilitated orientation meetings at the beginning of each country visit to clarify the purpose and proposed methodology and fine tune the itinerary. In Nepal, the orientation was done jointly with partners. A stakeholder workshop and a meeting with the Steering Committee for this evaluation during December 2017 to review findings, conclusions and recommendations in an initial draft of this report.

A range of stakeholders were interviewed in each country. In addition to staff from ECHO field offices and partners, representatives from government (national and local), UN, community members, local NGOs and, in India, private sector stakeholders. A noteworthy perspective missing from key informants was from the EU Delegation in each country. The team, supported by ECHO field staff, made repeated attempts to meet with senior EU

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<sup>13</sup> Field visit itinerary is provided in the annex.

Delegation staff, but were largely unsuccessful due to absence or their lack of availability due to competing priorities. A list of key informants and details of focus group discussions (FGD) is attached as an annex.

### 3.3 Debriefings with country level stakeholders

The evaluation team facilitated debriefing sessions at the end of the visit to each country when the team presented preliminary findings and hypotheses and provided participants with opportunities to validate these and complement with additional data. In Nepal, the debriefing was with ECHO and partner staff. In India, it was originally planned to involve partners in the debriefing session, but this did not prove to be feasible as very few partner staff were based in New Delhi. In Nepal, this consisted of a half-day session that allowed sufficient time for working groups to review hypotheses and provide their views on their relevance and which were priorities. Participants found the preliminary findings and hypotheses to be valid, while suggesting minor corrections and suggestions for improvement. Feedback from these debriefing sessions, subsequent desk research and feedback from the Steering Committee during the meeting during September to review the Progress Report helped to inform the conclusions and recommendations presented in this report.

### 3.4 Constraints and Limitations

Major challenges faced had already been identified in the inception report and the resulting contingency planning helped to mitigate their effects. The main constraints and limitations encountered during this evaluation included:

- **Need to cover two countries with significantly different contexts and operating models with a limited budget.** A total of only 16 days was allocated to field visits for both countries. The team split into two sub-teams each during site visits to increase coverage in Nepal. Since ECHO has phased out funding to partners in India from 2017 onwards, the team spent relatively less time in the country and only two team members visited project sites. The itinerary for the field visit itinerary is attached as annex.
- **The field visit not only coincided with the monsoon season in both countries, but the team arrived immediately after the worst floods the region had experienced in more than a decade.** Time constraints and poor road conditions meant that the teams could only visit more easily-accessible communities and, even then, the team traveling to western Nepal had to cancel some of the planned visits to some beneficiary communities. At the same time, the visit to western Nepal provided an opportunity to observe the government-led interagency response in “real-time”, including partner performance and the return on ECHO’s investments in DRR over the years.
- **Interviews of key informants.** A combination of phase out of project activities in India, staff turnover and staff absences meant that not all key informants were available. Some key informants were therefore interviewed by phone after the field visit.

- **Access to reference documents.** The team was provided with access to the HOPE database during the inception phase. During the field visit a number of additional annexes to the ECHO single form were provided that were not found on the database.

Overall there was a high level of engagement by staff from ECHO and partners with the evaluation process in both countries. Most partners viewed this evaluation as a useful and timely exercise and this, along with logistic support provided, greatly facilitated the team's work to compensate for these constraints and helped to ensure that the evaluation team was able to provide reliable statements on all essential aspects of the interventions in each country.



## 4. Response to Evaluation Questions

This section presents findings for each of the ten evaluation questions listed in the TOR.

### EQ 1 and EQ2: Needs Assessment

#### EQ 1 To what extent have needs assessments been of good quality?

*This evaluation question looks at the relevance, timeliness and quality of needs assessments and how partners and affected communities were involved.*

#### EQ 1 – Answer Box

- ECHO and partners in both India and Nepal mostly had access to relevant needs assessment data of sufficient quality. ECHO only occasionally participated in partners' needs assessment but played an important role in the process, at both strategic and operational levels.
- ECHO needs assessments were multi-layered. First phase assessments that drew on data from INFORM and Forgotten Crisis Assessments (FCA) were relevant and coherent. Data collected during the second phase were less coherent. IAF's relied on macro-level data and indexes and only the needs in DRR and the food and nutrition sectors and were elaborated. Needs in other sectors were hardly mentioned even when needs assessments and surveys carried out by others provided this data. Links between needs in IAFs and HIPs were not always clear, with examples including the lack of emphasis in the 2015 HIP on recovery following the 2015 earthquake in Nepal and in the 2016 HIP for India regarding forgotten crises. Based on assessment of relevant indicators, it is difficult to justify ECHO's suspension of their programme in India from 2017 onwards based on unmet needs alone.
- Needs assessments by partners were typically carried out in multiple phases and progressively focusing on priority needs and target groups. The first phase drew upon both primary and secondary data. The second phase mainly consisted of collecting qualitative data for more detailed needs assessments. The final phase of needs assessment usually consisted of the identification of beneficiaries, nearly always with the participation of their local partner. This approach resulted in good quality assessments.
- Links between needs in IAFs and HIPs were not always clear. Examples included lack of emphasis in the 2015 HIP on recovery following the 2015 earthquake in Nepal and in the 2016 HIP for India regarding forgotten crises.
- Although ECHO rapid and unplanned urbanisation as an important global driver of disaster risk in 2014, needs assessments in IAFs and HIPs for India and Nepal provided few concrete examples. The IAFs for Nepal 2016 and 2017 addressed risks particularly in the Kathmandu valley. There was no mention of the risk of disasters in other rapidly growing cities in areas affected by conflicts, such as Srinagar in India.
- Most partners regularly consulted with communities during needs during assessments, apart from some projects in Jammu and Kashmir, where the context posed challenges. Partners

relied on existing local government structures or established committees to help identify the most vulnerable. Local partners and authorities participated in most needs assessments in the projects reviewed, although not necessarily in all phases of assessments.

- The needs assessments carried out by ECHO and partners were appropriate and timely, including assessments by ECHO staff immediately following a disaster event to inform HIP modifications. Approaches and methodology in line with internationally-accepted standards. The first phase of needs assessments often consisted of a multi-sectoral joint or inter-agency assessment and rapid initial assessments were at times combined with distributions of relief items. Assessments for DRR actions included a mapping of stakeholder roles and responsibilities in line with ECHO guidelines.

### *JC. 1.1 ECHO and their partners had access to relevant needs assessment data*

**ECHO and partners in both India and Nepal had access to timely and relevant needs assessment data.** The approach and sources used by ECHO and its partners for data collection of data is described below.

**The description of the context and numbers of affected beneficiaries in the HIP and IAF was satisfactory.** In all five HIPs reviewed, results of assessments were in line with ECHO's General Guidelines on Operational Priorities for Humanitarian Aid (GGOPHA). Assessments in HIPs referred to needs identified in IAF reports after these were introduced in 2015. The 2013 HIP for India and 2014 HIP for Nepal for the Bhutanese refugee project provided descriptions of the results of second phase assessments carried out by field experts in coordination with EC.<sup>14</sup>

**Results of the first phase of ECHO's needs assessments, based on INFORM<sup>15</sup> and FCA data, provided relevant data to guide ECHO's intervention in the two countries.** INFORM data from 2014 - 2017 indicated the risk of humanitarian crises and disasters ranked high in both India and Nepal (Table 2 below). India was given a FCA risk rating of 9-11 during 2014-2016. India did not feature in the 2017 FCA assessment, even though it has been flagged in the 2017 INFORM database as one of 26 countries in the world at risk of "Highly Violent Conflict".<sup>16</sup> Note that based on these indicators, it is difficult to justify ECHO's suspension of their programme in India from 2017 onwards.

<sup>14</sup> UNHCR / WFP (2014) UNHCR / WFP Joint Assessment Mission Report.

<sup>15</sup> INFORM data is available from 2014 onwards and was used 1) to prioritise countries by risk to support decisions on resource allocation, programme location, etc.); 2) for risk profiling to support decisions about risks to focus programmes on for greatest impact and; 3) trend analysis for changing risks in countries and relative rankings.

<sup>16</sup> INFORM Mid 2017  
[http://www.informindex.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=CMQ71j1pf\\_c%3d&tabid=124&portalid=0](http://www.informindex.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=CMQ71j1pf_c%3d&tabid=124&portalid=0).

**Table 2 – Results of INFORM and FCA 2014-2017: Regional Comparison<sup>17</sup>**

Country	2017			2016			2015			2014	
	FCA	INFORM		FCA	INFORM		FCA	INFORM		FCA	INFORM
		Risk	Rank		Risk	Rank		Risk	Rank		Risk
India	-	5.7	25	10	5.6	24	11	5.7	24	9	5.7
Nepal	-	5.4	32	-	5.1	33	-	5.3	31	-	5.3
Afghanistan	-	7.8	3	-	7.9	4	-	7.9	3	-	7.9
Myanmar	12	6.6	12	10	6.7	11	11	6.8	10	11	6.8
Pakistan	9	6.6	12	10	6.6	13	9	6.2	16	8	6.2
Bangladesh	10	5.8	23	10	5.7	23	11	5.9	21	9	5.9
Bhutan	-	2.9	113	-	2.8	117	-	3.2	84	-	3.2

**The IAF relied on macro-level data and indexes, with insufficient links with other relevant needs assessments or surveys.**<sup>18</sup> The in-depth descriptions in the IAF focused on Food and Nutrition Needs Assessments,<sup>19</sup> along with a response analysis and DRR rankings, which were not always sufficiently comprehensive. IAFs for India contained descriptions of the food and nutrition needs in central India and areas affected by the Naxalite insurgency, but an analysis of nutrition data per state<sup>20</sup> provided little evidence for prioritisation of these areas in terms of unmet needs.<sup>21</sup> Response options were limited to pilot community-based management of malnutrition (CMAM) in areas for which nutritional data were either lacking or not presented in the IAFs. The IAF for Nepal in 2015 provided an extensive description of food needs, but section C was left blank in the next IAF although ECHO continued to support food assistance.

**Links between needs in IAFs and HIPs were not always clear.** For example, in the 2015 HIP (Section 3.4) ECHO's plans do not include detailed priorities for early recovery and emergency response to the earthquake. Likewise, there were no references to the nutrition crisis although the 2013 HIP for India prioritised addressing nutrition needs and the IAFs

<sup>17</sup> INFORM (2015): <http://www.inform-index.org/Results-and-data/INFORM-2015-Results-and-data>, INFORM (2015); INFORM Mid 2015 (11/03/2015) <http://www.inform-index.org/Results-and-data/INFORM-2015-Results-and-data>, INFORM (2017) <http://www.inform-index.org/INFORM-2017-Results-and-data>.

<sup>18</sup> Examples include the 2014 SPHERE post flood assessment in Jammu in Kashmir, the 2015 post disaster needs assessment for the Nepal earthquake carried by the National Planning Commission.

<sup>19</sup> GGOPHA's prior to 2014 indicated that a specific food insecurity needs assessment was to be carried out in the countries/regions with food assistance/ nutrition interventions, given the importance of food assistance/ nutrition (which was the Commission's single largest aid sector).

<sup>20</sup> National Family Health Survey 3 and 4 for 2005 and 2015 respectively.

<sup>21</sup> The data didn't indicate that acute malnutrition was a serious problem in central India as per the ECHO analysis. There were also states in in East India (Bihar) and the Northeast (Meghalaya) with a very high prevalence of acute malnutrition that were excluded. Analysis of the data shows that wasting was mainly related to poverty and lack of education.

for 2015, 2016 and 2017 provided a similar analysis. India's ban on ready to use therapeutic food (RUTF) in CMAM in 2013, which was an important influence on ECHO's intervention strategy, was not mentioned in later IAFs. There was a similar disconnect between IAFs and the HIP for 2016 regarding Forgotten Crises, which was included in the IAF for India, but not in the HIP.

**Although the General Guidelines on Operational Priorities for Humanitarian Aid (GGOPHA) highlighted rapid and unplanned urbanisation as an important driver of disaster risk from 2014 onwards, needs assessments in IAFs and HIPs for India and Nepal provided few concrete examples.** ECHO strategic guidelines for DIPECHO 7 in 2015<sup>22</sup> recommended giving more priority to growing urban populations in South Asia and piloting urban approaches. Operational priorities for Nepal outlined in the 2015 HIP for South Asia included pilot projects on a small scale to develop risk assessment and community mobilization tools and approaches in urban settings along with identifying a government agency that could coordinate with multiple stakeholders. The IAFs for Nepal 2016 and 2017 specifically mentioned the risks associated with the fast growth of Kathmandu and the GGOPHA for 2017 reiterates that ECHO will focus on earthquake preparedness, with an emphasis on high population density urban areas in Bangladesh, Bhutan and Nepal. However, there was no mention of the risk of disasters<sup>23</sup> in other rapidly growing cities affected by conflicts, such as Srinagar in India.

**Partners carried out needs assessments and analysis in accordance with ECHO requirements.** The only exceptions amongst the sample of 15 projects were two projects in conflict-affected areas in India where no needs assessments were carried out, which ECHO monitoring felt to be justified given the security challenges and the fact that both projects, ICRC in Jammu & Kashmir and MSF in Chhattisgarh,<sup>24</sup> were continuations of previous projects.

**Needs assessments were typically carried out in multiple phases, with some differences in the scope and approach depending on the type of intervention.** Typical phases are listed below:

- **The first phase** used secondary data and primary data, including data collected at community level. Methods for collecting primary data included FGD with affected communities, often with the government. Partners sometimes held workshops to identify gaps and review lessons learned, particularly for DRR projects.
- **The second phase** mainly consisted of collecting qualitative data for more detailed needs assessments. Five of the assessments in the sample of 15 projects reviewed (three in Nepal and two in India) collected quantitative data via surveys to help determine the number of vulnerable households and sectoral priorities.

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<sup>22</sup> ECHO 2015. Technical Annex South Asia, version 10, 14/10/2015.

<sup>23</sup> Rockefeller Foundation (2015); Asian Cities Climate Resilience, Policy Brief 2015. Available from: <http://pubs.iied.org/pdfs/10726IIED.pdf>.

<sup>24</sup> eSF 2015/91001 and eSF 2015/91006.



- **The final phase** of needs assessment usually consisted of the identification of beneficiaries, nearly always with the participation of the local partner. To the extent applicable,<sup>25</sup> partners identified individuals or households using vulnerability characteristics identified during the second phase, in line with ECHO's operational guidelines. Sometimes existing tools such as score cards were used as well. In 80% of the projects beneficiary selection was done by local partners.<sup>26</sup>

**ECHO only occasionally participated in partners' needs assessment but played an important role in the process, at both strategic and operational levels.** Of the sample of 15 projects reviewed, ECHO staff only participated in one needs assessment as an observer in the UNHCR-WFP JAM for Bhutanese refugees in Nepal. ECHO regularly provided technical input to partners to guide their assessments by, for example, suggesting inclusion of mine risk awareness in conflict affected Kashmir and nutrition needs in the Naxalite crisis in India. Partners were also informed in advance which activities ECHO would not fund, including post-earthquake livelihood activities in Nepal.

### *JC. 1.2 Involvement of affected communities and local partners in assessments.*

**Most partners regularly consulted with communities during needs during assessments.** ECHO's proposal format requires partners to describe how local communities were involved.<sup>27</sup> Approaches varied, with most partners using FGDs in affected communities or individual interviews with local authorities, service providers and representatives of minorities and vulnerable groups. The exception was in conflict areas in India, where communities were rarely consulted during the first and second phases of the assessment. Communities occasionally played a role in beneficiary selection in both countries. Partners relied on existing structures such as Disaster Management and Preparedness Committees or VDC's in Nepal or established committees to identify the most vulnerable individuals or households, such as injured children in Kashmir. Community workers or community-based service providers occasionally played a role to help ensure that assistance was appropriately targeted.

**Local partners have often been involved in needs assessments.** Only two needs assessments were carried out without active involvement of local partners or concerned local authorities. On the other hand, local partners were involved in all phases of the assessment in less than half of the needs assessments in the 15 selected projects reviewed. In only one (out of four) projects aimed at strengthening DRR capacities and resilience were national authorities involved in all phases.

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<sup>25</sup> Not applicable = the project was not targeting individual beneficiaries but e.g. institutions, a pre-defined group such as all IDPs in a certain area / all detained / refugees etc) or the project consists of services.

<sup>26</sup> ECHO 2015. Technical Annex South Asia, version 10, 14/10/2015

<sup>27</sup> ECHO 2015. Technical Annex South Asia, version 10, 14/10/2015 and ECHO 2017 Technical Annex South Asia, version 3, 13/09/2017

***J.C. 1.3 The needs assessments carried out by ECHO and partners were timely, appropriate, of good quality and used effectively.***

**The needs assessments carried out by ECHO and partners were timely.** HIPs with needs assessments were available to coincide with ECHO's annual planning cycle. These were updated following unforeseen events with significant humanitarian impact, such as the earthquake in Nepal, often on the basis of assessments by ECHO staff immediately after the disaster event. This was one of the areas where partners praised ECHO's "hands-on" approach.

**Needs assessments were appropriate, with approaches and methodology in line with internationally-accepted standards.**<sup>28</sup> The first phase of needs assessments often consisted of a multi-sectoral joint or inter-agency assessment, carried out by partners with complementary expertise. Rapid initial assessments were sometimes combined with distributions of relief items. Needs assessments in 7 out of the 15 projects reviewed in the sample covered multiple sectors, all focussing on post disaster response and recovery needs.

**Needs assessments by partners disaggregated gender, age and mainstreamed resilience.** The number of affected people was usually broken down by age and sex, even during rapid assessments. FGDs were often sex-disaggregated and partners made specific efforts to include the most marginalized. Several partners trained local partners to carry out more in-depth second phase needs assessments. Even so, none of the proposals, including proposals which referred to ECHO's toolkit,<sup>29</sup> received a score of 2 for the gender and age marker at the initial stage. Scoring for the resilience was good with six out of nine projects in Nepal scoring 2. The marker had not yet been applied for half of the projects reviewed in India. Table 3 below provides more detail for 13 out of 15 projects in the selected sample where assessments had been done.

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<sup>28</sup> SPHERE (2011) Core Standard - 3. Assessment

<sup>29</sup> European Commission 2014; Gender Age Marker Toolkit, Humanitarian Aid and Civil protection

Table 3 – Characteristics of assessments\*

	# of partners involved				Multi-sector		# of phases			Involvement of local partner(s)			Involvement of communities			Gender/age marker score			Score resilience marker			
	1	2	3	4+	Y	N	1	2	3	Y	N	some	Y	N	some	0	1	2	0	1	2	
Conflict (3)	2		1		1	2	1	1	1			1	2	1	1	1		2	1	-	1	-
Response/recovery (6)	1	2	-	3	6	-	1	2	3	5	1	-	6	-	-	1	4	-	-	1	4	
Capacity building (4)	1	2	-	1	?	?	1	2	1	1	2	1	2	1	1	1	3	-	-	2	2	

\* The gender/age marker and resilience markers were not yet applied in some of the older projects

**Assessments for DRR actions included a mapping of stakeholder roles and responsibilities in line with ECHO's guidelines.** Most partners involved national authorities at different levels through workshops and, in two of the projects reviewed, as part of the assessment team. Gap analyses and lessons learned contributed to comprehensive identification of needs and response analyses. In disaster response and recovery projects, local authorities at district and/or community level were consulted through FGDs or interviews, including in conflict areas when feasible.

## EQ 2 What was the fit between needs assessments and projects funded?

*This Evaluation Question covers two different aspects: 1) Comparison of results of needs assessment described under EQ1, both assessments by ECHO and by and partners and project design and 2) To what extent the identified needs were funded by ECHO and how gaps were addressed by other means*

### EQ 2 – Answer Box

- Projects largely reflected identified at needs at a macro-level if they were seen as relevant to ECHO's mandate although cases were identified where there was a disconnect between ECHO's description of sectoral needs and needs identified by partners. A related issue was ECHO's decision to suspend programme funding to India after 2016, an action that was inconsistent with identified needs and ECHO's mandate in Forgotten Crises.
- There was a strong link between project activities and needs identified during in-depth assessments during the second phase of the assessment. Project design did not include activities seen as being outside of ECHO's mandate. Needs assessments, either wholly or in part, were frequently shared with other donors by partners (see Table 4 for more details). Approximately two-thirds of sampled projects were funded from other sources.
- There were remaining unmet needs that were not covered by ECHO project funding or from other sources. This was a particular challenge in conflict areas in India where unmet needs in protection, livelihood and nutrition were identified.

#### *JC. 2.1 Alignment between needs assessment and project design.*

**Projects largely reflected identified at needs at a macro-level if they were seen as relevant to ECHO's mandate.** ECHO's HIP aimed to reflect their mandate and country strategy priorities, taking account of priorities and resources of other donors, and available budget on the one hand and partners presence and expertise on the other hand. However, the links between needs and response analysis as outlined in the HIPs, and presented during meetings with partners, was not always clear. Several partners in India referred to the lack of clarity regarding ECHO's prioritisation of nutrition during 2013 and its subsequent reversal in 2015. Another example cited by partners and other stakeholders was ECHO's decision to stop funding projects in conflict after 2016, particularly in Jammu and Kashmir where the conflict intensified during 2016. Partners pointed to the disconnect between the decision to withdraw from Jammu and Kashmir, where ECHO was the only major international humanitarian donor, with ECHO's policy of funding forgotten crises. In Nepal two partners expressed surprise that ECHO funding for 2016 in their modified HIP was restricted to capacity building in DRR, despite many remaining recovery needs in the aftermath of the 2015 earthquake.

**In some cases, there was a disconnect between ECHO's description of sectoral needs and needs identified by partners.** For example, in the 2013 HIP for India the most acute humanitarian health needs in conflict affected areas were described as "*Access to basic primary health services in remote and conflict-affected areas is poor or non-existent ...*" Data from partners show that in some regions affected by the Naxalite crisis access to health was indeed the major

problem.<sup>30</sup> However, in Jammu and Kashmir psycho-social support<sup>31</sup> was identified as a higher priority than lack of access, apart from the most remote areas. ECHO accordingly agreed to fund projects aimed at increasing access to basic health care in the region affected by the Naxalite crisis and a project to address mental health needs in Jammu and Kashmir.

**There was a strong link between project activities and needs identified during in-depth assessments during the second phase of the assessment.** The scope of the second phase of assessments was however more limited in sectors addressed and geographical coverage, the latter often depending on presence of partners or their local partners.

**Overall projects funded were well aligned to partners' needs assessments, but did not include activities seen as being outside of ECHO's mandate.** Needs which ECHO didn't fund because they were outside its mandate, such as permanent shelter in Nepal, didn't appear in partner project proposals. Needs assessments, either wholly or in part, were frequently shared with other donors by partners (see Table 4 for more details).

### *JC. 2.2 Assessment results were relevant*

**There were remaining unmet needs that were not covered by ECHO project funding or from other sources.** Examples cited by partners included gaps in geographical coverage, numbers of vulnerable families identified and assisted and assistance for sectors not covered in the ECHO project. The latter was a particular challenge in conflict areas in India where unmet needs in protection, livelihood and nutrition were identified, as illustrated by partner survey results:

- Two different surveys carried out in 2015<sup>32</sup> and 2016<sup>33</sup> respectively highlighted a high prevalence of mental health disorders and the gap between needs and service delivery in Kashmir. According to the 2016 survey, 88% of mental health needs went unaddressed.
- An end-line survey revealed that, even after provision of assistance to mitigate the loss of livelihood activities and assets resulting from conflict in Assam, the percentage of households falling below an acceptable level of household food security still increased from 8% to 14%.

As shown in Table 4 below, with the exception of conflict areas in India, nearly all partners were able to cover needs through other means. In Nepal, partners were able to leverage funds from both emergency and development funding envelopes. In India, partners were able to secure complementary funding from other donors for natural disasters. Approximately two-thirds of sampled projects were funded from other sources, either from the agency's own

<sup>30</sup> MSF H (eSF 2014/01180/RQ/01/01)

<sup>31</sup> Action Aid and IMHANS Kashmir (2016); Mental Health Illness in the Valley. Available from: <https://www.actionaidindia.org/publication/mental-health-illness-in-the-valley/>

<sup>32</sup> MSF India and IMHANS (2015); Kashmir Mental Health Survey Report 2015. Available from: <https://www.msfindia.in/meeting-mental-health-needs-jammu-and-kashmir>

<sup>33</sup> Action Aid and IMHANS Kashmir (2016); Mental Health Illness in the Valley: A Community-based Prevalence Study of Mental Health Issues in Kashmir; Available from: <https://www.actionaidindia.org/publication/mental-health-illness-in-the-valley/>

resources or another institutional donor, and most contributions were already foreseen while partners were drafting proposals. Some fund-raising was done locally for some of the medical needs of victims injured in the conflict in Kashmir to complement ECHO funding. In two cases, partners were able to mitigate funding deficits by linking up with other projects in the same geographical area, including with long term development projects.

**Table 4 – Strategies for addressing unmet needs as per needs assessments**

	Co-funding by applicant	Co-funding by institutional donor(s)	Linkages (complementary projects)	Not applicable (no unmet needs)	Other solutions	No additional funds
India	2	1	-	1	partner raised funds locally for individual beneficiaries	2
Nepal	3	6	2	1	One project was topped up by ECHO	-
<b>Total</b>	5	7	2	2	2	2

The impact on the two projects with no complementary funding was mainly a reduction in beneficiary number, and it was left mainly to local partners to explain why some vulnerable households received assistance while others that had satisfied selection criteria did not.

### EQ 3: Entry and Exit Strategies

**EQ 3** To what extent has ECHO ensured having put in place and implemented appropriate entry and exit strategies for its interventions?

*This Evaluation Question seeks to whether there were coherent entry and exit strategies in place developed as part of a participatory process. It also looks at how these strategies were put into practice and were modified as needs changed.*

#### EQ 3 – Answer Box

- ECHO developed strategies adapted to the specific needs and contexts in each country taking account of their vulnerability to natural disasters and need to strengthening people's resilience, particularly in mitigating the impacts marginalised groups who often experience disproportionate disasters impacts.
- Disaster events in both countries were entry points for ECHO and its partners as part of ECHO's preparedness for development of intervention strategies or use as triggers to scale up their operations.
- There has been little involvement of GoI during development of strategies. Once response and recovery operations for cyclone Phailin were completed, ECHO's strategy has focused on northern India where years of conflict have displaced populations and hindered access to government services. While GoI has not prevented ECHO from accessing these areas, they have forced some of its partners to suspend operations and have showed relatively little interest in working on common strategies with civil society actors..

- ECHO India lacked an exit strategy for their country programme. The phasing out of ECHO India's programme during 2017 was largely done on an ad hoc basis without much support from ECHO to smooth the transition for its partners.
- GoN has been willing to work with international humanitarian agencies. ECHO's strategy has been to engage with the government and other stakeholders by working through partners and relevant networks. Entry strategies for DRR activities in Nepal have followed a national → district → community process to gain approval at national level and move down the ladder gaining approval and promoting ownership at each stage.
- Exit strategies that were not over-reliant on government ownership were more viable. An example of good practice was a school safety project in Nepal that emphasised community mobilisation while engaging with other donors and the government.
- Exit strategies have faced challenges in both countries due to several factors including the relatively short duration of ECHO projects, operationalising LRRD with development actors and inadequate strategies for replicating and scaling up pilot projects. There are nevertheless several examples of replication of DRR activities in Nepal where the GoN has integrated good practice into guidelines, strategy and local development planning processes.
- In India, partners were faced with a higher bar to developing and implementing viable exit strategies with a high reliance on GoI continue support despite weak ownership.
- Strategies were regularly adjusted by modifying the HIP and reallocating funding. Partners were very positive during interviews about ECHO's flexibility in modifying contracts to accommodate adaptations due to changing needs.

***JC. 3.1 ECHO and their partners had clearly-defined strategies developed with the involvement of key stakeholders***

**ECHO developed strategies adapted to the specific needs and contexts in each country.** Both countries are highly vulnerable to natural disasters including cyclones, floods, landslides, earthquakes and drought and strengthening people's resilience to natural disasters was an essential part of ECHO's intervention strategy. A strategy common to both countries has been to mitigate the impacts on those at the lowest level of the caste system experience a disproportionate effect of the impacts of disasters who have low coping capacities due to a combination of poverty, lack of assets and difficult access to the government services and entitlements.<sup>34</sup>

**Disaster events in both countries were entry points for ECHO and its partners as part of ECHO's preparedness for development of intervention strategies or use as triggers to scale up their operations** where international intervention where national actors have difficulty in covering humanitarian needs. Examples of such entry points during 2013-2017 include:

<sup>34</sup> ECHO (2017) HIP Technical Annex: South and East Asia and the Pacific v.4

- **2013 Cyclone Phailin in India:** *“The government had put in place robust preparedness measures, which prevented massive loss of life. The government is also distributing emergency relief packages to affected households, but the magnitude of the emergency and early recovery needs calls for external assistance to be provided to the most vulnerable people, to complement the immediate aid efforts of the local responders...ECHO has allocated EUR 3,000,000 for immediate and early recovery assistance for the most vulnerable victims of cyclone “Phailin”*.<sup>35</sup>
- **2014 floods in mid-western Nepal:** *“As a result of the devastating floods last August (the most severe since 2008) ... 150 000 people in the Mid-Western districts have lost their homes and more than 34 000 were displaced...Despite urgent calls from the Nepalese Government, the international community has provided very little humanitarian assistance. The Commission through ECHO1 provided EUR 250,000 with a small-scale response intervention. Huge unmet gaps still remain, in particular in terms of shelter repair, WASH and food/livelihood recovery. It is therefore appropriate to increase the allocation under the present HIP by EUR 500,000”*.<sup>36</sup>
- **2015 Nepal earthquake:** *“On 25 April 2015, a 7.8 magnitude earthquake struck Nepal and in the following days several aftershocks up to 7.1 magnitude were recorded. The Central Regions of Nepal, including Kathmandu Valley districts have been badly affected, including mountain and hilly areas, where rural populations are dispersed, as well as some very densely populated districts and Nepal’s two largest cities – greater Kathmandu and Pokhara. Thousands of people have been killed and tens of thousands injured. There is massive destruction of infrastructure, property and livelihoods. An allocation of EUR 3,000,000 is required to cover the most urgent and immediate needs”*.<sup>37</sup>
- **2017 floods in Nepal:** There was no modification in the HIP, apart from the funding decision. The description of interventions was as per guidance in the regional HIP; *“Flooding associated with the monsoon is an annual event in most of the region. While the national governments’ initial response is usually rapid and effective in terms of search-and-rescue, humanitarian gaps in the post-disaster phase frequently remain unaddressed...The main value added of external assistance to victims of natural disasters in the region is to address gaps in the coverage of relief operations and to overcome the barriers limiting access to social schemes”*.<sup>38</sup> On October 19<sup>th</sup>, an allocation of EUR 2 million was made to respond to monsoon floods that had struck Bangladesh and Nepal in two months earlier. Priority was

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<sup>35</sup> ECHO (2013) HIP India. v. 3. 22 October 2013 (page 1)

<sup>36</sup> ECHO (2014) HIP Nepal/Refugees from Bhutan v.2 (page 1)

<sup>37</sup> ECHO (2015) HIP India. v. 3. 30 April 2015 (page 1)

<sup>38</sup> ECHO (2017) HIP South and East Asia and the Pacific v.3 (page 5)



given to ECHO partners who were already implementing humanitarian actions in the most affected areas.<sup>39</sup>

## India

**There has been little involvement of GoI during development of strategies.** As described under EQ1, there was an unsuccessful attempt to focus on nutrition as a core programmatic area. With the exception of cyclone Phailin response and recovery operations, ECHO's strategy during the evaluation period in India focused on three protracted crises; Jammu & Kashmir, the North-Eastern States and Naxal-affected areas in central India where years of conflict have displaced populations and hindered access to services and protection, health and nutrition needs remains priorities. While GoI has not prevented ECHO from accessing these areas, they have suspended activities of some of its partners, and GoI has shown little interest in working with ECHO on a common strategy.

In India, the period between 2013-2017 saw significant reductions both in staffing and funding for ECHO. This period coincided with a time when other donors were phasing down their programmes<sup>40</sup> and international civil society actors were feeling the effects not only of decreased funding, but also pressures from an increasingly restrictive legislative and operational environment. India has also been significantly increasing its own humanitarian capacities to respond both internally and internationally. ECHO was faced with the challenge of finding a suitable strategic focus and alternative operating model where it could add value with a relatively small budget.

In the bigger picture, ECHO India lacked an exit strategy for their country programme. The phasing out of ECHO India's programme during 2017 was largely done on an ad hoc basis without much support from ECHO to smooth the transition for its partners.

## Nepal

**GoN has been willing to work with international humanitarian agencies.** ECHO's strategy has been to engage with the government and other stakeholders by working through different networks, notably the Nepal Risk Reduction Consortium (NRRC),<sup>41</sup> the Humanitarian "Plus" Coordination Team chaired by the UN Humanitarian Coordinator and informal donor groups. ECHO has had a special emphasis on community-based activities designed to strengthen people's resilience, the focus of Flagship IV in the NRRC. Interviews with different stakeholders indicated that ECHO's strategy was generally widely-known, and endorsed, by humanitarian actors in Nepal. The exception was at the national government level, where there was less awareness of ECHO's strategy which was attributed to a combination of a lack of direct interaction and turnover of government staff.

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<sup>39</sup> ECHO (2017) HIP Technical Annex: South and East Asia and the Pacific v.4

<sup>40</sup> Consortium of Humanitarian Agencies in India (2016) Changing Dynamics of Humanitarian Financing in India

<sup>41</sup> The NRRC brings together humanitarian and development actors in partnership with the government in order to reduce Nepal's vulnerability to natural disasters. The NRRC focusses on five broad themes ("Flagships"): school and hospital safety, emergency preparedness and response, flood risk management, community based disaster risk management and policy/institutional strengthening.

**Entry strategies for DRR activities in Nepal have followed a national → district → community process** to gain approval at national level and move down the ladder gaining approval and promoting ownership at each stage. Nepal has maintained a consistent strategic and longer-term programmatic focus on DRR and resilience along with preparedness to respond to significant disaster events, notably the 2015 earthquake. The exit strategy was a reverse process, with the aim of influencing policy and practice at all levels. This approach has resulted in some lessons learned that could potentially be very helpful in promoting good practice in DRR during the current governance transition in Nepal. The process for approving projects can take a long time, with partners reporting delays of up to 9 months in obtaining project approval from GoN.

ECHO's guidance for exit strategies in Nepal during the evaluation period is summarised in the 2015 HIP: "*Actions will have to include a strong focus on institution building to facilitate an exit strategy. They are also to have strong linkages with the National Risk Reduction Consortium. Target actions may be envisaged to this end, contributing concretely to the overall resilience agenda.*"<sup>42</sup>

### ***JC. 3.2 Strategies were put into practice and adapted to account for changes in operating contexts***

**A review of the selected project proposals found some well-developed exit strategies.** Many of these relied on the expectation that governments will assure continued funding. In fact, more detailed exit strategies were available in the individual multi-year country strategies that most of the ECHO partners have, where ECHO projects figured as one of the components.<sup>43</sup>

**Exit strategies that were not over-reliant on government ownership were more viable.** One of the best examples found was the school safety project<sup>44</sup> in Nepal implemented by Save the Children. It placed considerable emphasis on community mobilisation (teachers, students and community leaders) while engaging with other donors and the government at different levels, both directly and via community leaders as a local level and via strategic partners such as UNICEF and the NRRC (Flagship 1) at a national level. The project design specifically aimed at reinforcing local capacities and encourage replication. Observations during field visits indicated good coordination with other agencies implementing DRR activities.

One of the key components of a project in western Nepal was the training of "Master Trainers" in DRR.<sup>45</sup> Based on interviews and observations during the team's site visit to western Nepal, the training had been well-received, and the flood response provided an opportunity to observe this training being put into action. However, due to the rapid turnover of government administration staff in the region, very few of the trainees are still

<sup>42</sup> ECHO (2015) HIP Technical Annex: South Asia v.10 (page 17)

<sup>43</sup> For example, the selected Red Cross project describes this as "*The activities of this action are embedded in the long-term strategy of the National Red Cross and therefore expected to be self-sustainable with a clear exit strategy for ECHO funding.*" (eSF 2014/0117b2)

<sup>44</sup> eSF 2014/01185

<sup>45</sup> eSF 2015/91004

present in those areas and remaining training resources were thus much reduced. Some interviewees felt that the new structure with elected leaders may reduce the turnover.

**Exit strategies have faced challenges in both countries due to a combination of factors**, some of which are shared. The main challenges have been:

- The relatively short duration of ECHO projects. The projects with the most viable exit strategies were those where there had been a relatively seamless continuation between successive projects. This can be illustrated by the project implemented by WHO Nepal to strengthen health sector capacities of the Ministry of Health and population in the Kathmandu Valley in preparation for a mass casualty incident.<sup>46</sup> As described under EQ7 and EQ10, achievements and sustainability of this project have been good, but would have been impossible to achieve during a single project cycle.
- Operationalising LRRD in collaboration with development actors has been a challenge for ECHO, particularly with DEVCO.<sup>47</sup>
- Relatively modest budgets have meant that most ECHO longer-term projects were conceptualised as pilots. However, project designs sometimes lacked specifics about mechanisms for capturing lessons learned, replicating and scaling up of the interventions to promote sustainability. While there are examples of pilots that have been scaled up in Nepal, notably in the education and health sectors, there has been a tendency for pilots to be relatively ad hoc without communication and advocacy strategies that could have supported replication and scale-up.

**In India, partners were faced with a higher bar to developing and implementing viable exit strategies with a high reliance on GoI continued support despite weak ownership.** With most of the portfolio focused on improving inclusion and quality for people marginalised due to conflict, ECHO's exit strategy depended on the success of these efforts in improving service delivery and coverage.<sup>48</sup> There was little alternative to GoI since local partners lacked capacity and resources to continue without external support. There have nevertheless been some examples of projects in Assam and in Chandigarh where GoI has taken over health-related activities. Handicap International initiated a cost recovery system for disabled people in Jammu and Kashmir but ECHO's phase out meant there was only a short implementation period and it proved unsustainable.

**ECHO strategies were regularly updated and adjusted by updating the HIP and reallocating of funding.** By mid-2017 there had been two modifications, three during 2016 and, during 2015, there were eight modifications. Additional allocations were provided for disaster response as well as for conflict related assistance. Response plans and project designs of partners were by and large consistent with the context and needs analysis. Some updates adjusted numbers of targeted beneficiaries or projects were modified to cover unmet needs following a monitoring visit by ECHO. Partners were very positive during interviews about ECHO's flexibility in modifying contracts to accommodate adaptations due to changing needs.

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<sup>46</sup> ECHO/-SA/BUD/2015/91005

<sup>47</sup> More details are provided under EQ6 and in the LRRD case study in the annex.

<sup>48</sup> ECHO (2015) HIP South Asia v.9 (page 12)

## EQ 4: Alignment with ECHO policies

### EQ 4 How well aligned were ECHO's operations with ECHO's policies?

*This evaluation question covers the coherence of the country strategies and specific operations with ECHO relevant internal policies. It aims at assessing the extent to which ECHO funded humanitarian activities in India and Nepal have been coherent to their relevant policy frameworks.*

#### EQ 4 – Answer Box

- ECHO country strategies and operations were coherent with ECHO's broader policy framework. ECHO-supported operations in Nepal were coherent with sectors and approaches described in the HIP.
- Sectoral interventions in India were broadly consistent with ECHO policies but, due to the operating context, ECHO found itself at the edge of its mandate since many of the activities it supported were bordering on development.
- Awareness of ECHO's policies amongst partners in each country was uneven and relatively limited. A combination of ECHO's "hands on" monitoring approach combined with advice and quality assurance provided by Europe-based partners helped to align interventions with ECHO policies. However, the understanding and application of humanitarian principles by partners and other stakeholders was inconsistent due in part to relationships with governments and the blurred lines between relief and development in both countries.
- Project documents often do not mention specific ECHO policies, with the exception of Resilience and Gender-Age Markers. These markers were useful since they helped to clarify ECHO's policy commitments for resilience and gender/age inclusion and allowed ECHO staff to make transparent and evidence-based judgements on compliance with related ECHO policies on ECHO funded interventions.

### *JC. 4.1 ECHO funded operations have been implemented in line with relevant ECHO policies*

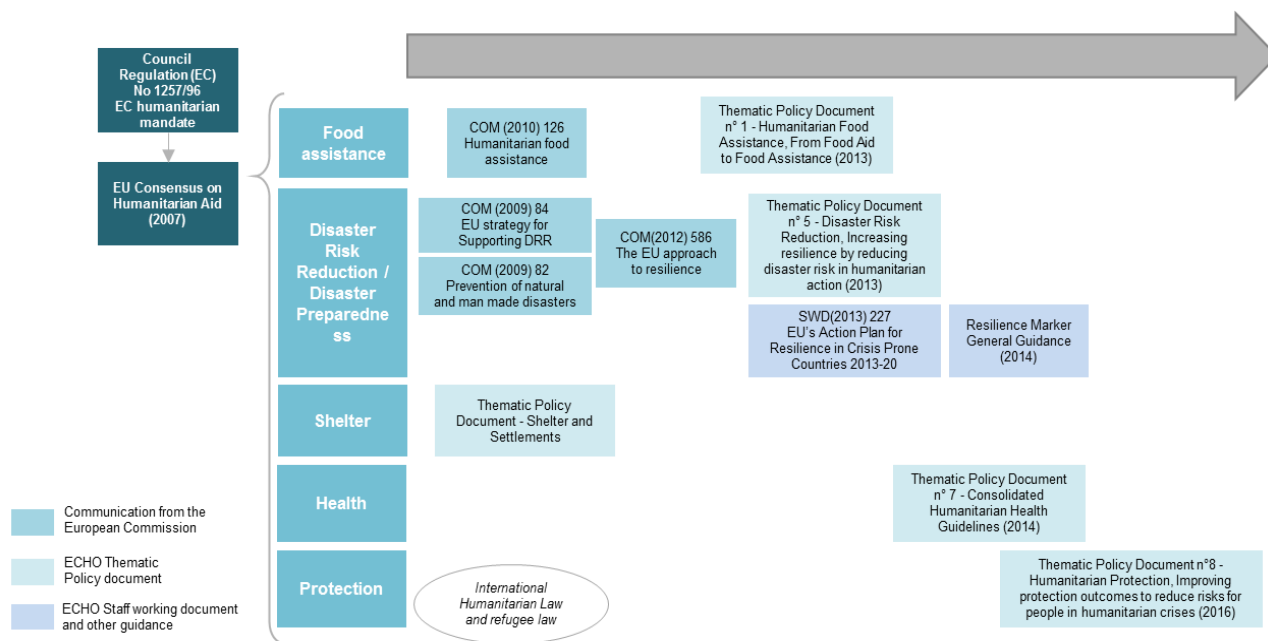
**ECHO country strategies and operations were coherent with ECHO's broader policy framework.** The overall policy framework for humanitarian assistance was outlined in the Council Regulation No 1257/96 on humanitarian aid. It sets out the main goals, principles and procedures for implementing EU humanitarian aid operations. The European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid (2007) aims to ensure coordination and complementarity between EU countries and institutions to improve EU's humanitarian assistance. It defines the EU's common vision, policy objectives and principles on a large number of topics, including international humanitarian cooperation, good humanitarian donorship, risk reduction and preparedness, civil protection and civil and military relations.

ECHO has developed thematic policies and guidelines on how to implement and coordinate EU humanitarian aid and civil protection policies for several thematic (e.g. regarding food

assistance, nutrition, health, and disaster risk reduction)<sup>49</sup>. This include a statement on the objectives pursued, response options, and the definition of entry and exit criteria:

This policy framework was illustrated in the figure below for ECHO's main sectors of intervention in India and Nepal.

**Figure 6 – Overview of ECHO policy framework for India and Nepal**



**ECHO-supported operations in Nepal were coherent with sectors and approaches described in the HIP.** ECHO's portfolio over the period mainly focused on DRR/disaster preparedness in hazard-prone areas in Nepal, post-earthquake shelter prioritising communities in remote areas and food assistance for Bhutanese refugees and people affected by the earthquake,<sup>50</sup> which corresponded to key sectors of intervention identified in HIPs and amongst twelve priority sectors identified by ECHO at a global level.<sup>51</sup>

**Awareness of ECHO's policies amongst partners was varied and most partner staff in the country have only a vague knowledge.** Partner staff in Nepal and India were not very familiar with ECHO policies, apart from those that were directly applicable to their specific projects (e.g. resilience marker, protection, etc.). As noted above, knowledge of a

<sup>49</sup> Include the following thematic : food assistance, nutrition, water sanitation and hygiene, health, cash and vouchers, protection, disaster risk reduction, helping children in need ([http://ec.europa.eu/echo/what/humanitarian-aid/policy-guidelines\\_en](http://ec.europa.eu/echo/what/humanitarian-aid/policy-guidelines_en))

<sup>50</sup> DRR, shelter and food assistance accounted for 26%, 14% and 7% of total ECHO budgets in Nepal respectively.

<sup>51</sup> List of sectors identified by ECHO (ECHO partners helpdesk [http://dgecho-partners-helpdesk.eu/reference\\_documents/start](http://dgecho-partners-helpdesk.eu/reference_documents/start)): Food security and livelihoods, WASH, Health, Nutrition, Shelter and settlements, Disaster risk reduction / disaster preparedness, Protection, Coordination, Support to operations, Mine action, Education in emergencies, Multi-purpose cash transfer

specific policy has not meant that the action was inconsistent with ECHO's policy framework. Our assessment was that the combination of ECHO's "hands on" monitoring approach combined with advice and quality assurance provided by Europe-based partners helped to align interventions with ECHO policies. When responding to this question, some partners referred to examples where there were inconsistencies between ECHO's approach and practice. Examples most frequently cited were ECHO's delay in making decisions about responding to quick-onset disasters, their approach to nutrition in India and a lack of clarity about the role of the EU's Civil Protection capacity.

**Projects are aligned with ECHO policies even if they are not explicitly described in country strategies and operations.** Project documents often do not mention specific ECHO policies, with the exception of Resilience and Gender-Age Markers. These markers were useful since they helped to clarify ECHO's policy commitments for resilience and gender/age inclusion and allowed ECHO staff to make evidence-based judgements on the coherence between policy and ECHO funded interventions.<sup>52</sup>

**ECHO's 2014 Resilience Marker was being used as a reference by many partners.** This tool supports the EU's Action Plan for Resilience in Crisis Prone Countries: 2013-2020. In Nepal, partners regularly applied ECHO resilience marker and were able to present satisfactory analyses of shocks, stresses and vulnerabilities, risks, local capacity measures and support to long term strategies. All nine projects amongst the Nepal sample applied the resilience marker, with 6 projects meeting all of the marker criteria.

**Few of the projects selected for detailed analysis met all criteria of ECHO's 2014 Gender-Age Marker.**<sup>53</sup> According to scoring by ECHO for these 9 projects, the design was not sufficiently adapted to the specific needs and capacities of different gender and age groups.

**In India, partners felt that ECHO had been acting at the edge of its humanitarian mandate and country strategy, as many of its activities were developmental in nature.** The sectors of intervention, food assistance, protection, and health, mentioned in ECHO strategy<sup>54</sup> were part of its mandate. This mix of humanitarian and development activities was seen to be due to a combination of the chronic nature of the conflict in northern India,

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<sup>52</sup> The Marker records whether or not humanitarian actions meet each of the following criteria sufficiently:

- Does the proposal include an adequate analysis of shocks, stresses and vulnerabilities?
- Is the project risk informed? Does the project include adequate measures to ensure it does not aggravate risks or undermine capacities?
- Does the project include measures to build local capacities (beneficiaries and local institutions)?
- Does the project take opportunities to support long term strategies to reduce humanitarian needs, underlying vulnerability and risks?

<sup>53</sup> The Marker records whether or not humanitarian actions meet each of the following criteria sufficiently:

- Does the proposal contain an adequate and brief gender and age analysis?
- Is the assistance adapted to the specific needs and capacities of different gender and age groups?
- Does the action prevent/mitigate negative effects?
- Do relevant gender and age groups adequately participate in the design, implementation and evaluation of the Action?

<sup>54</sup> ECHO (2013) HIP India

increased restrictions on civil society activities, the fact that most of ECHO's partners were also implementing development projects.

Examples of ECHO-funded that were more oriented towards development than humanitarian goals such as: the 'Assistance to people with disabilities in Jammu and Kashmir' (HI-Disabilities), the 'Assistance to children affected by conflict in Jammu and Kashmir' (STC-Conflict) funded through the EU Children of Peace Initiative which was more oriented towards conflict resolution, the 'Assistance to address malnutrition in Madhya Pradesh' (UNICEF), the 'Early recovery support to vulnerable populations affected by floods in Jammu & Kashmir' (Action Aid), and the 'Enhancing learning protection environment for children in conflict in Assam'<sup>55</sup> (Terre des Hommes).

**At a portfolio level, coherence with prioritized sectors of the country strategy hides an implicit orientation of the interventions toward development.** In India, ECHO's portfolio focuses on food assistance (21%), protection (18%) and health and medical services (12%) which correspond to the key sectors of intervention identified in the HIP 2013 as follows:

- Food assistance – emergency needs in central India stemming from malnutrition and localized food insecurity;
- Protection – child protection and respect of IHL;
- Health – primary health care outreach, psychosocial support for trauma victims and assistance to people living with disabilities.

Logical frameworks for nutrition projects, such as 'Assistance to address malnutrition in Madhya Pradesh', where UNICEF developed a system to track the progress of children once they leave the nutrition centres was oriented more towards development goals. ECHO described the project as 'humanitarian-focused' since it is targeted at stabilization centres. Similarly, ECHO's interventions in health and medical services tend to go beyond ECHO mandate set out in the Thematic Policy Document n° 7 - Consolidated Humanitarian Health Guidelines (CHHG, 2014) and apply development-oriented approaches.

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<sup>55</sup> This project was funded from ECHO's global "EU Children of Peace Initiative" that funds humanitarian projects for children in crisis-affected regions [https://ec.europa.eu/echo/what/humanitarian-aid/children-of-peace\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/echo/what/humanitarian-aid/children-of-peace_en)

## EQ 5: Articulation with other actors

**EQ 5** To what extent has ECHO's crisis response been well articulated to interventions of other actors addressing the same crises (such as Civil Protection, Development, local authorities, other donors)?

*This Evaluation Question assesses the coherence between ECHO and other parts of the EU and with external stakeholders.*

### EQ 5 – Answer Box

- There was a lack of articulation between ECHO and DEVCO in DRR and resilience programming in both countries. A good practice example of collaboration with DEVCO in the education sector in Nepal nevertheless did demonstrate that it was possible to achieve impressive positive outcomes despite institutional and system-related challenges.
- There was little evidence of formal collaboration between the EU Civil Protection and ECHO during the deployment for the Nepal earthquake response. However, their co-location in the EU Delegation office facilitated regular information-sharing during the earthquake response.
- ECHO's role in facilitating coordination between partners improved programme effectiveness in Nepal. ECHO made use of sector-wide partnerships with implementers, donors and other stakeholders active in supporting DRR and resilience. This helped to improve efficiency and effectiveness of ECHO interventions through better alignment and harmonisation of donor approaches to fill gaps and reduce duplication in addition to facilitating knowledge management
- ECHO's HIP for Nepal has been developed in consultation with other humanitarian actors, and other donors and was in line with the sectoral priorities and needs identified. There was no evidence of direct involvement of government actors in the development of the strategy. In India, the HIP was mainly developed by ECHO without much consultation with partners, but they found it was relevant.
- ECHO's relationship with governments in both countries usually has been indirect, either through its partners or the EU delegation. ECHO missions tend to interact mainly at a local government level. In Nepal, ECHO was an active participant in national DRR dialogues, where it has been viewed as a major player by the international community.
- Channelling ECHO funds through consortia have improved efficiency and effectiveness in some cases, providing they are well-managed and resourced.
- ECHO was well-informed about interventions of other humanitarian actors, particularly in Nepal, where ECHO regularly participated in collaborative activities with other donors, including joint assessments. In India, ECHO is following in the footsteps of bilateral donors to phase out their programmes. Some donors, such as USAID/OFDA, have been piloting alternative operating models working with UNDP in India to enhance resilience.



### ***JC. 5.1 ECHO facilitated internal coherence of EU capabilities based on mandates and value-added***

**Articulation with other parts of the EU Delegations in both countries has generally been poor.** This mirrors similar findings in other evaluations and reviews:

- In a 2010 evaluation of ECHO in Nepal that: *“Coordination with the EU Delegation has in particular been weak”*<sup>56</sup> which was partly attributed to capacity constraints and process differences. The lack of coordination was found to have reduced the influence of ECHO play a more significant role in influencing DRR policy-making.<sup>57</sup>
- From more recent internal lessons learned reviews:
  - A priority action to be taken was *“LRRD needs to be on the agenda of ERCC coordination meetings from the very first meeting onwards in order to facilitate a structured exchange and follow-through”*.<sup>58</sup>
  - *“In such emergencies, there is a great opportunity to improve the in-house ECHO cooperation, from the request for assistance to the elaboration of a joint plan...”*<sup>59</sup>

Interviews with ECHO staff in Brussels confirmed that this lack of articulation was by no means confined to these two countries and the underlying drivers, including lack of suitable training of ECHO and DEVCO staff, incentives and instruments to help bridge the gaps, were well known to leadership. There were some positive exceptions, the most notable of which was a good practice example of collaboration involving a collective effort by ECHO, DEVCO, Save the Children, UNICEF and the Ministry of Education in Nepal.<sup>60</sup> Other examples included the active participation of the EU Delegation in Nepal in Bhutanese refugee donor meetings convened by UNHCR along with the role of ECHO in both countries in providing updates and talking points to the Delegation regarding humanitarian situations.

**The only time during the evaluation period where EU Civil Protection capacities were deployed to either country was following the Nepal earthquake to carry out search and rescue activities and subsequently UN coordination efforts in regional hubs.** There was little evidence of formal collaboration, such as joint action, between the EU Civil Protection and ECHO. However, their co-location in the EU Delegation office facilitated regular information-sharing during the earthquake response.

**ECHO’s role in facilitating coordination between partners improved programme effectiveness in Nepal.** ECHO made use of sector-wide partnerships with implementers, donors and other stakeholders active in supporting DRR and resilience. This helped to

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<sup>56</sup> Aguaconsult Ltd. (2010) Evaluation of the ECHO’s Action in Nepal (page 39).

<sup>57</sup> Based on the findings from the current evaluation, there was no action taken on the corresponding recommendation to ECHO to strengthen links with the EU Delegation.

<sup>58</sup> European Commission (2015) Nepal Earthquakes, April – May 2015: Lessons Learnt (page 3).

<sup>59</sup> European Commission (2016) Outcomes of Technical and Operational Level Lessons Learnt Meeting on 19 October 2015 (page 3).

<sup>60</sup> This is described in more detail as a good practice example in the annexed LRRD case study.

improve efficiency and effectiveness of ECHO interventions through better alignment and harmonisation of donor approaches to fill gaps and reduce duplication in addition to facilitating knowledge management.

**ECHO's HIP for Nepal has been developed in consultation with other humanitarian actors**, and other donors and was in line with the sectoral priorities and needs identified in the 2015 Flash Appeal. There was no evidence of direct involvement of government actors in the development of the strategy. **In India, the HIP was mainly developed by ECHO** without much consultation with partners although most partners interviewed found it to be relevant. In India, partner coordination was mainly limited to pre-monsoon preparedness workshops.

## India

As described in detail in Case Study 3 (attached as an annex), ECHO partners in India has been operating in an increasingly restricted regulatory environment in India and, **since ECHO works through civil society, this has translated in very limited engagement with local authorities and virtually no interaction at a national level**. GoI disaster management officials interviewed had very little understanding about ECHO and partners noted that neither ECHO and the EU Delegation were actively participating in interagency DRR network meetings.

**For partners working in Jammu & Kashmir, ECHO made a binding condition in their funding decision**. During interviews, partners working in these areas acknowledged the need for good coordination and felt ECHO encouragement was helpful.

### *JC. 5.2 ECHO coordinated with other humanitarian actors effectively*

**Assertive governments have influenced the efficiency and effectiveness of projects**. In India and Nepal there was evidence of how the strength of engagement of partners with can influence the efficiency and effectiveness of projects. In India, there was limited engagement of partners with authorities at a local level and very little at a state or national level.

**Channelling ECHO funds through consortia have improved efficiency and effectiveness in some cases, providing they are well-managed and resourced**. In both India and Nepal, consortia approaches have been used several times by ECHO. Examples of partner consortia in Nepal, such as that led by Save the Children, demonstrated that this approach can help in avoiding duplication of effort and harmonising approaches. Characteristics of good practice examples were efficient segregation of duties between partners based on their competencies, a common strategy shared by all partners, effective leadership; a manageable number of members and cascade approaches to training.<sup>61</sup> Conversely, a lack of internal capacity in implementing partners, recruitment of large

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<sup>61</sup> eSF: 2015/91044; 2015/91005; 2015/91007

numbers of local partners and poor leadership was observed to cause delays and inefficiencies. In the case of the Action Aid consortium in India and IOM in Nepal, gaps in leadership and lack of human resources combined with a large consortium led to significant delays and unsatisfactory performance.<sup>62</sup>

**ECHO was well-informed about interventions of other humanitarian actors,** particularly in Nepal, where ECHO regularly participated in collaborative activities with other donors, including joint assessments.<sup>63</sup> This included coordination of activities across donors involved in DRR programming and filling gaps in shelter recovery programming left when some NGOs ceased temporary shelter assistance after the emergency phase was over in August 2015.<sup>64</sup> Engagement with the GoI through partners and networks has been an integral part of the design of the DRR and promotion of sustainability.

**ECHO and the EU<sup>65</sup> have been the only major source of funding for partners in Jammu and Kashmir.** ECHO partners reported that they could usually access funding from other donors, including USAID, corporate donors and private sector foundations but these mainly support responses to natural disasters.

**The recent decision to downgrade the ECHO field presence in India to an antenna follows the trend of bilateral donors to phase out their programmes in India.**<sup>66</sup> It was noted that one of the justifications that DFID used to close their office in India was the continued presence of ECHO, which would allow them to continue to have a humanitarian foothold in the country.

**USAID/OFDA has been piloting alternative operating models for working in India.** UNDP has been implementing a collaborative project “Enhancing resilience of institutions and communities to disaster risk and climate change” involving Ministry of Home Affairs, USAID and OFDA to support GoI’s efforts to strengthen resilience and climate risk management in urban settings. The project targets six medium-sized cities (with populations of 100,000 – 500,000) located in hazard-prone areas. Project objectives are to improve urban planning and disaster risk management.

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<sup>62</sup> eSF: Action Aid; 2014/91002, eSF: IOM; 2015/91041

<sup>63</sup> ECHO had organised a joint monitoring visit with NGO partners and representatives from DFID and OFDA to western Nepal just before the evaluation team arrived. Subsequent interviews with partners and donor staff demonstrated confirmed this visit had helped to ensure there was a common understanding and coordinated approach to addressing humanitarian issues.

<sup>64</sup> Interview: IOM

<sup>65</sup> To support peace-building.

<sup>66</sup> Consortium of Humanitarian Agencies in India (2016) Changing Dynamics of Humanitarian Financing in India: A Discussion Paper

**EQ 6: EU added-value**

<b>EQ 6</b>	<b>What was the EU Added Value of the ECHO actions in the region during the evaluation period?</b>
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*This Evaluation Question examines value-added of ECHO from the perspective of its role, mandate and how ECHO facilitated the work of its partners.*

**EQ 6 – Answer Box**

- Partners were unanimous in their appreciation of the “demanding and hands-on” approach of ECHO with their partners that helped them to focus on results and improve quality. Compared to its peers, ECHO was perceived by partners as the donor that was most knowledgeable about the situation on the ground and able to provide useful and timely feedback. This “hands on” approach has also resulted in ECHO being perceived by other donors with a presence in the country as a useful resource for advice about the situation on the ground. For EU members, such as Sweden, who do not maintain a permanent humanitarian presence, information from ECHO was a critical element for their analysis of needs, risk and vulnerability.
- More than a decade of investment in DRR and resilience in Nepal have positioned ECHO as a recognised thematic expert. This has led to expectations from partners and local governments that ECHO will make an important contribution in supporting the transition process to the new governance system. ECHO’s successes in improving the understanding of DRR and resilience in Nepal has highlighted gaps in LRRD as community members search for funds to retrofit unsafe buildings identified when drawing up hazard maps.
- Factors contributing to a reduction in ECHO’s value-added included:
  - The lack of direct engagement with GoI and GoN has made it easier for ECHO to be impartial, but at the same time limited their ability to advance humanitarian principles, notably provision of impartial assistance to marginalised populations.
  - ECHO’s designation of Nepal as a “Resilience Flagship” country following the 2015 earthquake was not supported by institutional investments.
  - ECHO has not been a predictable donor for meeting immediate needs following quick-onset disasters and partners have needed to rely on other sources of funding to support their responses.
  - Value-added of ECHO’s assistance model in the Indian operating context has been limited, even though partners confirmed the relevance of ECHO’s programme while emphasising that ECHO has been virtually the only donor regularly supporting and visiting conflict areas. There was a consensus that to add value in India ECHO will need to find a new operating model that is based on an equal partnership.

### *JC. 6.1 ECHO drew on its specific role and mandate to create added value*

**The ‘hands on’ approach by ECHO was considered as good practice by partners.** ECHO’s partners receive funding from a variety of donors, but ECHO stood out as a responsive and flexible donor in comparison to its peers. Partners, including strategic partners such as UN agencies involved in coordination, appreciated ECHO’s technical expertise, proactive monitoring of projects, flexible project management systems and frequent visits to the field to observe progress and consult with beneficiary communities. ECHO staff were perceived to have an in-depth understanding of the operating context and partners feel this helped them to improve project quality and facilitated constructive dialogues when project revisions were needed to adapt to changed needs in rapidly changing environments.

**ECHO’s information and analysis is valued by other donors.** ECHO was perceived by other donors present in the country as a useful resource for advice about the situation on the ground. For EU members such as Sweden, who do not maintain a permanent humanitarian presence, information provided by ECHO has been a critical element supporting their analysis of needs, risk and vulnerability that guided their interventions in countries like Nepal.<sup>67</sup>

**The lack of direct engagement with GoI and GoN has made it easier for ECHO to be impartial, but at the same time limited their ability to advance humanitarian principles, notably with regard to impartial assistance to the most vulnerable.** ECHO has instead promoted humanitarian principles during their ongoing collaboration with their implementing partners and engaging in formal and informal networks. As described in Case Study 3 in the annex, governments in both countries have passed several pieces of legislation during the evaluation period that restricts activities of NGOs, including ECHO partners. ECHO’s potential to advance humanitarian principles was particularly limited in India, where GoI has shown itself willing to suspend activities of ECHO.

In Nepal, ECHO partners and the Red Cross have had the opportunity to play a more substantive role and generally maintained good contacts with government counterparts at different levels. ECHO has also been able to use its influential role in the NRRC, the UN-led Humanitarian “Plus” Coordination Team and other networks.

The new governance system in Nepal where decentralised authority has been transferred to elected leaders has created both opportunities and challenges. Partners reported that a good number of newly-elected leaders are former NGO staff. They know about the ECHO-supported DRR projects and were requesting relevant training and other forms of support. At the same time, several incidents during the 2017 flood response have been reported by agencies claiming that members of political parties have interfered in needs assessments and distributions of relief items.

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<sup>67</sup> Tasneem *et al.* (2016) Evaluation of Sida’s Humanitarian Assistance

**ECHO's designation of Nepal as a "Resilience Flagship" country following the 2015 earthquake was not supported by institutional investments.**<sup>68</sup> There have been several good practice initiatives to increased resilience in Nepal, including the example cited above of successful ECHO and DEVCO collaboration in the education sector. However, there was no evidence that, apart from a workshop facilitated by ECHO's regional office soon after the announcement, there have been any investments in research, capacity building or attempt to capture relevant learning. Evidence suggests that ECHO has shifted its focus instead to countries selected to participate in the "Humanitarian-Development Nexus" agreed by the Council in early 2017.<sup>69</sup>

### ***JC. 6.2 ECHO and their partners could fill key gaps using their comparative advantage***

**ECHO has not been a predictable donor for meeting immediate needs following quick-onset disasters.** Partners have needed to rely on other sources of funding for their responses. With the exception of the Nepal earthquake, partners have waited approximately two months before signing contracts to respond to major disasters during the evaluation period (see Figure 8 for a timeline). ECHO's 2017 regional HIP states that national governments' initial response is usually rapid and "*The main value added of external assistance to victims of natural disasters in the region is to address gaps in the coverage of relief operations and to overcome the barriers limiting access to social schemes.*"<sup>70</sup> While this may apply for many countries in south and south-east Asia, including much of India, findings from this evaluation indicate that response capacities in Nepal and in some conflict-affected areas on India struggle to meet humanitarian needs, particularly for marginalised groups.

ECHO funding for response and recovery operations has also been relatively modest. Figure 7 below shows funding commitments 10 days after the earthquake struck on April 25, 2015. Of the EUR 3.3 m shown, a total of EUR 1.3 m was divided amongst ECHO partners for the response<sup>71</sup> at a time when the UN was estimating requirements for immediate relief and recovery needs at some \$422 million.<sup>72</sup>

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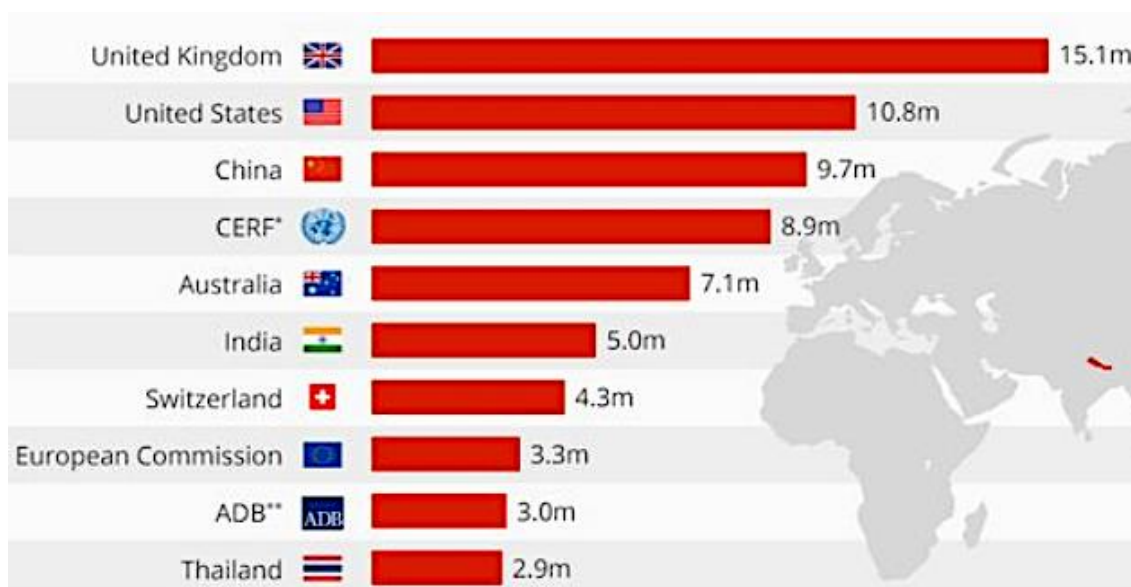
<sup>68</sup> This approach contrasts with the approach of USAID/OFDA following designation of Nepal as one of eight countries to be included in their "Global Resilience Partnership" initiative. The initiative aims to advance thinking and practice on risk and resilience measurement through consolidated learning and communication. Following some two years of planning, training, developing a baseline and procurement, USAID/OFDA was in the process of launching a five-year resilience pilot project at the time of the field visit.

<sup>69</sup> European Council (2017) Council Conclusions on Operationalising the Humanitarian-Development Nexus. 19 May 2017.

<sup>70</sup> ECHO (2017) HIP South and East Asia and the Pacific v.3 (page 5)

<sup>71</sup> Source: HOPE database

<sup>72</sup> OCHA (2015) Nepal Flash Appeal Revision: Nepal Earthquake April - September 2015

**Figure 7 – Nepal Earthquake: Commitments by Top 10 Donors (US\$)**

Source: OCHA (data as of May 25, 2015)

**More than a decade of investment in DRR and resilience have positioned ECHO as a thematic expert in Nepal.** Nepal remains a highly vulnerable and hazard-prone country. ECHO's links at different levels should position them well to support large-scale disaster responses. When asked about ECHO's value added, several partners said that being an ECHO partner was key to understanding DRR in Nepal. ECHO's "hands on" approach that emphasizes regular monitoring by technical experts has a unique niche amongst donors that goes beyond just funding. ECHO's status as DRR "expert" in Nepal has led to expectations, both by partners and local governments, that ECHO could make an important contribution in supporting the transition process to a new governance system. During the visits to project sites, the team heard of several newly-elected leaders that had requested DRR training of the type provided by ECHO partners.

**ECHO's successes in improving the understanding of DRR and resilience in Nepal has highlighted gaps in LRRD.** A key output of ECHO's DRR capacity building has been community hazard maps. ECHO's mandate and scale of financial resources has meant that it can support training and small investments, but communities have become aware that some of their school buildings were unsafe without necessarily being able to access funds to retrofit buildings.

**India's status as an emerging humanitarian donor means that knowledge exchange has been increasingly becoming more important rather than external funding.** GoI currently maintains a national response force of some trained 12,000 individuals who are available to respond to natural disasters. This means that the bar for international donors and agencies to add value has been rising higher and higher.

**For ECHO partners, however, relevance was connected to whether ECHO has funding for projects,** especially since ECHO has been one of the few donors supporting and visiting conflict areas. Although agencies such as Save the Children, ICRC, MSF have an emergency mandate, they were constrained in applying their emergency mandate in

Kashmir. ECHO has not been subject thus far to the same pressures by GoI. Apart from their work in conflict-affected areas, the other areas where ECHO-supported interventions had added value were their approaches to inclusive assessment and targeting.

**ECHO's assistance model in the Indian operating context resulted in limited value-added.** As described in Case Study 3 in the annex, it has become increasingly difficult for civil society to work independently in India and virtually all of ECHO's "international" NGO partners are now registered as national NGOs in India. The types of interventions supported by an impartial humanitarian like ECHO in conflict-affect areas (Kashmir and Assam) do fill humanitarian gaps, but continuation of project funding proved difficult to justify since the potential to influence and take activities to scale were limited in the absence of government ownership and, in north-eastern India, relatively high cost of service delivery. During interviews with ECHO and partner staff, there was a consensus that ECHO also added value through its expertise in vulnerability assessment and monitoring.

**There was a consensus that to add value ECHO will need to find a new operating model in India that is based on an equal partnership.** An example of an alternative model was the USAID-OFDA project implemented by UNDP to strengthen resilience in selected urban areas in high risk areas (see Case Study 1 in the annex). This intervention was reported to be in line with GoI's current priority on strengthening decentralised response capacities.



## EQ 7: Achievement of objectives

<b>EQ 7</b>	<b>To what extent has ECHO achieved its objectives in contributing to satisfying the humanitarian needs and building resilience?</b>
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*This Evaluation Question assesses whether ECHO had a coherent strategy in each country to meet humanitarian needs and build resilience, what results were achieved and to what extent were these results influenced by the strategy or by other factors.*

### EQ 7 – Answer Box

- ECHO Strategies in both countries include maintaining an adequate level of preparedness to be able to respond to disasters that exceed the capacity of national actors to address unmet humanitarian needs. While DRR interventions supported by ECHO have contributed to increased resilience of affected communities, delays in ECHO funding decisions following quick-onset emergencies have reduced the effectiveness of ECHO's interventions.
- The strategic objectives as formulated in each country were consistent with ECHO's mandate, although the contribution of ECHO actions in India was limited by various constraints. In India, ECHO's strategy mainly focused on improving inclusion and quality in service delivery for conflict-affected communities in northern India and Jammu and Kashmir. ECHO's strategy in Nepal had a specific focus on building resilience in hazard-prone areas.
- A sample of 15 ECHO-funded projects reviewed found a 90% success rate in achieving, or even exceeding, planned outputs in terms of beneficiaries reached and sectoral assistance delivered. Results for outcomes were mixed, with many more positive examples from Nepal regarding use and replication of assistance where initial monitoring of the response to the 2017 flood response indicated less loss of life and significantly increased resilience compared to a similar disaster during 2014.
- Lack of preparedness limited the adoption of cash modalities and represented a missed opportunity for ECHO and its partners to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the response.

### ***JC. 7.1 ECHO has a coherent strategy and guidance to satisfy humanitarian needs and build resilience in each country***

**Strategies in both countries include maintaining an adequate level of preparedness to be able to respond to disasters that exceed the capacity of national actors to address unmet humanitarian needs.** In addition to in-country capacities, ECHO can also

draw upon a number of tools and systems at a regional and global level to effectively support a response to a major disaster.<sup>73</sup>

**After 2013 Phailin response and recovery operations had been completed, ECHO's strategy in India focused on improving inclusion and quality in service delivery for conflict-affected communities in northern India and Jammu and Kashmir.**<sup>74</sup> Five out of the six projects from the sample drawn from the India portfolio were located in conflict-affected areas.

**The strategic objectives as formulated were consistent with ECHO's mandate although the contribution of ECHO actions in India was limited** in terms of satisfying humanitarian needs and building resilience for three major reasons.

- Unlike in Nepal, ECHO in India lacked government ownership of their strategy and there was no vehicle similar to the NRRC network which could have helped in scaling up ECHO interventions to strengthen resilience. Many of the ECHO-supported project objectives were focused on provision of assistance to individuals or households and, as described under EQ3 (exit strategies) and EQ10 (sustainability) and there was little evidence of moving to scale resilience outcomes at a community level, let alone at a regional or national level;
- ECHO's limited financial resources, which totaled Euro 21 million during 2013-2016 along with progressive budget reductions limited ECHO's influence, especially in a country where humanitarian needs are so vast.
- ECHO's leverage in terms of policy influence on the Government of India has been very limited in an operating environment severely constrained by the government restrictions and where space for civil society and partnership with international humanitarian donors has progressively decreased.

**ECHO's strategy in Nepal during the evaluation period has had a specific focus on building resilience in hazard-prone areas.** ECHO has accordingly prioritised resources for capacity building while at the same time promoted DRR mainstreaming during response and recovery operations following disasters. ECHO's strategy also supported food assistance for Bhutanese refugees until phasing out in 2016 when the majority of refugees had been resettled. Based on feedback from partners and other stakeholders, this strategy has proved to be effective since it has positioned ECHO as a DRR "expert" resource.

### ***JC. 7.2 ECHO and their partners have translated these strategies and guidance into concrete outputs and outcomes***

**The sample of ECHO-funded projects reviewed found that 87% projects (13 out of 15) examined in detail succeeded in achieving, or exceeding, their planned outputs in terms of beneficiaries reached and sectoral assistance delivered.** The two projects with unsatisfactory performances were an earthquake recovery project in Nepal led by IOM and a recovery project following a cyclone in India led by Action Aid. Both of these projects

<sup>73</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/echo/what/civil-protection/emergency-response-coordination-centre-ercc\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/echo/what/civil-protection/emergency-response-coordination-centre-ercc_en)

<sup>74</sup> ECHO (2015) HIP South Asia v.9 (page 12)

faced challenges with relatively large consortia compounded by management gaps. The two projects with unsatisfactory performances faced challenges with managing relatively large consortia along with other management issues.

**While outputs were satisfactory, outcomes had mixed results.** The main factors influencing outcomes have been described elsewhere in this report, including the degree of government ownership, effectiveness of piloting strategies for replication and scale-up of activities and the extent to which partners have been constrained by the relatively short project length in achieving longer term outcomes.<sup>75</sup> Another relevant issue encountered during the evaluation was the availability of outcome data since there were considerable variations between partners on the extent that they monitor project outcomes.

**In Nepal, DRR and resilience have been a major area of focus of ECHO** with a third of ECHO funds being allocated to this sector during the period 2013-2017. The overall envelope however remains limited with a total of Euros 9.5 million.

Four out of the nine projects reviewed from the Nepal sample focused on strengthening DRR and preparedness capacities at local level through community-based approaches. Based on reviews of ECHO monitoring reports and interviews, they all showed a good overall performance. All the FDGs conducted by the evaluation team with communities and interviews with aid workers in western Nepal immediately after the August 2017 floods gave positive feedback about support received. In comparison with the 2014 floods, they noted that everything was better organised and being prepared had made the response much less stressful. While the sample was small, these findings were supported by subsequent monitoring by partners which found that the overall capacity of the GoN to respond to disasters such as floods had improved since the last flooding episode in 2014.

**In India, partners have mostly been successful in achieving planned output objectives** based on a review of sample projects, interviews and a site visit to Kashmir. Despite the instable of the security environment in Kashmir, Assam and Chhattisgarh, partners successfully delivered food assistance, health services and protection in contexts of forgotten crises such as the conflicts in Jammu and Kashmir, districts of central India, and in the north-eastern states. Performance was unsatisfactory in the sixth project in the sample that supported response and recovery operations following cyclone Phailin.<sup>76</sup>

Lack of ownership by GoI and progressively shrinking space for humanitarian actors in India during 2013-2017, including for ECHO partners, has limited most outcomes to responding to immediate needs of individuals and households.

**ECHO's contribution to satisfying the humanitarian needs and building resilience has been constrained by relatively modest investments in both countries.** Approximately EUR 20 million and EUR 30 million were allocated to India and Nepal

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<sup>75</sup> The finding on project length was similar to findings from the 2010 evaluation: "*Sectoral approaches were generally appropriate, effective and efficient in WASH, health and DRR, but the move towards more development activities creates increasing challenges for partners working with ECHO funding timescales*". Source: Aguacconsult Ltd. (2010) Evaluation of the ECHO's Action in Nepal.

<sup>76</sup> eSF 2013/91017

respectively during 2013-2017. The figure for Nepal includes the amount allocated to major response and recovery operations following the 2015 earthquake.

**Lack of preparedness limited the adoption of cash modalities and represents a missed opportunity for ECHO and partners to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the response.** Interviews with different stakeholder groups indicate that, although understanding was improving, many agencies were still not all sufficiently prepared to design and implement humanitarian cash responses of sufficient quality.<sup>77</sup> This was a particular issue amongst national partners of ECHO partners who often did not understand the range of modality option or how to carry out a market analysis. Despite efforts in India to improve financial inclusion along with technological innovations, partners still preferred to deliver cash in hand. In Nepal, neither the GoN or most agencies were prepared to use humanitarian cash responses. Lack of capacity and policy coherence for CTP in emergencies translated into opposition in some parts of GoN, which discouraged partners from attempting CTP. Limited financial infrastructure in parts of the country was also a challenge.<sup>78</sup> The situation is improving in, and CTP has been used more widely during the 2017 Nepal flood response.

**Delays in funding decisions following quick-onset emergencies have reduced the effectiveness of ECHO's interventions.** Evidence from project documents<sup>79</sup> and interviews with partners and ECHO that the efficiency and effectiveness of ECHO's emergency responses were hampered by consistent delays in ECHO funding decisions and partner contracting for responses to quick-onset disasters (Figure 8). These delays meant that, apart from the relatively small amounts to each country contributed to the Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) in response to an Appeal by the International Federation of the Red Cross (IFRC), there were consequently delays to the contracting and disbursement of funds to partners in country. While the DREF may be an efficient way of channelling funds to a trusted partner to support a response, this tool does not make full use of ECHO's value added as described under EQ6 above.

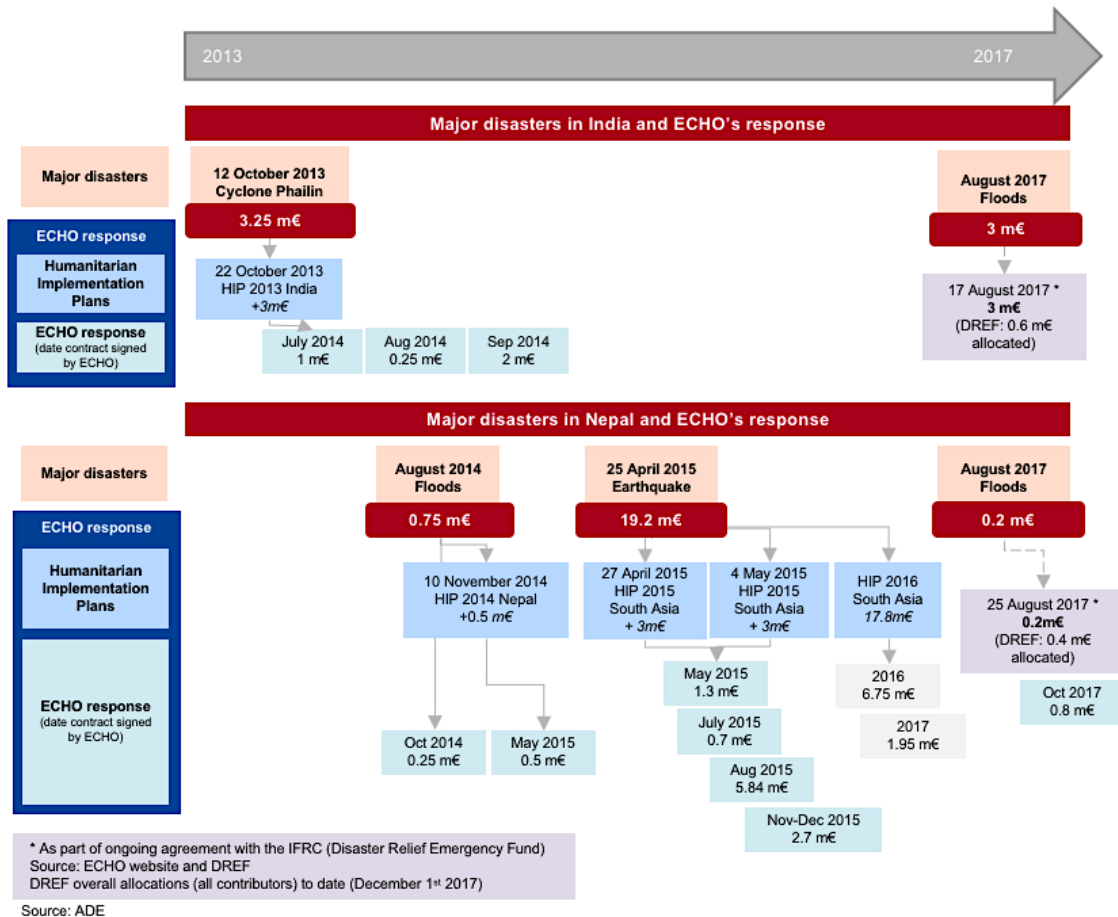
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<sup>77</sup> Interviews: USAID, ECHO

<sup>78</sup> Willitts King and Bryant (2016) Scaling up humanitarian cash transfers in Nepal. ODI working paper; Ferrie and Gautam (2017); Bailey and Harvey (2017)

<sup>79</sup> For example, eSF 2013/91017

**Figure 8 – Timeline for Responses to Quick-Onset Disasters (2013-2017)**



Funding decisions have been back-dated to the disaster event, so that partners can be reimbursed for emergency operations. Some partners interviewed said that they have limits on funds they can advance, particularly if funding is not guaranteed, and the contract signing date is more relevant to when they can start operations than when the HIP has been approved.

## EQ 8: Advocacy and communication

<b>EQ 8</b>	<b>How successful has ECHO been through its advocacy and communication measures in influencing other actors by direct and indirect advocacy on issues like humanitarian access and space, respect for IHL, addressing gaps in response, applying good practice, and carry out follow-up actions of ECHO's interventions? Is there an 'advocacy gap'?</b>
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*This Evaluation Question looks at the extent advocacy and communication strategies supported the strategic objectives in the HIPs and how they contributed to achieve positive outcomes.*

### EQ 8 – Answer Box

- ECHO advocacy and communications strategies were appropriate and consistent with HIP objectives in each country. In Nepal, there has been a primary focus throughout the evaluation period on advocacy towards the formulation of a "National Strategy for Disaster Management in Nepal". In India, advocacy efforts for inclusion and quality improvements in service delivery in India were viewed as a key component of ECHO's interventions.
- ECHO did not have a formal advocacy and communication strategies, although some partners had developed their own that included ECHO projects. Partners viewed ECHO's role more as one of providing useful technical support rather than conducting advocacy.
- In India, ECHO's scope for advocacy has been extremely limited due a constrained operating environment.
- ECHO's influence in Nepal, notably in thematic areas related to DRR, was more significant than would be expected from the level of investment compared to other major humanitarian donors in the country. This influence can be attributed to several factors, including ECHO Nepal's membership on the Humanitarian Coordination Team 'Plus'. The Nepal Risk Reduction Consortium (NRRC) offered a useful forum for ECHO and their partners to share lessons and influence through joint advocacy.

### ***JC. 8.1 Advocacy and communication strategies of ECHO and their partners were appropriate and consistent with strategic and HIP operational objectives***

**ECHO advocacy and communications strategies were appropriate and consistent with HIP objectives in each country.** There has been a primary focus throughout the evaluation period on advocacy towards the formulation of a "National Strategy for Disaster Management in Nepal".<sup>80</sup> In India, advocacy efforts for inclusion and quality improvements in service delivery in India were viewed as a key element of ECHO's interventions.<sup>81</sup> There was little evidence of direct advocacy by ECHO in either country, but rather working with partners and participating in networks to help achieve outcome objectives.

<sup>80</sup> ECHO (2017) ECHO Factsheet: Nepal

<sup>81</sup> ECHO (2015) HIP South Asia v.9 (page 12)

**ECHO did not have a formal advocacy and communication strategies, although some partners had developed these to support ECHO projects.** Since ECHO does not work bilaterally with either government, but rather works through civil society, the opportunity for direct advocacy was limited. As a whole, partners viewed ECHO's role more as one of providing useful technical support rather than conducting advocacy.

***JC. 8.2 Strategies were executed in such a way to support strategic priorities and yield positive outcomes***

**In India, ECHO's scope for advocacy has been extremely limited due a constrained operating environment.** Partners understood this since they also found themselves in a position where they had to keep a low profile. There were occasional requests to provide information and talking points for visiting missions of senior EC representatives. There has been limited sharing of information between ECHO's partners, though they found the the annual pre-monsoon preparedness meetings convened by ECHO to be useful.

**In Nepal, there were several examples of indirect advocacy where ECHO Nepal has played an effective facilitation, catalytic and networking role with partners, peer donors and UN-led initiatives.** ECHO Nepal's approach has not only helped partners to meet project objectives, but also contributed to learning and influencing longer-term DRR outcomes at a community, district and national level. Some partners expressed a wish that ECHO take a more proactive advocacy position with the government to facilitate project implementation in the face of an increasingly restrictive regulatory operating environment.

Evidence from document review, interviews and field observations indicates that ECHO Nepal's approach has not only helped partners to meet project objectives, but also contributed to learning and influencing longer term DRR outcomes at a community, district and national level. At the same time, many partners would like to see ECHO take a more proactive advocacy position with the government to facilitate project implementation in the face of an increasingly restrictive regulatory operating environment and widespread belief within GoN that international agencies were absorbing excessive amounts of funding destined for communities.

**ECHO's influence, notably in DRR thematic areas, was more significant than would be expected from the level of investment during the evaluation period** compared to other major humanitarian donors who have a permanent presence in Nepal. This influence can be attributed to several factors, including ECHO Nepal's membership on the Humanitarian Coordination Team "Plus. The Nepal Risk Reduction Consortium (NRRC) offered a useful forum for ECHO and their partners to share lessons and influence through joint advocacy.

The recently-approved Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act in the Nepal was one example, with many key informants acknowledging ECHO's significant contribution. This

is illustrated by a statement released by Save the Children after the long-awaited Bill on disaster risk reduction and management had been approved and registered by Parliament.<sup>82</sup>

*“Recent discourses on disasters of the past and the recent 2015 Gorkha Earthquake of Nepal have all brought about a shift in attitude on part of the planners, government officials, donor agencies and civil society. The calls were unanimous from all quarters for the need of a coordinated disaster preparedness and response mechanism. As a humanitarian donor, the European Commission-Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection (ECHO) has always been pushing for evidence-based advocacy with special interest in Disaster Management among ECHO Consortia partners...*

*...The credit for the replacement of the 1982 Relief Act with Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (DRRM) Act rests with all stakeholders. But the final push in the marathon was vested in the 34 television episodes revolving around the themes of post-disaster reconstruction and government accountability for Disaster Management. The support from ECHO in the Inclusive Community Based Disaster Preparedness Project with a media engagement angle is something the public is aware of.”<sup>83</sup>*

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<sup>82</sup> Kathmandu Post (2017) Bill on disaster risk reduction and management registered. September 11, 2017. The bill named as the 'Act to Revise and Integrate Acts Related to the Disaster Risk Mitigation and Management-2074 BS' focuses on protecting public life, public and private property, natural and cultural heritages, physical properties and minimising the disaster risk. The bill also proposes setting up a Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council, which will have ministers for finance; supplies; agriculture; home affairs; physical infrastructure and transport; women, children and social welfare; defence; forest and soil conservation; education; urban development; irrigation; information and communications; and federal affairs and local development as the members. <http://kathmandupost.ekantipur.com/news/2017-09-11/bill-on-disaster-risk-reduction-and-management-registered.html>

<sup>83</sup> Save the Children (2017) Much Awaited Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act is Endorsed. 18 October 2017 <http://nepal.savethechildren.net/news/much-awaited-disaster-risk-reduction-and-management-act-endorsed>



## EQ 9: Efficiency (Transfer Modalities)

**EQ 9** To what extent were the ECHO humanitarian actions efficient?

*During the inception phase, it was agreed that it would be useful to focus this Evaluation Question on modalities, that is the extent that ECHO and its partners considered different transfer modalities during project design and implementation and the appropriateness and efficiency of the selected modality.*

### EQ 9 – Answer Box

- There has been a positive evolution in both countries since 2013 in more systematic consideration and adoption of cash-based modalities by ECHO's partners. However, this has not been the same for all sectors and needs identified and this has not been based on a consistent and rigorous analysis.
- ECHO has been a 'quiet facilitator' of this evolution, funding CTP interventions that were proposed by partners for response and recovery without issue, and in some cases suggesting addition of or substitution to cash modalities for more effective programming.
- In both countries, and particularly in Nepal, given its vulnerability to recurrent natural disasters, increased investment in cash preparedness activities (both technical assistance and support to policy/institutions) as part of broader DRR work could have reduced some of the barriers to selection and implementation of the most efficient and effective modalities for response and recovery.
- Several features of ECHO-funded programmes have contributed to the efficient use of resources. This includes
  - The increasing use of cash-based modalities, working through consortia, strong coordination, knowledge management and links with government initiatives.
  - Decisions on operational models, and on modality choices, have not just been based on cost efficiency alone but also cost effectiveness considerations.
  - ECHO and its partners made efforts to keep abreast of interventions of donor and government and this has helped to improve efficiency.
- Channelling funds through multiple layers of partner agencies may not be the most efficient model but it has contributed to cost effectiveness.

### *JC. 9.1 Implementation of ECHO strategies in each country systematically and periodically considered different transfer modalities*

**Projects funded by ECHO increasingly considered and adopted cash modalities during the evaluation period.** In line with ECHO's global positioning on CTP, ECHO began to more proactively promote the use of cash with partners from 2013 onwards.

In Nepal prior to the 2015 earthquake there was limited use of cash transfer programming CTP by ECHO partners, who had much more focus on in-kind assistance. The earthquake led to a 'step change' in cash assistance, which eventually made up approximately 10% of the

overall earthquake response by the international community. The response in Nepal represented consideration of cash from the outset of the response by donors, including ECHO, and international aid agencies, supported by their respective surge capacities.<sup>84</sup>

In India, the “step change” in ECHO’s CTP occurred earlier, during the response to cyclone Phalin that struck India at the end of 2013. Prior to the cyclone, ECHO partners prioritised in-kind assistance. Evidence from the analysis of ECHO single forms and interviews indicates that promoting other modalities besides in-kind assistance came from the partners themselves prior to the cyclone.<sup>85</sup> More systematic use of CTP by partners occurred from the Phalin response onwards, where ECHO actively promoted use of cash transfers.<sup>86</sup>

**ECHO’s country strategy supports the use of cash-based modalities to their full potential during responses to and recovery from natural disasters.** It specifies that for natural disasters, cash based, *and multi-sectoral assistance* should be provided, in accordance to the needs identified, and to strengthen the communities’ resilience to future disasters.<sup>87</sup>

**The consideration of CTP – by partners and by ECHO - was restricted to particular sectors.** During the evaluation period, cash has been used predominantly for interventions in the food security and livelihood recovery sectors, whilst most shelter and all wash needs have continued to be provided in-kind. Analysis of project documents shows that partners generally do not provide justification for why an in-kind modality has been chosen for food, shelter materials, NFIs or hygiene. It seems likely that for the shelter and wash sectors there was no such consideration of alternative modalities; rather, in-kind was the traditional ‘way of working’ in these sectors. Analysis also shows that ECHO did not extensively and actively promote alternative and perhaps more appropriate modalities with these partners. All proposed projects were approved for funding, without queries.

**ECHO’s support for CTP in insecure environments was appropriate, and risks were considered and mitigated.** The insecurity and political sensitivities in Kashmir raised specific challenges for CTP that partners needed to take on board. In the case of ActionAid, markets were still emerging in some areas and additional measures were needed by local partners to make the cash transfer effective – including providing purchase support for traders, price negotiation, as well as finance literacy of the cash receiver. In the case of Save the Children’s project there were concerns, due to the political and security environment, that cash would not be a safe modality. However rather than revert to in-kind delivery, instead cash was retained for specific needs (medical treatment and associated transport) and provided conditionally.<sup>88</sup>

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<sup>84</sup> US\$24.5 million delivered by more than 30 international Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and United Nations (UN) Agencies: Ferrie and Gautam (2017); Bailey and Harvey (2017) Time for change: Harnessing the potential of humanitarian cash transfers. ODI report

<sup>85</sup> Interviews: ECHO; Save the Children

<sup>86</sup> For example, ECHO-funded projects managed by Action Aid, SCUK and Christian Aid considered CTP from the outset and reached over 9700 households.

<sup>87</sup> ECHO HIP

<sup>88</sup> eSF 2016/91014

**Partners did not consistently monitor appropriateness of their modality choices during implementation.** There was limited evidence from analysis of project documents that partners have monitored the appropriateness of their interventions, and interviews confirmed the lack of consistency between partners. Where this has taken place, there was evidence that it has contributed to efficient and effective programming since it has identified limitations with the modality selected and changes could be made. For example, the case where the initially proposed modality of a conditional cash transfer for shelter recovery was changed to an unconditional modality to enable more flexible use of the assistance by households, due to a continued lack of government support.<sup>89</sup> Project documents highlighted instances when ECHO provided feedback to partners so that they could adapt the project based on monitoring findings.

**ECHO's country strategy supports the use of cash-based modalities during responses to natural disasters but is not supporting the use of cash to its full potential.** ECHO's HIP for Nepal has been developed in consultation with other humanitarian actors, and other donors. It was in line with the sectoral priorities and needs identified in the 2015 earthquake Flash Appeal<sup>90</sup>. There was no evidence of coordination with government actors in the development of the strategy. This would have been useful regarding setting of transfer modalities in the context of Nepal, where the government was a key player in provision of cash assistance, distributing approximately \$70 million after the earthquake, but where there were also challenges to getting government agreement on such modalities in the early response phase (see below)<sup>91</sup>.

As described under EQ1, ECHO's HIPs don't specify modalities for the majority of sectoral priorities. Whilst use of cash/vouchers were not excluded they were not explicitly highlighted as options for assistance in any sector, except in the case of livelihood recovery. Interviews with ECHO staff indicated that a preference had been expressed for cash transfers as the preferred mechanism for relief assistance given the challenging logistics of delivering in-kind aid to remote mountainous areas and functioning markets in the majority of affected areas. There was no mention in the HIP of multi-sectoral approaches, or multi-purpose cash grants, which was inconsistent with the guidance both in the Flash Appeal for the Nepal earthquake<sup>92</sup> and ECHO's global position on this issue since late 2014.<sup>93</sup>

**ECHO did support the efficient and effective use of modalities to some degree, but not consistently across sectors and with missed opportunities for harmonising assistance.** Analysis of project documents shows that most of the response and recovery projects funded by ECHO from 2015 onwards were multi-sectoral and combine cash and in-kind modalities.

However, response modalities have generally remained sector-specific. Cash was proposed by partners for particular needs (for example cash for food, basic needs, shelter labour costs

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<sup>89</sup> eSF 2014/92015

<sup>90</sup> OCHA (2015) Flash Appeal Nepal

<sup>91</sup> This includes both emergency cash assistance and standard social assistance programming - Ferrie and Gautam (2017) Cash Preparedness in Nepal: lessons from the 2015 earthquake. A report for the Cash Coordination Group Nepal

<sup>92</sup> OCHA (2015) Flash Appeal Nepal

<sup>93</sup> ECHO (2015) Ten Principles for MPGs

or winter NFIs). This was even the case where different cash modalities have been used in the same project, to meet different sectoral needs within the same population. There was no justification from partners on the need for these multiple transfers and no querying of this approach from ECHO. It reflects a silo approach to project analysis and design within both partners and ECHO and a lack of consideration for more holistic and potentially efficient and effective responses through the use of MPGs, despite these being promoted in the Flash Appeal 2015. Unconditional and unrestricted cash modalities have been mostly used for food and basic needs. Partners have generally not justified their rationale for the use of restrictions (i.e. vouchers) or conditions over unrestricted and unconditional cash modalities. Evidence from partner interviews and project documents suggests these decisions to impose restrictions or conditions were made by the partner rather than ECHO – although literature highlights some specific instances where ECHO promoted more restricted modalities for shelter and NFIs.<sup>94</sup> In general, ECHO has not queried these decisions or promoted the use of more flexible modalities by partners as per their guidelines.

In-kind modalities have been proposed primarily for shelter materials and hygiene needs, with food security assistance being a mix of cash and in-kind. Partners have used different reasons to justify the choice of modality. A limited number of projects cite poor access to markets and delivery channels. During interviews, it was clear that the lack of a government policy on use of CTP during the earthquake response was a significant influencing factor. None of the WASH projects provided a justification for distribution of hygiene kits instead of using CTP. The impression was that there was no consideration of alternative modalities, a finding that was consistent with the overall earthquake response.<sup>95</sup>

Whilst ECHO ultimately approved these in-kind assistance projects for funding, in several projects ECHO made recommendations for considering switching to cash or adding in cash as a complementary modality. However, in-kind provision of hygiene kits and shelter materials do not appear to have ever been queried.

### **ECHO and their partners actively monitored and adapted choice of modality where appropriate, for efficient and effective programming**

There was consistent evidence from analysis of project documents and interviews that partners monitored the appropriateness of the intervention, and of the benefits of this in terms of contributing to their efficiency and effectiveness. ECHO's hands on approach to monitoring added value here. Project documents highlight numerous instances where ECHO have fed back to partners on the need to adapt the project according to monitoring findings, which was appreciated by partners<sup>96</sup>.

Where appropriateness of modality choice has been monitored, there were several challenges identified with the projects that were using in-kind modalities. For example, challenges identified include: lack of financial support for household labour costs on in-kind shelter and wash reconstruction projects; lack of financial support for household labour costs on

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<sup>94</sup> Willitts King and Bryant (2016)

<sup>95</sup> *ibid*

<sup>96</sup> Interviews: implementing partners

rehabilitation of communal wash infrastructure; lack of consideration of financial support for households to meet their winter needs during the needs assessment; delays in supply of goods or restrictions from government meaning the proposed activity was not viable; and beneficiaries stating a preference for cash compared to in-kind assistance. In contrast, where it was used monitoring shows that cash has generally been well received by beneficiaries.

**Channelling funds through multiple layers may not be the most efficient model but it has added value that contributed to cost effectiveness.** ECHO's present funding model was to work through European NGOs, who then pass through funds to their national counterparts, who then subcontract local partner organisations.<sup>97</sup> In addition to agency overhead costs, ECHO field offices also absorb 3% of humanitarian budgets.

It was not just donors who have increasingly been concerned about cost efficiency. Cost efficiency was highlighted by government key informants as a problem during interviews due to the widespread perception amongst government officials that a disproportionate amount of donor funds intended for affected communities was being absorbed by implementing agencies. Some partner key informants noted that government officials were more positive at a local level since they could observe project outcomes themselves and felt that ECHO could play a useful role by helping to highlight the value-added of partner interventions in supporting the government's own efforts at a national level.

Evidence from analysis of project documents and interviews suggests that each level does add value through, for example:

- ECHO is required to channel funds via Europe-based NGOs, who justifies the costs they absorb through technical support, quality assurance and increased efficiency.
- Local partners on the ground with an in-depth knowledge of the context and close community links have reduced the cost and time required to reach out to vulnerable households and groups. Protection benefits have been found to be particularly relevant in the conflict zones, where local partner organisations that were embedded in communities and had open lines of communication with different groups to help ensure access.

There has been a growing recognition in the humanitarian community of the importance of working with national actors.<sup>98</sup> At the same time, national actors often struggle with administrative procedures and quality assurance required by humanitarian donors like ECHO. Building projects using established national and local partnerships was also important to get authority buy-in.<sup>99</sup> Jammu and Kashmir provided examples of role that international humanitarian agencies can play in managing risks that local NGOs face in conflict-affected environment to help ensure that assistance reaches the most vulnerable.<sup>100</sup>

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<sup>97</sup> Poole (2013); CaLP (forthcoming) State of the World's Cash Report.

<sup>98</sup> There is growing interest from donors in 'rationalising' the number of partner relationships in the interests of efficiency – see Poole (2013) 'Funding at the Sharp End: Investing in National NGO Response Capacity', CAFOD; and demonstrated by the commitments made to the localization agenda in the Grand Bargain and World Humanitarian Summit

<sup>99</sup> Interview: Action Aid; eSF: 2014/92015

<sup>100</sup> Interview: ActionAid

*JC. 9.2. The choice of transfer modalities was appropriate to the phase and operational context*

**ECHO has regularly queried partners about the rationale for CTP in line with their guidelines** by, for example, requesting evidence that markets were functioning and accessible, providing technical advice and questioning high transaction costs of aid delivery (both cash and in-kind).

**There have been variable levels of analysis concerning the feasibility and appropriateness of cash or vouchers.** Where CTP has been proposed, analysis of project documents shows that partner's justification for this decision has of variable quality. In Nepal, the use of market analysis has been ad hoc and there was limited evidence that beneficiary preferences have been taken into account. In India, there has been variable levels of justification given by partners for their choice of modality. Some partners, such as Oxfam, systematically undertook market analysis but they were the exception. It does not appear that factors such as beneficiary preference, costs or government preferences were systematically considered by partners. In India, security was an additional consideration for modality choice, especially in the Kashmir region.

ECHO had supported the recommendations in the 2013 and 2014 UNHCR/WFP Joint Assessment Missions<sup>101</sup> that WFP shift from in-kind food distributions to cash-based assistance for Bhutanese refugees in Nepal. WFP did not agree, arguing that it would be more expensive since they could no longer purchase food in bulk<sup>102</sup> and that the risk of further aggravating tensions between local and refugee communities and introduction of cash may introduce needless complications. UNHCR subsequently implemented a CTP for non-food items without significant problems while WFP continued with in-kind distribution.<sup>103</sup>

**ECHO's approach been well aligned with other stakeholders.** There is some evidence from analysis of project documents and interviews that ECHO and its partners made efforts to keep abreast of interventions of government and other donors and this has helped to improve efficiency. At the same time, there are cases where ECHO appears not to have taken into account the wider context in funding decisions. Save the Children implemented different CTP projects for shelter and winterisation in Nepal. The project funded by DFID provided unrestricted cash transfers but restricted to specific items in the ECHO-funded project.<sup>104</sup>

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<sup>101</sup> UNHCR and WFP Joint Assessment Mission reports for 2013 and 2014

<sup>102</sup> An analysis using WFP's Omega value tool concluded that the in-kind food assistance would be 45% less expensive compared to a cash and voucher transfer modality. Source: eSF 2014/01077

<sup>103</sup> WFP also carried out a beneficiary survey in 2013 where results indicated a preference for continuation of in-kind assistance. UNHCR introduced cash transfers for non-food items the following year and, when WFP repeated the survey the following year they found that preference had switched to cash after refugees had first-hand experience.

<sup>104</sup> Willitts King and Bryant (2016)

## EQ 10: Sustainability

<b>EQ 10</b>	<b>What was the Sustainability of the ECHO actions, i.e. how did they manage to achieve lasting effects, including in strengthening national and local governments' long-term development policies and practices and preparedness for future crises?</b>
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*This Evaluation Question examines how stakeholder participation and ownership were developed and what was ECHO contribution.<sup>105</sup>*

### EQ 10 – Answer Box

- Four main categories of stakeholders have been targeted to achieve sustainability of ECHO-supported interventions, including governments, communities, local NGOs and development donors. Partners have used a variety of methods to promote ownership, including capacity building, co-funding, joint planning and implementation.
- Sustainability for DRR and conflict-related interventions often was linked to a robust exit strategy, and many of the same influencing factors apply (e.g. short project time frame and uncertain follow up funding, lack of clarity about exit strategies and protocols, lack of government ownership).
- Gaining the necessary level of ownership from government has been one of the main challenges to achieving sustainability, particularly in India. Despite the challenges faced in India, there have been some examples of activities continuing with GoI support. Nepal, where the operating environment has been more conducive, provides more examples of sustainable interventions. ECHO partners and their local partners have placed emphasis community mobilisation to help promote ownership and sustainability.
- There is a strong demand for ECHO-supported interventions from national stakeholders. The Ministry of Health in Nepal decided to replicate and scale up the emergency health preparedness activities and ECHO partners have received requests for training from newly-elected local authorities in western Nepal.

### *JC. 10.1 Ownership and stakeholder participation processes have been defined and developed*

**Four main categories of stakeholders have been targeted to achieve sustainability of ECHO-supported interventions, including governments, communities, local NGOs and development donors.** During the latter part of the period covered by the evaluation, ECHO partners in Nepal began to involve the private sector in a more substantial way during their interventions. Partners have used a variety of methods to promote ownership,

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<sup>105</sup> Short term emergency response projects have not been analysed for sustainability.

including capacity building, joint planning and implementation. Partners also encourage contributions from counterparts, one example being co-funding of river protection micro infrastructure projects in western Nepal by VDCs.<sup>106</sup>

**Sustainability for DRR and conflict-related interventions was often linked to a viable exit strategy, and many of the underlying drivers applied** including, predictability of follow up funding to compensate for a relatively short project time frame, viability of exit strategies, degree of government ownership.

**In both countries, partners routinely made efforts to promote government ownership as part of their project design** to both ensure their support during implementation and continue to fund activities after the project had ended. Gaining the necessary level of ownership from government has been one of the main challenges to achieving sustainability, particularly in India. In Nepal, other challenges to sustainability include a lack of a clear policy framework for post disaster recovery,<sup>107</sup> lack of resources, delays in decision-making and regular turnover of government officials. Another common challenge was that, with the exception of one successful example in Nepal in the education sector, there has been little cooperation between ECHO and DEVCO. ECHO Nepal has had some success with LRRD with other donors such as DFID as part of the longer-term strategy of the individual ECHO partner.

Despite the challenges faced in India, there have been some examples of activities continuing with GoI support, including three nutrition centres set up by UNICEF in north-east India and a Rehabilitation Centre in Chhattisgarh that continued to operate after Handicap International phased out in 2014. While the restricted nature of MSF's mandate did not allow this partner to consider implementing long term resilience measures, project activities included training several Community Health Workers which was likely to have some sustainable impact over the long term.<sup>108</sup>

Nepal, where the operating environment has been more conducive for international humanitarian actors, there are several examples of sustainable interventions. ECHO partners and their local partners have placed an emphasis on community mobilisation to promote ownership and sustainability. The team met members of community disaster management committees which had been established and trained during previous ECHO projects which continue to function.

**There is a strong demand for ECHO-supported interventions from national stakeholders.** For example, as a result of the successful operationalisation of preparedness measures health system to respond to the 2015 earthquake, the Ministry of Health in Nepal decided to allocate funding to replicate and scale up the emergency health preparedness activities<sup>109</sup> throughout the country by creating 25 hub hospitals in strategic locations of the

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<sup>106</sup> eSF 2015/91004

<sup>107</sup> Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act 2074 has recently been endorsed and approved by Nepal's parliament.

<sup>108</sup> eSF 2014/01180

<sup>109</sup> eSF 2015/91005



country. The school safety project succeeded in to mobilise the support of other donors, including DEVCO, to support all three pillars of the Comprehensive School Safety Framework.<sup>110</sup>

**The new system of governance currently being rolled out in Nepal offers both opportunities and risks.** There have already been demands from some of the newly-elected local authorities for DRM training by ECHO partners as they have to deal with constituents who were trying to recover from the recent floods. On the other hand, with new actors and a new power structure there is a risk that the sustainability of some ECHO investments may be compromised due to lack of ownership given that DRR activities have been phased out in some areas.

### *JC. 10.2 ECHO has contributed to the sustainability of interventions*

**Achieving sustainable outcomes with short-term projects was a challenge** highlighted by many interviewees when responding to this question. Most of successful examples identifies were projects that had renewed for at least two more cycles. As noted above, a lack of alignment between ECHO and DEVCO has obliged ECHO to look at alternative funding sources to support LRRD.

**ECHO India appeared to have few options to achieve sustainability of its interventions with its low levels of investment and an operational model that was unable to promote ownership of GoI to the required level.** An abrupt suspension of ECHO programme funding from 2017 onwards posed a challenge to some partners to achieving some kind of sustainability. Interviews indicated that all of ECHO's partners had managed to identify alternative funding to continue their programmes, although in many cases at a much-reduced scale while suspending virtually all of the humanitarian activities (e.g. direct support for victims of conflict).

**In Nepal, ECHO has played an active role as facilitator and catalyst** that has helped in both bringing key agencies around the table on a regular basis to discuss relevant issues and also highlighted outstanding needs by organising joint assessments and monitoring visits with partners and other donors.

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<sup>110</sup> The LRRD case study in the annex describes in more detail the key factors that contributing to the success.



## 5. Conclusions

This chapter presents conclusions emerging from findings and analysis of this evaluation. They are structured as follows:

- An overall statement on ECHO's interventions in India and Nepal during 2013-2017;
- Conclusions supporting recommendations based on an analysis of evidence at a project and programmatic level relevant to the programme for each country.
- Given the specific context of India, ECHO's operating model in India has been reactive rather than strategic. A second category of conclusions are presented based on discussions with stakeholders about alternate business case options, based on a request from the Steering Committee for this evaluation.

### Overall statement for ECHO's interventions in India and Nepal during 2013-2017

ECHO has invested a total of some EUR 50 million in the two countries during 2013-2017, of which 60% was allocated to Nepal. During this period ECHO supported responses to Cyclone Phailin India, two severe floods and the 2015 earthquake in Nepal. The earthquake, the approval of a new Constitution in Nepal, the emergence of India as an international humanitarian donor in its own right together with the passing of legislation to regulate activities of civil society organisations in both countries had a significant influence on ECHO country programmes. In India, the effect was to call into question ECHO's operating model, even while needs remained unmet and their intervention strategy continued to be relevant. In Nepal, evidence indicates that these changes increased ECHO's relevance as the 2015 earthquake and 2017 flooding illustrated the relevance of the work in DRR and resilience by ECHO and others. The impact of the earthquake in Nepal also provided the momentum to endorse a long-awaited Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act.

The team's estimated that, measured in terms of assistance delivered and people reached, 80-90% of the project portfolio in both countries have achieved their output objectives. Both country programmes have been highly relevant to priority needs and ECHO's mandate. ECHO received high marks from partners and other humanitarian stakeholders for its in-depth understanding of the situation on the ground, its facilitation and technical oversight role that many partners recognise as contributing to the quality of their projects.

Due in large part to the external influences described above, project outcomes have been very different in each country. In Nepal, ECHO's contributions during the evaluation period had a positive transformative effect at both community and at a national level. In contrast, in India ECHO has struggled to address unmet humanitarian needs in conflict-affected areas in a way that an impartial humanitarian actor can add value.

As described in the Methodology section, many of the conclusions below were presented during debriefing sessions with ECHO field staff and, in Nepal, with ECHO partners at the end of each country visit. Conclusions presented below have taken into account feedback during a stakeholder workshop and a meeting with the Steering Committee for this evaluation to review an initial draft of the report.

**Conclusion 1: ECHO investments in DRR and resilience in Nepal have yielded good returns which have the potential to constructively support the current transition in governance and roll out of the national Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act.**

Investments by ECHO and other donors in DRR and resilience over the past decade have yielded results in terms of increased awareness, organisation at a community and district level and improved capacities at all levels. The recent restructuring of the government that shifted authority to elected leaders at a municipality level is a potential opportunity for ECHO and other humanitarian actors to institutionalise resilience into policies and ways of working. The relatively low level of investment, the change in partners for DRR projects in western Nepal and low level of collaboration with DEVCO has reduced ECHO's ability to support this transition and risks to undermine sustainability of prior interventions.

*Based on EQ3, EQ7, EQ10, Case Study 1*

**Conclusion 2: ECHO's operating model in India has been reactive rather than strategic.**

Working with civil society partners in conflict-affected areas has been in line with ECHO's core mandate, especially given the low levels of private sector and funds from other donors available for these areas. There is however little alternative to working with GoI since local partners lack capacity and resources and the operating space for international civil society is being increasingly constrained by the regulatory environment.<sup>111</sup> A lack of engagement with GoI has led ECHO to take a reactive approach to meeting humanitarian needs by filling gaps rather than being strategic. Although partners have met most of their output objectives at a project level, the combination of low investment levels by ECHO and lack of ownership by GoI has resulted in limited and mostly unsustainable outcomes.

GoI has not formally requested international assistance to respond to a disaster since the 2001 Gujarat earthquake and it is very unlikely GoI that will formally request international assistance in future, especially given its own significant emergency response capacity and status as an emerging international humanitarian donor in its own right. At the same time, there is likely to be a "grey area" following a major disaster event when national capacities are effectively overwhelmed when GoI may be open to accepting assistance of the type where ECHO has a comparative advantage (i.e. inclusive assessment and delivery approaches, early recovery working with civil society, promotion of humanitarian principles).

While there may still be a role for international neutral actors in areas such as Jammu and Kashmir, there is a need for a new operating model in India to achieve concrete outcomes before ECHO can add tangible value. Findings from this evaluation indicate that a viable business case for ECHO in India must be seen as mutually beneficial to both the GoI and ECHO, while at the same time playing to ECHO's strengths in working with civil society within its mandate.

At the request of the Steering Committee for this evaluation, various options were explored. One option where there appeared to be strong consensus amongst both GoI and partners was that India could benefit from knowledge transfer of private sector engagement in DRR and disaster response. The private sector in India has been active in disaster response but, up until recently,<sup>112</sup> their approach has tended to focus on short term relief without much attention to quality or DRR. There is currently no overall umbrella or private sector network

<sup>111</sup> See case study on "operating in sensitive and politically complex contexts" in the annex for more details.

<sup>112</sup> See, for example, <https://asiafoundation.org/2014/09/17/engaging-asias-private-sector-in-disaster-risk-management/>

in India that could help to develop standards or coordinate private sector activities during disaster response. There was a consensus that the private sector could play a much more substantive role in DRR and improving the quality of disaster response and that India could potentially benefit from learning from private sector networks in other countries, an area which ECHO is now beginning to explore through their involvement in the Connecting Business initiative led by UNDP.<sup>115</sup>

*Based on EQ5, EQ7, EQ8, EQ10, Case Studies 2 and 3*

**Conclusion 3: ECHO funding decisions for responses for quick onset disasters have not been timely and allocations were relatively modest.**

There has been a pattern during the scoping period of ECHO funding decisions being taken weeks, or even months, after quick onset disasters which lack high media visibility. Even for large disasters, grant amounts have tended to be relatively modest in comparison with other major donors, rarely exceeding a total of EUR 1-3 million. In practice, this has meant that partners have had to rely on other sources of funding for their response which was then either reimbursed when they receive ECHO funding or use the funds for early recovery activities. While this modus operandi has helped to fill gaps, the lack of predictability of ECHO funding has compromised the ability of some partners to optimise their interventions.

*Based on EQ6, EQ7, EQ9*

**Conclusion 4: Short project duration without a programmatic approach, lack of alignment with LRRD and project-based approach by partners have hampered efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability of ECHO supported interventions.**

Project funding timelines puts pressure on partners to design resilience projects which often have unrealistically short timeframes instead of being based on realistic assessment of the timeframe for sustainable outcomes. Short project duration without a programmatic approach, lack of alignment with LRRD and project-based approach by some partners have hampered efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability of ECHO supported interventions. Some ECHO partners have been using a programme approach that has made it easier for them to achieve intermediate and long-term outcome objectives. However, there was still a prevalence of a project-based approaches and examples were seen in both countries where an unanticipated end to ECHO project funding forced partners to downsize their activities while searching for alternative donors to try and achieve planned outcomes.

Exit strategies did not always include planning for learning and scale up of pilot projects and there have been some good practice examples from the health and education sectors that demonstrate how this can be done.

ECHO's systems and approaches do not lend themselves to a programmatic approach. In the context of the yearly Worldwide Decision, ECHO prepares and publishes annual HIPs, which provide information on operational priorities and funding needed to address humanitarian needs within a specific geographic scope. While the HIPs highlight priorities,

<sup>115</sup> ECHO is amongst those donors supporting the "Connecting Business initiative", which is a demand-driven multi-stakeholder initiative transforming the way the private sector engages before, during and after crises to create more resilient communities, increase local capacity and alleviate human suffering. Operational and technical support is provided by United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) while United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR) is providing technical advice on disaster risk reduction [www.connectingbusiness.org](http://www.connectingbusiness.org)

many of the associated outcome objectives cannot realistically be achieved within an annual cycle and ECHO has no multi-annual strategy that provides relevant guidance.

*Based on EQ3, EQ7, EQ10, Case Studies 1 and 2*

**Conclusion 5: Apart from one exception in the education sector, ECHO and the EU Delegation have struggled to achieve coherent LRRD.**

ECHO, DEVCO and EEAS have had some success in some countries with the humanitarian-development nexus to strengthen resilience and LRRD. Successful implementation of LRRD and NEXUS programs has tended to be more linked to context and individuals than driven by strategic decision-making. Only one example around the theme of “safer schools” in Nepal stands out as a significant ECHO and DEVCO collaboration even though DRR cuts across all sectors of development and 25 targets related to DRR appear in 10 out of 17 SDGs<sup>114</sup> and LRRD lies at the core of Nepal’s development. While ECHO and DEVCO continue their efforts to better align their systems, the experience with safer schools in Nepal has some replicable learning about how a combination of risk-sharing, strategic partnership and more flexible use of existing tools and instruments can facilitate LRRD.

*Based on EQ3, EQ7, EQ10, Case Study 2*

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<sup>114</sup> UNISDR (2015) Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

## 6. Recommendations

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Five strategic recommendations targeted primarily at ECHO are listed below. Each recommendation follows from the conclusion in the previous section with the same number. The first and second recommendations are targeted specifically at Nepal and India respectively. The final three recommendations are not only applicable to country programmes in Nepal and, to some extent, India but also potentially applicable to ECHO global operations.

**R1. ECHO should use the current window of opportunity that has recently opened in Nepal due to the decentralisation process and planned roll out of the newly-approved Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act to support application and strengthen sustainability of ECHO investments in resilience and DRR.**

ECHO can play a pivotal role in promoting application and scale up of new DRR policies so that they are consistent with humanitarian principles and community needs. Increased ECHO investment and strengthened collaboration with DEVCO and other development actors over the next three years to provide additional technical support to Nepal and expanded pilot projects will help support effective use and sustainability of ECHO investments in DRR and resilience. Feedback from ECHO partners during the validation workshop in Nepal was virtually unanimous that this recommendation should be seen as the top priority. Their view was that ECHO is well-positioned in terms of its recognised expertise and *modus operandi* and there is a significant need to support DRR capacity building for newly-installed local authorities both by expanding pilot projects and also facilitating the involvement of development actors.

**R2. ECHO should explore the potential value-added and feasibility of alternative operational models for India and other emerging humanitarian actors.**

India is but one example of emerging economies that have developed significant emergency response capacity and funding instruments that were being deployed both internally and internationally. ECHO should develop new partnership models for countries such as India that could involve cooperation with EU Civil Protection Mechanism, EU Aid Volunteers, DEVCO or other (non-EU) strategic partners whose *modus operandi* is working bilaterally as part of a multi-year strategy.

Based on discussions with key informants from government and civil society actors in India, two options were identified where there appeared to be a potential business case, with the first option (private sector engagement) being viewed as a major gap/opportunity:

**Option 1:** Facilitation and networking role for ECHO with Europe-based private sector humanitarian actors to promote good practice and humanitarian principles within the Indian private sector. A viable model for disaster response involving the private sector could help ECHO to add value by continuing to advocate for incorporation of humanitarian principles in disaster response and respond to needs in forgotten crisis.

**Option 2:** Facilitate knowledge transfer with GoI and Indian civil society through involvement of EU Civil Protection capacities to support the GoI in decentralising its

disaster response capabilities. Areas where it was felt that ECHO could provide specific value-added by drawing upon its expertise in targeting vulnerabilities and early recovery.

## **RELEVANT TO ECHO'S GLOBAL OPERATIONS**

### **R3. ECHO should improve the timeliness, transparency and predictability of decision-making processes, particularly for quick onset disasters.**

Timeliness is used here as an indicator of effectiveness, i.e. support being provided at the “right” time to optimise the value added of ECHO’s contribution, not just how quickly funding is provided. In addition to providing humanitarian assistance to populations when they were most in need, timely and more predictable funding for partners and technical support from ECHO will help to at the same time strengthen resilience of local capacities.

### **R4. ECHO should adopt a more strategic approach both, internally and with its partners, when working in contexts such as Nepal and India to improve the impact and sustainability of resilience outcomes.**

A number of ECHO partners were already implementing programme approaches, but these were not necessarily systematically considered when ECHO was appraising and monitoring projects or developing logical frameworks. Components programme approach usually include:

- Implementation strategies and monitoring systems based on a Theory of Change.
- Reliance on multiple funding sources, with a risk management strategy that maintains core activities in the event of a funding shortfall;
- Regular monitoring of outcomes using participatory approaches (including data collected via feedback and complaints systems);
- A communication and advocacy strategy to promote ownership of partners and other stakeholders.
- Where activities include pilots, there should be a coherent approach to capturing learning, replicating and scaling up good practice.

### **R5. ECHO should work together with DEVCO and other development actors to promote more coherent application of LRRD with the aim of strengthening the effectiveness and sustainability of ECHO investments in resilience and DRR.**

Drawing on good practice examples (e.g. from education sector in Nepal, as detailed in the case study in the annex, and from other countries) and existing guidance, pilot initiatives in other sectors by applying relevant learning. Protocols for communication, coordination, monitoring and capturing learning together with key stakeholders, including project beneficiaries, should be developed.



# **Annexes**



## Annex 1 – Case Studies

The case studies support this evaluation in various ways, including provision of supplementary evidence to answer evaluation questions, support strategic recommendations and describe in more detail key challenges faced and how these were mitigated, relevant outcomes and lessons learned.

### Case Study 1 – Resilience<sup>115</sup>

#### Case Study 1

Both India and Nepal have been paying significantly more attention to resilience during recent years, in part due to learning by both countries from the 2015 Nepal earthquake. In addition, India hosted the Asia regional meeting for the Sendai Framework in 2016, and this process has been timely since it has offered an opportunity for both countries to strengthen their respective resilience frameworks.

In India, UNDP has helped facilitate support by international actors to GoI-led efforts to increase resilience, including a joint 4-year project with the Ministry of Home Affairs and USAID/OFDA to strengthen resilience in medium-sized urban centres located in disaster-prone areas.

In Nepal, the primary convening point for international humanitarian actors working on resilience during the period covered by this evaluation has been the NRRC, where ECHO has been an active participant. More than a decade of investment in DRR and resilience has positioned ECHO as a thematic expert in Nepal and there are several examples of successful outcomes in terms of both increased community resilience and national policies. With success, there have also been challenges, including trying to promote sustainable improvements in resilience with short project timeframes, host government regulatory frameworks that limit activities of civil society and collaborating with development actors that have very different systems, ways of working and experience difficulties in applying humanitarian principles.

ECHO has been supporting resilience project activities in areas where there have been subsequent responses to emergencies, notably 2013 cyclone Phallin in India and, in Nepal, the 2015 earthquake along with the 2014 and 2017 floods. Preparedness planning including these scenarios was factored into project designs and logical frameworks. The field visit to Nepal took place immediately after severe flooding, with several districts experiencing the heaviest rainfall recorded in over 60 years affecting some 1.7 million people.<sup>116</sup> Evaluation team members were thus able to observe relief operations first hand and take the opportunity to speak to humanitarian staff and affected communities. There was a broad consensus amongst stakeholders that, compared to the 2014 floods, the response in 2017 was more effectively organised, including at a community level. ECHO partner staff shared some examples of their resilience interventions, many of which were subsequently validated by the team during site visits.

<sup>115</sup> This case study complements findings under EQ2, EQ3, EQ4, EQ6, EQ7, EQ9, EQ10 and supports Conclusions 2 and 4.

<sup>116</sup> National Planning Commission of Nepal (2017) Post Flood Recovery Needs Assessment.

## Policy Framework

ECHO was in the vanguard of the global movement towards DRR and resilience when it launched the Disaster Preparedness ECHO programme (DIPECHO) in 1996. Since 2013, there has been a renewed focus on resilience, driven in large part by conflict and migration crises in the Middle East and drought emergencies in Africa. There are many EC/ECHO policy-related documents related to resilience. A selection of some of the most recent examples are listed below.

Year	Title
2013	Action Plan for Resilience in Crisis Prone Countries 2013-2020
2013	Increasing resilience by reducing disaster risk in humanitarian action
2014	Resilience Marker: General Guidance
2017	New European Consensus on Development - 'Our world, our dignity, our future'
2017	Joint Communication on "A Strategic Approach to Resilience in the EU's
2017	A Strategic Approach to Resilience in the EU's External Action

### Policy Framework: Partners

Most of ECHO's partners in Nepal are working in both relief and development and their policy frameworks have mainstreamed resilience. The one exception found during this evaluation was MSF, whose mandate does not allow the organisation to consider implementing long term resilience measures. Even though it is not an organisational priority, ECHO monitoring noted that MSF's approach to recruiting and training of community health workers as part of their project activities have the potential for long-term impacts.<sup>117</sup>

### Policy Framework: Nepal

The response to the 2015 earthquake highlighted gaps in Nepal's outdated 1982 Natural Calamity (Relief) Act provided a long overdue push to replace with a legal framework and restructure institutional capacities.<sup>118</sup> The Sendai Framework process has been timely, as it has offered an opportunity for Nepal to develop a framework that not only taking advantage of learning from the earthquake, but from experiences around the globe during a structured process.

The development of Nepal's "National DRR Policy and Strategic Action Plan: 2017-2030" followed a participatory process involving national, sub-national and district level consultations with government staff, UN Agencies, the Nepal Red Cross Society, NGOs/INGOs, Community-Based Organisations, academia and the private sector. A national DRR Portal was set up so that documents could be shared using and feedback collected. Key principles were (i) a focus on disaster risk reduction (ii) assessing risks for

<sup>117</sup> eSF 2014/01180

<sup>118</sup> <http://reliefweb.int/report/nepal/nepal-s-horrific-earthquake-international-community-doing-too-much-prepare>

multiple disaster types (iii) mainstreaming DRR into the development process (iv) multi-hazard management and (v) Partnership (Whole-of-Society Approach).<sup>119</sup>

The main convening point for international humanitarian actors working on resilience in Nepal has been the NRRC, which was launched in 2011. One advantage that the NRRC has is that GoN has perceived it as a broad international effort without overly political overtones. ECHO, together with DFID and USAID, has been one of three major donors that supported the NRRC with significant financial and vocal support.<sup>120</sup> The five NRRC Flagships were each co-led by relevant Ministries and international agencies. ECHO's investments mainly targeted Flagships 1 and 4 by channelling through partner consortia. Flagship 4 is led by IFRC, which together with the Nepal Red Cross Society, are key strategic partners for ECHO.

**Figure 9 – 5 Flagships of the NRRC**

Flagship Area 1: School and Hospital Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coordinator: ADB/MoE/WHO/MOPH</li> <li>Focuses on reducing mass casualties and damage in hospital and schools through retrofitting, training and raising awareness</li> </ul>
Flagship Area 2: Emergency Preparedness and Response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coordinator: OCHA/MOHA</li> <li>This flagship seeks to enhance the government of Nepal's response capacities at the national, regional and district level in a coordinated manner with all in-country resources including the armed forces, as well as integrating incoming international humanitarian and military assistance</li> </ul>
Flagship Area 3: Flood Management in the Koshi river basin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coordinator: World bank/Mol</li> <li>This flagship is designed to address the risk of floods in Nepal. Managing water-induced disasters, focusing on the Koshi basin, is a priority for the government. Short-term goals focus on enhancing institutional capabilities in flood management, while the long-term goals focus on implementing effective flood mitigation</li> </ul>
Flagship Area 4: Community-based Disaster Risk Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coordinator: IFRC/MOLD</li> <li>This flagship seeks to capitalise on Community-Based Disaster Risk Management (CBDRM) at VDC level by developing a set of minimum characteristics for disaster-resilient communities and adopting a minimum package of common elements to be included in all CBDRM projects. One thousand VDCs will be identified and consulted</li> </ul>
Flagship Area 5: Policy/Institutional Support for Disaster Risk Management (DRM)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coordinator: UNDP/MOHA</li> <li>This flagship recognises that institutional, legislative and policy frameworks are essential for DRM system building and embedding DRM into Nepal's development efforts. This flagship will work to ensure new risk is minimised</li> </ul>

Source: NRRC

Nepal was also selected as one of the “EU Resilience Flagship Countries” in 2014, which was expected to lead to more “...*effective EU collaboration, bringing together the humanitarian assistance, long-term development cooperation and on-going political engagement*”.<sup>121</sup> Based on findings

<sup>119</sup> Presentation of “Nepal’s National DRR Policy & Strategic Action Plan: 2017-2030” by the Under Secretary of Disaster Preparedness and Response Section Disaster Management Division in the Ministry of Home Affairs – 26 April 2017 [https://www.jica.go.jp/nepal/english/office/topics/e8h0vm0000b7cjk-att/170426\\_04.pdf](https://www.jica.go.jp/nepal/english/office/topics/e8h0vm0000b7cjk-att/170426_04.pdf)

<sup>120</sup> Taylor, G. et al. (2013) Review of the Nepal Risk Reduction. Consortium (NRRC). Final Report. 22 August 2013.

<sup>121</sup> European Commission (2014) Multiannual Indicative Programme (MIP) 2014-2020: Nepal (page 5)

during this evaluation, however, institutional support by ECHO was limited to facilitation of one workshop in Kathmandu with little evidence of substantive outcomes.

### **Policy Framework: India**

The 2015 Nepal earthquake was also a significant milestone for India, since it was the largest humanitarian response they had done outside India. Indian relief teams were the first to arrive after the earthquake and they were also the largest donor, pledging US\$ 1 billion.<sup>122</sup>

As part of its role as an emerging international humanitarian actor, India hosted the 2016 first Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (AMCDRR) following the adoption of the Sendai Framework where the key outcome was the “New Delhi declaration on disaster risk reduction in Asia and the Pacific 2016”. Nationally, relevant policies and plans include the 2016 National Disaster Management Plan, which is aligned with the Sendai Framework for DRR and the 2013 Human resource plan for disaster management capacity building.<sup>123</sup>

### **Background**

ECHO has been supporting resilience project activities in areas where there have been subsequent responses to emergencies, notably 2013 cyclone Phalin in India and, in Nepal, the 2015 earthquake along with the 2014 and 2017 floods. Preparedness planning including these scenarios were factored into project designs and logical frameworks creating the possibility of measuring outcomes relating to increasing resilience. ECHO's approach to resilience in India has primarily focused on improving access to services for marginalised populations. Review of monitoring reports and interviews indicated that, apart from a few examples, most improvements in resilience resulting from ECHO projects had been at an individual or household level. Findings from this evaluation indicate that limited outcomes are mainly caused by a lack of ownership by GoI together with increasingly challenging regulatory environment for ECHO partners and other civil society organisations that are described in more detail in Case Study 3.

### **Nepal**

More than a decade of investment in DRR and resilience in Nepal has positioned ECHO as a thematic expert.<sup>124</sup> Nepal remains a highly vulnerable and hazard-prone country and, when asked about ECHO's value added, several partners said that being an ECHO partner was key to having a good understanding DRR in Nepal. ECHO's “hands on” approach that emphasizes regular monitoring by technical experts has a unique niche amongst donors that goes beyond just funding. ECHO's status as DRR “expert” in Nepal has led to expectations, both by partners and local governments, that ECHO will make an important contribution in supporting the transition process to a new governance system. During the visits to project

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<sup>122</sup> Cook, A. et al. (2016) International Response to 2015 Nepal Earthquake Lessons and Observations NTS Report No. 4

<sup>123</sup> National Institute of Disaster Management (2013) Human resource plan for disaster management capacity building

<sup>124</sup> Grünewald, François & Burlat, Anne (2015) Nepal earthquake: a rapid review of the response and a few lessons learnt

sites in flood-affected areas in western Nepal, the team heard reports that several newly-elected leaders that had requested DRR training of the type provided by ECHO partners.

Successes have created their own challenges. ECHO's support to improving the understanding of DRR and resilience at community level in Nepal has highlighted gaps in LRRD as community members search around for funds to retrofit unsafe buildings they identified when drawing up hazard maps. Other challenges ECHO and partners have faced have included

- **Building resilience takes time:** Short project funding timelines puts pressure on partners to design resilience projects which often have unrealistically short timeframes instead of being based on realistic assessment of the timeframe for sustainable outcomes. Short project duration without a programmatic approach, lack of alignment with LRRD and project-based approach by partners have hampered efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability of ECHO supported interventions.
- **Humanitarian principles and resilience:** While resilience strategies tend to be less controversial in many natural disasters, they can undermine the neutrality of humanitarian action in armed conflicts if the improvement of political and economic structures is perceived to advantage one side against the other. The tensions between adhering to the principles and strategic and operational choices are particularly apparent in multi-mandate organizations,<sup>125</sup> which describes virtually all of ECHO's partners implementing resilience activities. While partners in Nepal are not working in an environment of violent conflict, they are working in a context where caste and ethnicity influence access to services. As highlighted in a recent EU Joint Communication, resilience requires a political approach and that governments take primary responsibility for catering for the needs of their populations.<sup>126</sup>
- **Integrating the resilience approach into EU external action:** findings from this evaluation indicate challenges in EU collaboration due to different systems, capacities and ways of working, although the example from the education sector shows it can be effectively done. The EC is planning to improve practice by improving risk analysis of risks and resilience capacities, early warning monitoring to allow for early action along with financing partnerships with multilateral and bilateral institutional.<sup>127</sup>
- **GoN regulatory framework:** increasing numbers of restrictions during the scoping period have put constraints on civil society actors, including ways of working and delays in obtaining project approvals. Case Study 3 describes these in more detail.
- **Design of pilots:** ECHO's resources for investing in resilience have been relatively modest. A third of ECHO funds were allocated to DRR/resilience during the period 2013-2017 for a total of EUR 9.5 million. This has required strategic investments in pilots that can be replicated and scaled up. During the evaluation scoping period, there have been two examples of good practice from the health and education sectors that demonstrate how pilots can be scaled up through a combination of strategic partnerships

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<sup>125</sup> Labbe, Jérémie and Daudin, Pascal (2016) Applying the humanitarian principles: Reflecting on the experience of the International Committee of the Red Cross

<sup>126</sup> EC (2017) A Strategic Approach to Resilience in the EU's External Action

<sup>127</sup> *ibid*

and positioning for demand-driven scaling-up. The 2015 earthquake generated such a demand within the government.

As a result of the successful response by the health system during the 2015 earthquake, GoN took the decision to replicate and scale up the emergency health preparedness activities throughout the country by creating 25 hub hospitals in strategic locations around the country. The education initiative is described in more detail below that illustrates the key activities and milestones of this example of a strategic partnership between ECHO and DEVCO.

### Outcomes from ECHO-supported Resilience Interventions

Some examples of outcomes demonstrating resilience are below. These are examples were compiled by ECHO Nepal for current and past projects they supported.

ECHO Partner	Actions taken in project sites
Practical Action (supported by ECHO from 2002 - 2014) Narayani, West Rapti, Babai and Karnali	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SMS texts to communities when flood reached warning in the flood forecasting station upstream. General alerts were issued based on the rainfall estimates.</li> <li>• Community based organisations (CDMC, task forces) helped in moving people in at risk areas to pre-identified safe places.</li> <li>• Immediate relief from pre-positioned stocks in the NRCS warehouse in Tikapur municipality was provided to 233 families who had been temporarily displaced.</li> </ul>
NRCS: national	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepositioned equipment in the districts, such as boats and life vests was used for rescue and evacuation of affected population. Tents provided temporary shelter for those who had been displaced.</li> <li>• Trained experts in assessment and coordination were deployed and supported the local response effort coordinated by the Chief District Officer. The Ministry of Home Affairs used the Assessment Guidelines. that had been developed and socialised during the project. The Initial Rapid Assessment was completed within one week in 26 districts. This was a significant improvement in comparison with the assessments for the 2014 floods, which took 2 - 3 weeks.</li> <li>• IM officers (NRCS staff seconded to DEOCs) played a key role in it by compiling of assessment data and sharing information with district stakeholders</li> </ul>
CARE Kailali district	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The pocket booklets developed during the project were widely used by the communities. The booklets contained contact details</li> </ul>



ECHO Partner	Actions taken in project sites
	<p>of taskforce members, Disaster Management Committees, local authorities, NRCS, security forces which helped quickly establish communication with affected communities and organize the response.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The community-based flood early warning system communication system developed at Kailali by the project functioned well and all community members were kept informed by DEOC through SMS.</li> <li>• The small-scale flood mitigation works protected river banks and houses.</li> </ul>
Save the Children: Banke district	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Under DIPECHO VIII, the project had supported 10 schools, of which 8 were flooded. 5 schools were used as community emergency shelters (higher floors were used in flooded schools)</li> <li>• The community knew which schools would be safe since barrages had been constructed the previous year with funds from the Village Development Committee.</li> </ul>
WHO: Kailali and Banke districts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pre-positioned stocks deployed by Ministry of Home: Diarrheal Diseases Kits, Emergency Health Kits, community water filters, chlorine tablets</li> <li>• Department of Water Supply and Sewage mobilized the Water Quality Testing Mobile Van procured by WHO to the flood area with water purification supplies</li> </ul>

## India and Resilience

India's 2016 Disaster Management Plan represented a significant milestone for India as they continue to shift their focus from relief towards an institutional mechanism that focuses more on prevention, mitigation and preparedness through adequate pre-disaster planning and pro-active actions.<sup>128</sup>

GoI currently has a deployable national response force of around 12,000 people, many of whom are based at state level. GoI is currently taking steps to decentralise emergency management to the state level. There is significant variation of disaster management capacities between states. Some states, such as Orissa, Assam and Tripuda, have significant capacities. Others, including Terengina (which is a new State) and Jammu and Kashmir have

<sup>128</sup> National Institute of Disaster Management (2013) Human resource plan for disaster management capacity building

much lower capacities. GoI is currently developing a disaster resilience scorecard to help measure risks and resilience levels more systematically.<sup>129</sup>

The **private sector** has been increasingly involved in responses to natural disasters, but mostly post disaster relief. There is potential value-added with private sector involvement and efforts are currently being made to raise awareness of how supply chains are affected by disasters.<sup>130</sup> The last decade has witnessed increased interest and involvement by the private sector and has been the subject of a recent study commissioned by OCHA.<sup>131</sup> As described in the main report, ECHO has recently joined other bilateral and private sector donors supporting the “Connecting Business Initiative” (CBI),<sup>132</sup> which was launched following the World Humanitarian Summit in 2016. The CBI is a demand driven multi-stakeholder initiative designed to transform the way the private sector engages before, during and after crises to create more resilient communities, increase local capacity and alleviate human suffering.

### **Private sector network engagement in response and resilience: example from the Philippines**

The Philippine Disaster Recovery Foundation (PDRF) is a private sector network, and member of the Connecting Business initiative, that is often cited as a model of good practice.

#### **History and Aims of the Philippine Disaster Recovery Foundation<sup>133</sup>**

After the devastation of typhoons Fengshen, Ketsana and Parma during 2008-9 the Office of the President issued Executive Order No. 838 to create the Special National Public Reconstruction Commission (Public Commission) to spearhead reconstruction measures to address the needs of disaster-stricken communities. The Public Commission was mandated to tap the resources of the private sector to increase support for its reconstruction programs. Heads of some of the country's largest private corporations and non-government organizations (NGOs) subsequently came together to form the Philippine Disaster Recovery Foundation (PDRF). In October 23, 2009, the Public Commission and PDRF drew a cooperation agreement to further solidify the commitment of the private sector support to assist in the reconstruction programs of the Philippine government.

In 2013, the Philippines faced successive large-scale disasters, including civil unrest in Zamboanga, the 7.2 magnitude earthquake in Bohol and Cebu and the world's strongest recorded cyclone Super Typhoon Haiyan. Following these crises, PDRF was reorganized as the umbrella organization of the private sector for disaster preparedness, relief and

<sup>129</sup> Source: interviews with GoI and UN staff during the field visit to India

<sup>130</sup> *ibid*

<sup>131</sup> OCHA (2017) *The Business Case: A Study of Private Sector Engagement in Humanitarian Action*

<sup>132</sup> Operational and technical support to the CBI is provided by UNDP and OCHA, while UNISDR is providing technical advice on disaster risk reduction [www.connectingbusiness.org](http://www.connectingbusiness.org)

<sup>133</sup> Source: PDRF <http://pdrf.org/>

recovery. Corresponding programs have been focused on post-disaster recovery in five key sectors; shelter, livelihood, education, environment and water, infrastructure, sanitation and health.

In 2015, PDRF formally changed its name to Philippine Disaster Resilience Foundation to include the complete disaster risk reduction and management framework.

### International Bilateral Cooperation with India on Resilience

Some bilateral donors have been exploring new ways of working with newly-emerging humanitarian donors. One such example in India is the 8 year *Developing Resilient Cities through Risk Reduction to Disaster and Climate* initiative which is a partnership between the Home Ministry, UNDP and USAID. The initiative aims to support GoI's efforts to strengthen resilience and climate risk management in urban settings. The project currently targets six medium-sized cities (with populations of 100,000 – 500,000) located in hazard-prone areas. Project objectives are to improve urban planning and disaster risk management in urban areas by enhancing institutional and community capacities to integrate climate risk reduction measures in development programs as well as to undertake mitigation activities based on scientific analyses. The five outputs described below include engagement with the private sector. A summary of the project describing the scope, target and objectives is below. Note that this is included here for illustrative purposes only. Given its mandate and modus operandi, ECHO may like to implement a similar type of intervention by itself due to the need to engage bilaterally.

In June 2016 USAID awarded an additional USD 2.5 million to the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) to implement *Developing Resilient Cities through Risk Reduction to Disaster and Climate Change* June 2016 to May 2020. It covers 6 cities from the states of Andhra Pradesh (Vijayawada & Visakhapatnam), Himachal Pradesh, (Shimla), Maharashtra (Navi Mumbai), Meghalaya (Shillong) and Odisha (Cuttack). The cities were selected in consultation with the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), based on their hazard profile, and their participation in the Government of India's (GOI) Smart Cities and/or Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT) schemes. This initiative is part of a wider effort between the Ministry of Home Affairs, the GOI's nodal ministry for disaster management, and UNDP that focuses on mainstreaming disaster risk reduction (DRR) and climate change adaptation (CCA) in 10 states launched in 2012-13. This initiative is built on a prior phase supported by USAID/India (USD 1.735 million) that worked in eight cities, including four of the current cities, which ended in Sep 2016.

Four of the current cities from phase I (Navi Mumbai, Shimla, Vijayawada and Visakhapatnam) are showing strong progress and commitment. Two cities (Shillong and Cuttack) were added in Phase II. Since they are at different stages of risk assessment and some have already prepared risk-informed City Disaster Management Plans (CDMP), the activities in each city will vary. Disasters have been eroding developmental gains by damaging public and private infrastructure and negatively affecting people and economic activities. Recognizing the significant role that private sector could play in furthering DRR and CCA strategies in urban India to protect the development gains, concerted efforts will be made to motivate private sector to invest in DRR.

The focus would be to strengthen the resilience of cities by protecting investments, minimizing economic disruptions and ensuring business continuity. To encourage greater partnership with the private sector, the project plans to host an Innovation Challenge focusing on four sectors such as healthcare, water management, alternative energy solutions and affordable housing.

#### **A. PROJECT GOAL**

Reduce the vulnerability of urban population, infrastructure and lifeline facilities to natural hazard induced disasters through risk sensitive planning.

#### **B. PROJECT OBJECTIVE**

The proposed project will have two main objectives:

- Reduce disaster risk in urban areas by enhancing institutional capacities to integrate climate risk reduction measures in development programs as well as to undertake mitigation activities based on scientific analyses.
- Enhance capacities of local governments and urban communities, including private sector stakeholders, to manage disaster and climate risks.

#### **PROJECT ACTIVITIES**

**Output 1: Enhanced Risk Sensitive City Development Planning through preparation of City Disaster Management Plans, undertaking Disaster Risk Assessments and Structural Safety Audits:**

- *City Disaster Management Plans (CDMP)*
- *Hazard Risk and Vulnerability Analysis (HRVA)*

**Output 2: Action plan to strengthen Early Warning Systems in cities based on analytical studies:**

**Output 3a: Enhancing capacity of the government to respond to disasters and mitigate risks in cities:**

**Output 3b: Local Level Training for preparedness, response and mitigation in cities:**

- *Communities in 620 wards trained to respond to disasters*
- *Municipal officers trained in Incident Response System (IRS) to respond to disasters in cities*
- *Training to Construction Fraternity*
- *Enhancing School Safety*
- *Psycho social Training*

**Output 4: Knowledge Management:**

**Output 5: Public Private Partnerships for Disaster Risk Reduction and Recovery Facilitated and Enhancing Private Sector Investment for Risk Reduction through Innovative Pilots:**

## Case Study 2 – Early Recovery and LRRD<sup>134</sup>

Drawing upon evidence gathered during the evaluation process, this case study identifies relevant policies, systems and approaches and examples of LRRD during 2013-2017 and describes some of the underlying drivers.

### Case Study 2

LRRD is widely understood as linking short-term relief measures with longer term development programmes in order to create synergies and provide a more sustainable response to crisis situations. EC policy documents all stress the need to enhance coordination internally within the EU institutions, between the EU and its Member States and with external actors. They acknowledge the need for certain pre-conditions for effective LRRD implementation, including the need for multi-annual financing.

Most of ECHO's partners in Nepal and India work in both relief and development and have mainstreamed their policy frameworks into LRRD. This has translated into "build back better" approaches to increase community resilience during post-disaster operations. Several examples of good practice were observed In Nepal, including a collaboration involving ECHO, DEVCO, Save the Children and the Ministry of Education to mainstream resilience at both a community and national level. Partners in India have been faced with a higher bar to using recovery operations as a LRRD entry point due to lack of GoI ownership. There was little alternative to GoI since local partners lacked capacity and resources to continue without external support.

### Policy Framework

LRRD is widely understood as linking short-term relief measures with longer term development programmes in order to create synergies and provide a more sustainable response to crisis situations.<sup>135</sup> ECHO has regularly been supporting recovery activities following humanitarian crises throughout the globe to support recovery and stabilise populations who have been affected by natural disasters and/or are displaced or are at risk of displacement due either to natural or man-made disasters. Project design often include "build back better" and conflict sensitivity elements objectives aimed at increasing resilience. There are numerous EC/ECHO policy-related documents related to early recovery and LRRD. A selection of some of the most recent examples are listed below.

Year	Title
2012	European Parliament - Linking Relief, Rehabilitation and Development: Towards more Effective Aid
2017	The New European Consensus on Development 'Our World, Our Dignity, Our Future'
2017	Operationalising the Humanitarian-Development Nexus - - Council conclusions (19 May 2017)

<sup>134</sup> This case study complements findings under EQ4, EQ6, EQ7, EQ9, EQ10 and supports Conclusions 2, 3 and 4.

<sup>135</sup> European Parliament (2012) Linking Relief, Rehabilitation and Development: Towards more Effective Aid

These documents all stress the need to enhance coordination internally within the EU institutions, between the EU and its Member States and with external actors; including emerging donors, UN departments and agencies, international development banks and the private sector. The EC recognises that flexible and well-coordinated financing instruments and modalities are needed, to allow for quick response and modification in emergency and recovery activities, especially in fragile situations. Policy documents at the same time also acknowledge the need for certain pre-conditions for effective LRRD implementation, including the need for multi-annual financing.

### Early Recovery in Nepal and India

The 2017 HIP for south- and south-east Asia acknowledges a key early recovery role for ECHO in the region in “...*have a rapid and effective search-and-rescue and immediate relief capacities but are often unable to address various humanitarian gaps in the post-disaster phase, notably inclusion of marginalised groups into social protection schemes*”.<sup>136</sup> The HIP proposes that the main value added of external assistance to victims of natural disasters in the region is to address gaps in the coverage of relief operations and to overcome the barriers limiting access to social schemes.<sup>137</sup>

Virtually all of ECHO's partners in Nepal are working in both relief and development and have mainstreamed their policy frameworks into LRRD. Several external influences, many of which are described in Case Study 3 below, have meant that agencies have faced a number of challenges in implementing LRRD. As an example, a year after the earthquake, an IOM PDM survey of 895 randomly-selected households in 14 districts found that 63% of respondents were still living in temporary shelters next to their damaged or destroyed house. Of those still in temporary shelters, 75% reported that had not yet started to repair or reconstruct their houses even though only 34% of respondents reported their existing shelter conditions were satisfactory.<sup>138</sup>

One of the more positive outcomes following the 2015 Nepal earthquake was the establishment of a National Reconstruction Authority which then spearheaded the development of a Post Disaster Recovery Framework,<sup>139</sup> prepared with technical and financial support from UNDP and the World Bank.

India's framework for early recovery is incorporated into the 2016 Disaster Management Plan. Interviews with key informants indicated that, while India has significantly reinforced its emergency response capacities over recent years, there is not yet a coherent recovery framework in place. Similar to Nepal, with the exception of MSF, most ECHO partners have made efforts to systematically incorporate LRRD in their relief and development programme design.

Most of ECHO's portfolio in India focused on improving inclusion and quality for people marginalised due to conflict and exit strategies largely depended on continued support from

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<sup>136</sup> Based on findings from this evaluation, this claim rings true for India, but Nepal is still in the process of developing their response capacities.

<sup>137</sup> ECHO (2017) HIP Technical Annex: South and East Asia and the Pacific v.4

<sup>138</sup> IOM Nepal (2016) IOM Nepal Earthquake Emergency Response: 2<sup>nd</sup> PDM report. May 2016.

<sup>139</sup> National Reconstruction Authority (2016) Post-Disaster Recovery Framework 2016-2020

GoI to sustainably improve service delivery and coverage. However, partners in India were faced with a high bar to LRRD due to a general lack of GoI ownership. There was little alternative to GoI since local partners lacked capacity and resources to continue without external support. As a result, only a few isolated examples were found of projects in Assam and in Chandigarh where GoI has taken over health-related activities. Handicap International initiated a cost recovery system for disabled people in Jammu and Kashmir but ECHO's phase out meant there was only a short implementation period and it proved unsustainable.

### Examples of ECHO-supported Early Recovery Interventions

Examples of outcomes compiled from the selected sample of ECHO-supported project reports relating to recovery and LRRD issues are listed below.

ECHO Partner	Early Recovery Actions taken in project sites
Action Aid Cyclone Phailin, India 2013/91017	Action Aid received support from ECHO to lead a consortium providing humanitarian and early recovery support to some 180,000 people from some of areas that were worst affected by Cyclone Phailin. Activities incorporated DRR, gender and inclusion of marginalised and poor. The cash transfer program mainly targeted women from marginalised tribes and castes. Post distribution monitoring of cash grants found that 36% of beneficiaries claimed that, if they hadn't received this assistance, they would have migrated. Another 34% said that they would have taken a loan. DRR was incorporated into shelter interventions, with 448 local masons and carpenters trained on flood and cyclone resistant shelters, although 25% masons dropped out. 232 hand pumps were repaired and rehabilitated, 81 new hand pumps installed and 41 dug wells were rehabilitated. The project's objectives and indicators were mostly met, although Action Aid struggled with managing a relatively large consortium, which contributed to project delays.
Mercy Corps Golaghat, Assam 014/92015	Mercy Corps received funds from ECHO to support recovery of conflict affected communities in Assam. All deliverables by January 2015, except for the cash transfer component intended to catalyse early livelihood recovery in the returnee villages. However, since the security situation in several of the targeted villages was not conducive to return, only 35% out of the targeted 70% was achieved.
CARE western Nepal 2014/00913	CARE led a consortium providing emergency response and recovery for 2,600 vulnerable and severely affected households by flood and landslides in targeted districts in mid-western region of Nepal. The aim was to improved access to livelihood opportunities, targeted NFIs, WASH services, safe education facilities and advocacy initiatives. The project aimed to ensure improved access to

ECHO Partner	Early Recovery Actions taken in project sites
	livelihood opportunities, the provision of NFIs and WASH services, while creating safe education facilities and conducting advocacy initiatives while using the opportunity to reinforce resilience through application of DRR principles.
ADRA Dhading district Nepal 2015/00793	This project's main aim was to provide humanitarian assistance to earthquake-affected communities through provision of shelter, NFIs, water and sanitation needs of the most vulnerable households and earthquake affected households. The partner was able to reorient the project towards early recovery by recognising changing needs and switching from tarpaulin distribution to iron sheet distribution with the same target and cost to ECHO. This clearly added quality to the project.
DCA Dhading, Makwanpur, Sindhupalchowk and Rasuwa districts 2015/91041	The project provided early recovery support for earthquake affected populations in Nepal in shelter, WASH and other emerging humanitarian needs of earthquake affected communities. Skill development training enhanced communities' capacity towards investing in livelihoods inputs. In earthquake affected districts of Nepal, training to the carpenter and mason has helped to obtain additional income for livelihood. DCA's livelihoods initiatives not only supported to restoration of livelihood recovery and diversifying income, but also linked relief/response work to the development programme. With the aim to improve income in the long term, DCA's humanitarian response activities have included a strong component of DRR and long-term recovery/rehabilitation which was assessed as best practice in an independent evaluation. <sup>140</sup> However, ECHO's assessment was that the improved food and livelihood security was too much of a developmental approach and recommended removing this component from the project and DCA duly identified another donor.
IOM Dolakha, Sindhu- palchok, Gorkha, Ramecchap,	This project aimed to improve shelter solutions for earthquake affected populations in displacement sites and at places of origin, through upgrading of sites, distribution of shelter materials, provision of technical trainings and dissemination of guidance for safer shelter to some 50,000 earthquake-affected individuals. Shelter

<sup>140</sup> Bhattarai, Prakash and Gautam, Dhruva (2016) Joint Programme Evaluation. August 2106. DanChurchAid Nepal



ECHO Partner	Early Recovery Actions taken in project sites
Rasuwa, Dhading, Nuwakot and Kathmandu Valley	was a critical sector in early recovery, given its strong gender equality and social inclusion elements. <sup>141</sup> ECHO monitoring and assessment by the team found several gaps in the project in terms of how gender/age specific needs and capacities were taken into account in the project along with a focus on relief and lack of DRR mainstreaming. A significant challenge IOM faced with early recovery and LRRD sustainability was that many beneficiaries lacked ownership documentation.

One of ECHO's key priorities in Nepal following the earthquake was to advocate for the respect of humanitarian principles during the recovery, notably in ensuring that vulnerability and inclusion of marginalised groups was not side-lined. Advocacy was largely indirect, messaging through the EU Delegation and partners, both of whom engage in regular dialogue with both governments.

DEVCO, who was a member of the NRA Coordination Committee, was also an important conduit for ECHO, especially after the EU pledged EUR 100 million for a State building contract with EUR 5 million complementary measures (social accountability, capacity building, and reconstruction support facility/technical assistance) during the International Conference on Nepal's Reconstruction in June 2015.<sup>142</sup>

<sup>141</sup> National Planning Commission of Nepal (2015) Nepal Earthquake 2015: Post Disaster Needs Assessment

<sup>142</sup> European Union (2015) Annex: of the Commission Implementing Decision on the Individual Measure in favour of Nepal to be financed from the general budget of the European Union. Multiannual Indicative Programme (MIP) 2014-2020 – Nepal.

### LRRD Good Practice: ECHO and DEVCO Cooperation in the Education Sector

The example below from the education sector in Nepal is also relevant to Case Study 1 (resilience) in addition to recovery. It provided the best example of LRRD cooperation between ECHO and DEVCO identified by the team in terms of:

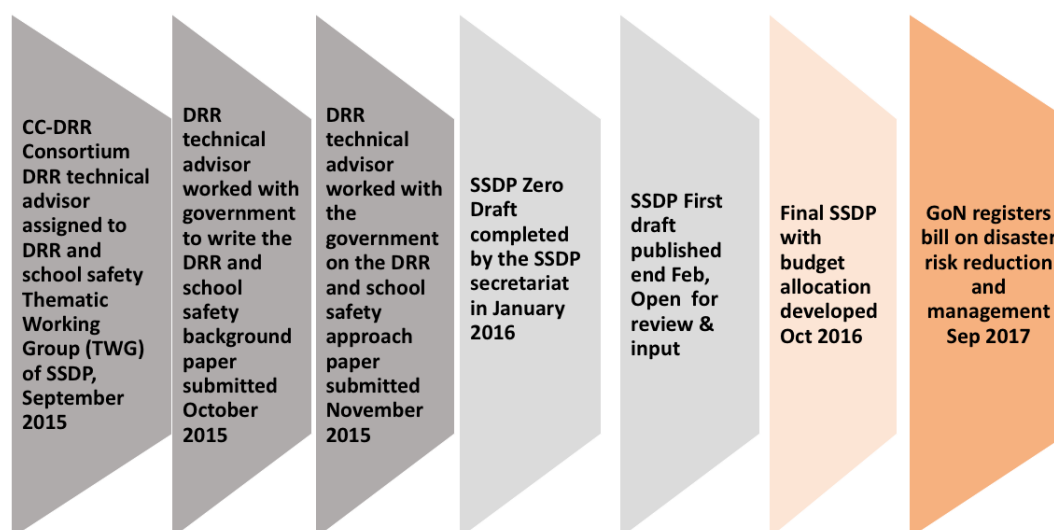
1. Constructive working partnership between ECHO, an ECHO partner and DEVCO;
2. Integration of DRR/resilience into the national education sector plan;
3. Coordinated networking with various education working groups that brought together government, donors, UN agencies and NGOs to coordinate approaches; and
4. Leveraging other funding, including the Ministry of Education who provided the bulk of resources

### Background

In 2015, the Government of Nepal initiated a process to review and update their education sector plan, previously known as the School Sector Reform Plan (SSRP). The School Sector Development Plan (SSDP) is the defining document for the education sector in Nepal and maps out government priorities for education across the country for the period covering 2016/2017-2022/2023. It includes chapters and budget on, for example, quality and effective pedagogy, curriculum frameworks, teacher management and professional development, as well as infrastructure and school safety. The total budget for the SSDP for seven years is more than USD 10 billion.

As illustrated in Figure 2 below, , in order to integrate Comprehensive School Safety into the SSDP, the process required a significant amount of investment and time to make this happen, but the result was positive as it has resulted in strong government and donor coherence around Comprehensive School Safety.

**Figure 10. Contribution of School Sector Development Plan to DRR in Nepal**



Source: Save the Children International

## Key Milestones and Lessons Learned

### 1. ECHO and DEVCO cooperation

- Save the Children, in their lead role of the consortium, met in 2015 with a joint meeting in Brussels with ECHO and DEVCO in preparation for the start-up of a school safety project in Nepal.<sup>143</sup>
- In Nepal, ECHO and Save the Children and the DEVCO Education Adviser met together 2-4 times a year to discuss project progress.
- The EU Delegation drafted and finalised an education sector budget support programme in Nepal which included school safety and all three pillars of the Comprehensive School Safety Framework (CSSF).<sup>144</sup> Furthermore, the EU is the sponsor of the School Sector Development Plan's (SSDP) disbursement linked indicator related to school safety.

### 2. Integration of DRR into the School Sector Development Plan which was finalised and approved by the Ministry of Education in 2017. This is the foundation document for education in Nepal for the next seven years.

### 3. DRR and education working groups in Nepal.

- As part of the roll out and implementation of the SSDP highlighted above, there is a school safety and DRR working group. The SSDP DRR and school safety working group is led by the Ministry and Department of Education and involves representatives from UNICEF, EU, DFID, USAID, Save the Children and others who support key activities within the SSDP DRR and school safety chapter such as the development of implementation guidelines for CSS in Nepal. This has proved to be an important space to demonstrate the linkages between response and development. DFID is providing 12 million GBP for all three pillars of the CSS in Nepal in the mid and far west. DFID's call for proposal contained many of the elements of the ECHO-CSS project experience which demonstrates strong donor and government coherence.

### 4. Programme approach supported by multiple donors

- It was clear to Save the Children from the beginning that ECHO could not provide long-term funding and was only intended for piloting. A key component of the piloting strategy was to make DRR a core part of Save the Children Nepal's education strategy by replicating the tools and approaches to school safety developed during the ECHO project. into all their education and disaster management projects in Nepal. Their projects are funded by several donors, including Norway, Korea, Bulgaria amongst others and. Save the Children included a replication and scale up strategy into their own education and disaster management programme as a specific activity within the design of the first CC-

<sup>143</sup> eSF 2015/91007 "Promoting and strengthening school safety in Nepal"

<sup>144</sup> The three pillars are 1) Safe Learning Facilities, 2) School Disaster Management and 3) Risk Reduction and Resilience Education. Source: UNISDR and GADRRRES (2017) Comprehensive School Safety. March 2017.

DRR project and had to report on progress. This has helped to hold Save the Children to account and avoid solely relying on ECHO funds.

- Save the Children Norway provided funding for Save the Children International's global CC-DRR team. With these resources, their team was able to provide adequate support to Save the Children in Nepal and, following the end of the initial project, to replicate school safety trainings in projects in Bangladesh and Bhutan while disseminating lessons from the Nepal experience throughout Save the Children International.

#### 5. **Lessons learned**

- There was only one joint ECHO/DEVCO meeting in Brussels at the start of the project. It would have been useful to have another meeting to share and capture lessons learned from this success story.
- Technical Advisers in Save the Children and DEVCO participated throughout the process which both helped with maintaining the momentum and in replicating good practice in other projects they were working on.
- If there is an Education Sector Plan and Local Education Group in the country, it is important to engage with this group and the Education Development Partner Group through the DEVCO Education Advisor if the MIP supports Education. This helps to ensure the inclusion of CSS and school safety in the education sector plan and policy dialogue.
- Time and technical skills are required to engage effectively in sector planning processes. The results are potentially significant as it can result in shock-responsive development approaches and is therefore a worthwhile investment.

### Case Study 3 – Operating in sensitive and politically complex contexts<sup>145</sup>

This case study aims to provide additional evidence to support findings, conclusions and recommendations in the evaluation by describing the policy framework, main challenges faced and how they were mitigated related to operating in sensitive and complex contexts.

#### Case Study 3

**While there have been no large-scale conflicts during 2013-2017 in either country, ECHO has been supporting project activities in India with a history of chronic conflicts and periodic displacement** caused by long-standing tensions due to ethnic and caste and territorial disputes. Governments in both Nepal and India view international humanitarian agencies, and civil society actors in general, with a certain amount of suspicion and have passed legislation that both limits activities of national and international civil society while at the same time strengthening the position of the government to lead humanitarian responses.

**There has been a marked improvement in national humanitarian response structures and capacities of government and civil society** over the past few years, notably in preparedness and response for natural disasters. Once response and recovery operations following cyclone Phalin were completed, ECHO's programme in India has focused on mitigating the impacts of civil strife in the north-east, north-west and the area affected by the Naxalite crisis. Challenges have mainly been connected to humanitarian principles rather than access since most partners, apart from ICRC, managed to negotiate access to conflict areas with GoI.

**Most relevant challenges in Nepal were linked to governance issues**, including civil unrest surrounding the launching of Nepal's Constitution soon after the earthquake in 2015, national and local elections, decentralisation reform process. An outdated disaster management policy and structure contributed to a considerable amount of confusion during the response and a relatively slow recovery from the earthquake, notably for repair and reconstruction of housing.

#### Policy Framework

- ECHO's policies with a significant relevance for working in sensitive contexts include among others the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid,<sup>146</sup> and Complementary

<sup>145</sup> This case study complements findings under EQ4, EQ5, EQ6, EQ7, EQ8, EQ9 and EQ10 and supports Conclusion 4.

<sup>146</sup> European Union (2008); Joint Statement by the Council and the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States meeting within the Council, the European Parliament and the European Commission, Official Journal of the European Union 2008/C 25/01

Action plan approved in 2008, the 2015 follow-up implementation plan<sup>147</sup>, the thematic policy document on protection outcomes<sup>148</sup> and the working document on children in conflict,<sup>149</sup> Key commitments of the European Consensus include strong and consistent advocacy for International Humanitarian Law and promotion of good humanitarian donorship. The mid-term review of the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid Action Plan<sup>150</sup> carried out in 2010 concluded that further work was necessary on strategies for humanitarian advocacy and outreach; as well as support for the work of mandated organisations to promote IHL compliance. A later evaluation of the implementation of the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid (the Evaluation)<sup>151</sup> performed in 2014 concluded among others that the EU and DG ECHO in particular, “supported and gave increasing importance to humanitarian principles”, for example, by requiring in its funding regulations that partners demonstrate commitment to these principles.

- A later working document published in 2015 referred to these two evaluations, identified three priorities of which the first one was upholding humanitarian principles and International Humanitarian Law (IHL). The recommended approach consisted of “undertaking actions to promote principled humanitarian action, the respect for IHL and the protection of humanitarian space by focussing both at the strategic – institutional – and operational levels...among others by expanding public communication and advocacy on humanitarian concerns and the mandate of humanitarian action targeting in particular non-humanitarian actors.” The document also stressed the need put to put protection more at the centre of humanitarian action and therefore more actively promote and support protection-related initiatives as well as work more closely with partners to enhance the knowledge and ability of Member States' and EU staff to promote access in humanitarian contexts.
- The technical annexes for the HIPs for India/Nepal/South Asia during the period 2013 - 2017 referred to many humanitarian principles including those of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence, the imperative to mainstream basic protection principles including the commitment of safe and equal access to assistance as well as the need for special measures to ensure access for particularly vulnerable groups. In the HIPs itself there was also sometimes reference to the need to uphold IHL. In the 2013 HIP for

<sup>147</sup> Commission of the European Communities (2015); Commission Staff Working Document, Implementation Plan of the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid, Brussels, 27.11.2015

<sup>148</sup> DG ECHO (2016); Improving protection outcomes to reduce risks for people in humanitarian crises, DG ECHO Thematic Policy Document n° 8, May 2016

<sup>149</sup> Commission of the European Communities (2008); Commission Staff Working Document, Children in Emergency and Crisis Situations, Brussels 2008

<sup>150</sup> Commission of the European Communities (2010); The mid-term review of the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid Action Plan implementing effective, principled EU humanitarian action, 2010. Available from: [http://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/policies/consensus/mid-term\\_review/1\\_EN\\_ACT\\_part1\\_v21.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/policies/consensus/mid-term_review/1_EN_ACT_part1_v21.pdf)

<sup>151</sup> ADE (2014); Evaluation of the implementation of the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid, Final Report June 2014. Available from: [http://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/evaluation/2014/european\\_consensus\\_main\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/evaluation/2014/european_consensus_main_en.pdf)

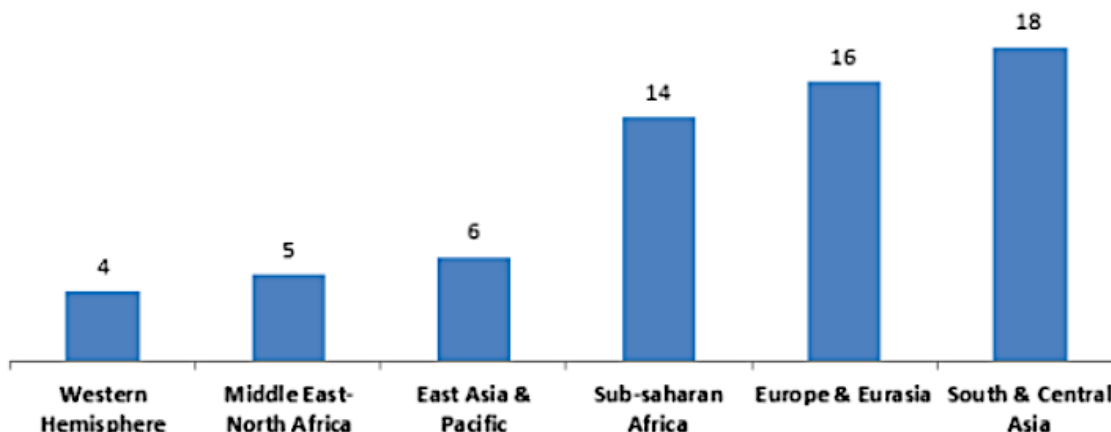
India support to protection, including child protection and increased respect of IHL, was identified as a top priority. This was repeated in the paragraph on India in the 2015 HIP for South Asia. The 2016 HIP for South Asia mentioned that during the implementation, special attention would be given to relevant aspects related to international humanitarian law and humanitarian access. Protection needs, including the needs to target the most vulnerable and marginalised, children - especially those in conflict situations - were consistently mentioned in all HIPs.

- Many of ECHO's partners, especially the larger agencies, have their own policies and approaches to guide operations in complex environments, but these are based on very similar principles as outlined above. This is no surprise, given that, according to the Consensus on Humanitarian Aid, that humanitarian aid provided by the EU is framed in an overall international approach that brings together the United Nations, the Red Cross/Crescent movement, humanitarian NGOs and others. The Consensus acknowledges the special role of organisations such as of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and its specialised mandate based on international treaties, particularly in conflict situations. This is also recognized among others by the GoI. Consequently, DG ECHO's facilitating role, in particular regarding principles in conflict-like situations in India was found to be rather phlegmatic: *"ECHO partners are able to find a way if they intervene transparently"*.
- Two of the five partners sampled carrying out projects in conflict-affected areas in India (ICRC and MSF) referred to humanitarian principles in their proposal and logical frameworks. For both agencies, working without compromising its core principles of neutrality and impartiality and acceptance of all parties of the conflict of these principle was a pre-condition to carry out activities. In not any of the ten other project proposals of the sample were humanitarian principles or challenges relating to a humanitarian principled approach mentioned.

Examples of challenges due to access, the political environment and/ or conflict that affected humanitarian space and ECHO's activities to mitigate these challenges are described below.

### **Findings common to both country contexts**

Governments and civil society in both Nepal and India view international humanitarian agencies with a certain amount of suspicion and passed legislation that limits activities of national and international civil society while in the meantime positioning themselves to lead humanitarian responses (see Figure 3 below).

**Figure 11 – Number of Pieces of Restrictive Legislation Affecting CSOs 2015-2016**

Source : [www.icnl.org](http://www.icnl.org)

- ECHO has been the only major international donor providing humanitarian funding to civil society in conflict-affected areas in northern India since 2016 and it has been challenged to uphold humanitarian principles. ECHO felt they were unable to do any direct advocacy. Their partners agreed, since they are well aware that leverage of international donors in India and Nepal is limited, especially for actors like ECHO who do not work bilaterally.
- In both countries, there was very little formal interaction between ECHO and the government at the national level. There were however many examples of advocacy for independent humanitarian assistance by ECHO through its partners. In Nepal, following a request by ECHO, the Danish Red Cross and Nepalese Red Cross trained its own staff and other partners on understanding and upholding humanitarian principles. In India, ECHO consistently asked partners to include lobbying for the most vulnerable in their proposals. Examples include Action Aid's advocating for entitlements for people living below the poverty line affected by Cyclone Phailin in Odisha and Save the Children's advocacy for connecting IDPs in tribal area villages with the system in Chhattisgarh. In both countries, ECHO ensured that partners adequately addressed protection and inclusion issues within their projects.

## India

- ECHO's funding of partners in conflict-affected areas was in line with their core life-saving mandate. There has been very limited alternative project funding available to partners in conflict areas. This is in contrast to response to natural disasters, where partners find it easier to raise funds from the private sector and other donors. ECHO has this been filling funding a gap that has helped to mitigate the effects of conflict, notably through provision of medical assistance to people injured in the conflict and MSF's support to mother and child health care in Chhattisgarh and psycho-social and livelihood activities in Kashmir.



- ECHO provided funds for surveys on needs among conflict affected populations in Jammu and Kashmir, to give a voice from local to national level to injured children<sup>152</sup> supported by Save and adults suffering from Post-Traumatic Stress Syndrome and other mental health conditions supported by Action Aid.<sup>153</sup>
- Partners, especially those operating in conflict areas, praised ECHO as a valued partner in terms of active monitoring/ project visits and constructive dialogue. Typical of the partnership is ECHO's flexible approach in what is working and what not, jointly looking at solutions and willingness to modify proposals accordingly.
- Partners also appreciated ECHO's efforts to bring the larger EU and the UN on board regarding the need to provide support in conflict areas. Examples include ECHO facilitating a visit to Kashmir by the EU troika and also playing a catalyst role with UNICEF to provide support in conflict-affected areas. Funding from ECHO enabled UNICEF to increase humanitarian space and develop partnerships with local agencies among populations in Chhattisgarh affected by the Naxalite crisis.
- A number of interviewees referred to the lack of shared understanding of humanitarian principles between the various actors in India. ECHO although recognizing the need to play a role in this, did little in terms of advocating the use of humanitarian principles and respecting International Humanitarian Law when delivering assistance. Based on interviews with ECHO and partner staff, key contributing factors include:
  - the relatively small amount of funding available for India since, with such modest resources ECHO had little influence.
  - ECHO lack of involvement and influence with the GOI at all levels
  - Knowledge about ECHO's mandate, policies and strategies among partners, in particular among local partners. Limited awareness of partners meant that the limited opportunities for advocacy on humanitarian principles were not always capitalized on.
- Over the last few years space response for humanitarian civil society actors has been significantly reduced, particularly in Jammu and Kashmir. Up until 2016, international staff from ICRC and UN agencies were able to conduct regular monitoring, but this became increasingly difficult. GoI has consolidated its lead humanitarian role, including in conflict areas, and partners reported that it has been increasingly difficult carry out direct assessments. As a result, agencies have increasingly relied on indirect information sources and local partners. At the same time, there was a strong consensus by key informants of partners and their local partners of the need for international neutral actors to ensure assistance reaches those who need it most. ECHO's decision to no longer fund projects in forgotten crises in India could be perceived as at odds with this need. At the same time, ending funding could negatively impact on ECHO's access to conflict areas and its role in reconsidering previous approaches and models for providing independent humanitarian assistance, also building on experience in other countries.

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<sup>152</sup> eSF 2016/91014

<sup>153</sup> esF 2013/91017

- Partners interviewed perceived ECHO's humanitarian assistance in conflict as its biggest added value in India since it was the only major donor providing funding while at the same time helping to create some humanitarian space for its partners making use of its in-depth knowledge of the situation on the ground. Partners questioned ECHO's decision to suspend funding given ECHO's mandate for working in forgotten crises and pointed to other middle-income countries where ECHO was carrying out this mandate.

## Nepal

- Most challenges relating to complex operating environments in Nepal were linked to governance issues, including civil unrest surrounding the launching of Nepal's Constitution soon after the earthquake in 2015, the ongoing national election and decentralisation process along with an outdated disaster management policy and structure. One of the main effects of the civil unrest in mid 2015 was the prolonged closure of the border with India, the main pipeline for relief items and fuel. Governance-related issues, including outdated legislation and delays in establishing and operationalising the National Reconstruction Authority, which contributed to the relatively slow recovery from the earthquake, notably shelter assistance.
- The ongoing restructuring of the government devolves authority for disaster management to elected leaders of 753 Gaunpalika (wards/ clusters of VDCs). Districts, which used to have this role, will mainly be involved in coordination. This change raises several challenges including for instance loss institutional memory, but by and large, the change fits well with ECHO's strategic objective to strengthen involvement of communities in disaster preparedness and response. ECHO has consistently supported community-based early warning through its pilots and proactive engagement in Flagships 1 and 4 of the NRRC. The GoN's adoption of those early warning components in its DRR strategies not only institutionalises the role of communities in early warning, but is viewed by partners as providing opportunities for their voices to be heard at a national level.
- The priority target groups for DRR capacity building has thus shifted due to the new structure.<sup>154</sup> ECHO and its partners were well aware of that transitions in governance and roll-out of the new Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act 2074 is likely to mean higher transaction costs. ECHO and its partners were already discussing ways transaction costs could be reduced and still achieve the necessary outreach, including advocacy for DRR and identifying new structures/plans and cooperating with municipalities who could act as models to promote scale up of good practice to others.

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<sup>154</sup> In the past, 75 districts were developing and sending DRR plans to central government based on inputs from some 4,000 VDCs and 200 municipalities. Under the new structure, there are 753 municipalities who will hold responsibility for this task.

- According to Nepalese law, international agencies are only able to work through approved local partners.<sup>155</sup> The current approach by ECHO and partners in working with and through local partners is however in line with the Great Bargain, except perhaps with localisation since ECHO continues to fund through European NGOs. The added value in working with local partners does not appear to be sufficiently highlighted during monitoring and reporting.
- Negative consequences of restrictive legislation have included (1) lengthy processes of up to nine months for obtaining approval for projects. This is partly due to the fact that programs have can only be implemented through local CSOs by entering into project-specific agreements which may require approval from as many as seven different ministries<sup>5</sup> and (2) GoN restrictions on numbers of work permits for international staff (one international staff per organisation). Given the administrative capacities and corruption risk, the latter was perceived as a particular threat. ECHO has not played an active role in mitigating these two consequences results, by for example, advocating for fast track approval of DRR projects with the Ministry. The value-added of ECHO-supported interventions in supporting the government's DRR efforts although substantial, is relatively little known at the national level.
- Another challenge related to restriction on NGO activities ECHO and partners mentioned was GoN's insistence on providing standardized assistance, in the case of earthquake response projects, rather than being tailored to needs. There were some interesting examples of ECHO assisting partners in (re)designing projects considering GoN sensitivities regarding needs-based response. For instance, whereas the GoN insisted on the provision of temporarily shelter in-kind worth 200.000 NR per household (the one door policy), DCA in close collaboration with ECHO developed a conditional voucher system (vouchers that could be exchanged for a selection 10 different articles) to help meet needs of earthquake-quake affected communities. Some partners suggested that ECHO had missed opportunities to advocate for independent humanitarian assistance according to need and got the feeling that ECHO expects them to be at the forefront when advocating with government. They felt that ECHO could have done more advocacy to mitigate challenges the effects of GON policy so that partners would be able to respond more effectively according to needs.

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<sup>155</sup> Sidel, M. and Moore, D. (2016) *The Law Affecting Civil Society in Asia: Developments and Challenges for Non-profit and Civil Society Organizations*. Report prepared by the International Centre for Not-for-Profit Law (ICNL) December 6, 2016



## Annex 2 – List of Projects Selected for In-Depth Analysis

In addition to conducting a high-level review of ECHO's 2013-2017 project portfolio, 6 projects in India and 9 projects in Nepal were selected for more detailed analysis out of a total of 60 projects. Selected projects were prioritised for site visits during the visit to Nepal and India.

Theme	Area (India)	Contract No.	Description	Partner	Amount	Case Study
Health & Nutrition	Jammu and Kashmir	2014/91004	Improve humanitarian assistance to people with disabilities in conflict affected areas	FED HANDCP-FR	500,000	1,3
	Chhattisgarh	2015/91006	Chhattisgarh Conflict Intervention	MSF-NL	400,000	1,3
Response & Recovery	Odisha, Jajpur, Kendrapara, Cuttack, Bhadrak, Bargarh districts	2013/91017	Humanitarian and early recovery support to vulnerable populations affected by Cyclone Phailin	ACTIONAID-UK	2,000,000	1,2
	Assam	2014/92015	Supporting the recovery of conflict affected communities in Golaghat, Assam	MCE-UK	250,000	1,2,3
Protection	Jammu and Kashmir	2015/91001	ICRC Protection Activities in India	CICR	800,000	3
	Jammu and Kashmir	2016/91014	Contribute to the humanitarian protection of conflict affected children in by enabling access to health care through cash transfer, medical assistance and specialist referral services.	STC	300,000	1,3

## Selected Projects in Nepal

Theme	Area (Nepal)	Contract No.	Description	Partner	Amount	Case Studies
DRR	Central	2015/91005	Strengthening Health Sector Response Capacity of Ministry of Health and Population to respond to the humanitarian health needs in the event of mass casualty incidents in Kathmandu Valley	WHO	850,000	1,2
	Mid and Far Western	2015/91004	VISTAR II- Strengthening resilience of communities and institutions from the impacts of natural disasters in Far and Mid- Western Region of Nepal	CARE-AT	800,000	1,3
Refugees	East Nepal	2015/91008	Food Assistance to Refugees from Bhutan in Nepal	WFP-IT	500,000	3
Recovery	Tbd	2015/91041	Early recovery support for earthquake affected populations in Nepal	IOM-CH	900,000	1,2,3
	Dhading, Makwanpur, Sindhupal-chowk, Rasuwa	2015/91044	Early recovery support to earthquake affected communities in Nepal (NERP: Nepal Earthquake Recovery Project)	DAN CHURCH AID -DK	900,000	1,2
Response	Central	2015/91026	Humanitarian Assistance to Earthquake affected people in Nepal	ADRA-DE	840,000	1,2
	Mid-Western	2014/91002	Emergency Flood and Landslide Response and Transitional Recovery Programme-Nepal-Mid West Region-2014	CARE-AT	500,000	1,2
Institutional strengthening	Central, Mid West, Far West	2015/91007	Promoting and strengthening school safety in Nepal	STC-NO (Redd Barna)	850,000	1,3
	Mid-western	2015/91009	Delivering improved emergency preparedness and response in Nepal through enhanced partnership between the Red Cross and the Government of Nepal	CROIX-ROUGE-DK	800,000	1,3

## Annex 3 – Field Visit Itinerary

Date	Sub-Team 1	Sub-Team 2
Tue 15.08	Orientation Meetings	
Wed 16.08	Travel to western Nepal	
Thu 17.08	Site visits, interviews	Travel to earthquake-affected zones
Fri 18.08	Site visits, interviews	Site visits, interviews
Sat 19.08	Return to Kathmandu	Site visits, interviews, travel
Mon 21.08	Interviews in Kathmandu	
Tue 22.08	Interviews in Kathmandu	
Wed 23.08	Debriefing with ECHO & partners, internal team meetings	
Thu 24.08	Travel to India and orientation meeting with ECHO India	
Fri 25.08	Interviews in New Delhi	
Sat 26.08	Desk review	Travel to Kashmir, interviews
Sun 27.08		Site visits, interviews
Mon 28.08	Interviews	Site visits, interviews, travel
Thu 31.08	Interviews in New Delhi	
Mon 28.08	Interviews in New Delhi	
Thu 31.08	Evaluation team meeting	
Fri 01.09	Departure of team members from New Delhi	
Tue 05.09	Debriefing for ECHO India (remote)	





## Annex 4 – Documents Consulted

The following bibliography presents the list of documents consulted during the drafting of the evaluation report. It is presented by order of author (alphabetical) and then year (ascending).

Author	Year	Title
ACAPS	2015	Humanitarian Needs Assessment – The Good Enough Guide
ADE, for the European Commission	2016	Evaluation of the Use of Different Transfer Modalities in the European Commission's Humanitarian Aid Actions 2011-2014
ADE, for the European Commission	2016	Study on Approaches to Assess Cost-Effectiveness of DG ECHO's Humanitarian Aid Actions
ADE, for the European Commission	2017	Evaluation of the EU Approach to Resilience to Withstand Food Crises in African Drylands (Sahel and Horn of Africa) 2007-2015
Aguaconsult Ltd., for the European Commission	2010	Evaluation of the DG ECHO's Action in Nepal
Bailey and Harvey	2017	Time for change: Harnessing the potential of humanitarian cash transfers. ODI report
Baker, J. et al.	2015	Real Time Evaluation of the Nepal Earthquake Response Operation. IFRC
Bhattarai, Prakash and Gautam, Dhruba	2016	Joint Programme Evaluation. August 2106. DanChurchAid Nepal
Cabot Venton, et al.	2015	Value for Money of Cash Transfers in Emergencies. DFID
CaLP		State of the World's Cash Report (forthcoming)
Consortium of Humanitarian Agencies in India	2016	Changing Dynamics of Humanitarian Financing in India: A Discussion Paper
Cook, A. et al.	2016	International Response to 2015 Nepal Earthquake Lessons and Observations NTS Report No. 4   October 2016
Council of the European Union	1996	Council Regulation concerning humanitarian aid
Duryog Nivaran	2016	Are we Building Back Better? Lessons from South Asia

Author	Year	Title
Secretariat		
ECHO	2012	Humanitarian Wash Policy: Meeting the challenge of rapidly increasing humanitarian needs in Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
ECHO	2013	Disaster Risk Reduction: Increasing resilience by reducing disaster risk in humanitarian action
ECHO	2013	ECHO Factsheet Nepal / South Asia
ECHO	2013	Humanitarian Implementation Plan India
ECHO	2014	ECHO Factsheet Nepal
ECHO	2014	European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid
ECHO	2014	Health General Guidelines
ECHO	2014	Humanitarian Implementation Plan Nepal/Refugees from Bhutan
ECHO	2014	Resilience Marker: General Guidance (November 2014)
ECHO	2015	ECHO Factsheet Nepal earthquakes, April and May 2015
ECHO	2015	Ten Principles for MPGs
ECHO	2016	ECHO Factsheet Nepal
ECHO	2016	Humanitarian Implementation Plan South Asia
ECHO	2016	Regional Lessons Learned Workshop: ECHO Partners in South Asia 2015-2016
ECHO	2017	ECHO Factsheet: EU Civil Protection
ECHO	2017	ECHO Factsheet India
ECHO	2017	ECHO Factsheet Nepal
ECHO	2017	Humanitarian Implementation Plan South and East Asia and the Pacific
ECHO	2017	Mission Report: Mission to India and Nepal 2 - 12 April 2017
European Commission	2009	Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament: EU strategy for supporting disaster risk reduction in developing countries
European Commission	2010	Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament: Humanitarian Food

Author	Year	Title
		Assistance
European Commission	2012	General Guidelines on Operational Priorities for Humanitarian Aid in 2013
European Commission	2012	Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council: The EU approach to Resilience: learning from food security crises
European Commission	2013	Annual Strategy for Humanitarian Aid in 2014: General Guidelines on Operational Priorities
European Commission	2013	Action Plan for Resilience in Crisis Prone Countries 2013-2020
European Commission	2014	European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid: ECHO Factsheet
European Commission	2014	General Guidelines for Operational Priorities on Humanitarian Aid in 2015
European Commission	2014	Multiannual Indicative Programme (MIP) 2014-2020: Nepal
European Commission	2015	General Guidelines on Operational Priorities for Humanitarian Aid in 2016
European Commission	2015	Nepal Earthquakes, April – May 2015 Lessons Learnt.
European Commission	2016	Action Plan on the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030: A disaster risk-informed approach for all EU policies. 17.6.2016 SWD (2016) 205 final/2
European Commission	2016	ECHO.B - Humanitarian and Civil Protection Operations B/1 - Emergency Response: Outcomes of Technical and Operational Level Lessons Learnt Meeting on 19 October 2015.
European Commission	2016	General Guidelines on Operational Priorities for Humanitarian Aid in 2017
European Commission	2017	A Strategic Approach to Resilience in the EU's External Action
European Commission	2017	Council Conclusions on Operationalising the Humanitarian-Development Nexus of 19 May 2017
European Commission	2017	European Consensus on Development - 'Our world, our dignity, our future'
European	2017	Towards the development of a common ECHO-

Author	Year	Title
Commission		DEVCO guidance package on “Shaping social protection as an effective short and long-term response to multivariate shocks, protracted crises and displacement”
European Court of Auditors	2016	Special Report: Union Civil Protection Mechanism: the coordination of responses to disasters outside the EU has been broadly effective
European Union	2014	Commission implementing regulation (EU) laying down rules for the implementation of Regulation (EU) No 375/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps (‘EU Aid Volunteers initiative’)
Ferrie and Gautam	2017	Cash Preparedness in Nepal: lessons from the 2015 earthquake. A report for the Cash Coordination Group Nepal
Global Note on Inter-Cluster Early Recovery	2016	Guidance Note on Inter-Cluster Early Recovery
GoI	2013	Human Resource and Capacity Development Plan for Disaster Management and Risk Reduction in India
ICF International	2014	Ex-post evaluation of Civil Protection Financial Instrument and Community Civil Protection Mechanism (recast) 2007-2013
IFRC	2011	International Disaster Response Law (IDRL) in Nepal: A study on strengthening legal preparedness for international disaster response
IOM Nepal	2016	IOM Nepal Earthquake Emergency Response: 2 <sup>nd</sup> PDM report. May 2016.
Labbe, Jérémie and Daudin, Pascal	2016	Applying the humanitarian principles: Reflecting on the experience of the International Committee of the Red Cross
Lain, Jonathan	2017	Resilience in Nepal: Impact evaluation of the Joint Programme on Disaster Risk Management and Humanitarian Preparedness. Oxfam.
Mowjee, T., Poole, L., Greenhalgh, L. and Gharbi, S.	2016	Evaluation of Sida’s Humanitarian Assistance
National Planning Commission of Nepal	2015	Nepal Earthquake 2015: Post Disaster Needs Assessment

Author	Year	Title
National Planning Commission of Nepal	2017	Post Flood Recovery Needs Assessment
National Reconstruction Authority	2016	Post Disaster Recovery Framework for Nepal
OCHA	2015	Flash Appeal for Nepal: Nepal Flash Appeal for the Response to the Nepal Earthquake April - July 2015
OCHA	2015	Nepal Flash Appeal Revision: Nepal Earthquake Apr - Sep 2015
OCHA	2017	The Business Case: A Study of Private Sector Engagement in Humanitarian Action
Poole, Lydia	2013	Funding at the Sharp End: Investing in National NGO Response Capacity. CAFOD
Sanderson, D. and Ramalingam, B.	2015	Nepal Earthquake Response: Lessons for operational agencies. Disasters Emergency Committee
Taylor, G. et al.	2013	Review of the Nepal Risk Reduction. Consortium (NRRC). Final Report. 22 August 2013.
UN Country Team for Nepal	2015	Nepal Earthquake: Humanitarian Country Team After Action Review Workshop Summary Report
USAID	2016	Resilience at USAID: 2016 Progress Report
UNDP, GoI, USAID and FICCI	2015	Workshop on Enhancing Private Sector Partnership for Disaster Risk Reduction, 24th August 2015, Hotel The Lalit, New Delhi
UNHCR and WFP	2013	UNHCR / WFP Joint Assessment Mission Report
UNHCR and WFP	2014	UNHCR / WFP Joint Assessment Mission Report
UNISDR and GADRRRES	2017	Comprehensive School Safety: A global framework in support of The Global Alliance for Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience in the Education Sector and The Worldwide Initiative for Safe Schools
UNISDR	2015	Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development
Willitts King and Bryant	2016	Scaling up humanitarian cash transfers in Nepal. ODI working paper
Zurich Insurance and ISET-International	2015	Urgent case for recovery: What we can learn from the August 2014 Karnali River floods in Nepal?

In addition to the above list, project documents available on HOPE database and related to ECHO projects in India and in Nepal for the period 2003-2017 (see Annex 5) have also been consulted during the evaluation process.

## Annex 5 – List of Persons Interviewed

### ECHO Brussels

Anne Clear	Former Team Leader for South Asia
Flavio Bello	Head of Sector South & East Asia and the Pacific, ECHO
Ionut Homeag	Emergency Response Coordination Centre Coordinator & Programme Assistant Civil Protection
Joakim Nilsson	Head of Evaluation, ECHO
Maria Ralha	Former Team Leader for South Asia
Martin Landgraf & Flavio Bello	Acting head of C/4 Unit - Asia, Latin America, Caribbean, Pacific, Head of Sector, C/4 South, East, South-East Asia and the Pacific
Roger Bellers	Policy Officer

### Nepal

Piush Kayastha	Programme Officer
Bal Bahadur Shiladhar	President, CSSD
Bhola Ram Shrestha	Coordinator HEOC
Caterina Galluzzi	Government Partnership Officer, WFP Nepal
Craig Sanders	former UNHCR Representative in Nepal
Damodar Adhikari	National Program Officer, WHO
Delialah Borja	SCI Country Director
Dolakh Dangi	NRCS Project Coordinator for ECHO Project
Dr. Reuben Samuel	Focal Point for Partnerships, WHO
Francesca Caponera	WFP
Harun Rashid & Sanjeeb Shakya	Harun Rashid, CC-DRR consortium manager. Humanitarian Manager, Save the Children
Jitendra Bohara	Policy Adviser
Joelle Goire	Technical Expert, ECHO deployed to Nepal
Kaila LI	Partner for CCDRR
Kevin J. Allen	UNHCR Representative in Nepal

Kiriti Ray & Lora Wuennenberg	DRR Programme Manager & Country Director, CARE Nepal
Lydia Baker	DRR and Climate Change Adviser for the Education Sector, Norwegian SCI
Nityananda Pandey	Project Office ECHO HIP WVIN
Pippa Bradford	Country Representative, WFP
Prem Chand	SCI Project Manager
Prem Kushmi	DRR Program Manager CSSD
Samjhana Bista	Regional funding Coordinator
Shyam Jnavaly	DRR Team leader
Silvia Crespo & Mariana Liptuga	Program Manager & Country Coordinator, Danish Red Cross
Willy Bergogne	CD, Handicap international and former CD for Terre des Hommes in India
Yogendra Ojha	DRR Focal Person, DDRC
Jérôme Kisielewicz	Team Leader, ECHO Comprehensive Humanitarian Action Evaluation
Hari Dangol	Program Head, WVI
Nityanand Pandey	Program Manager , WVI
Prem Kusumi	CSSD Member
Beneficiaries and stakeholders	Sindhupalchowk communities
SCI communities	CDMC
Keshav Bimali	LDO
Yogendra Ojha, Goma Kumari Adhikari , Hari Singh Saud	District Disaster Relief Committee
Students	School Disaster Risk Reduction Club
School Committee CCDRR - teachers and parents	School Disaster Management Committees
Navin Karki	Shelter beneficiaries Partner NGO



Dolakh Dang(NRRCS), AZIZAhmed Siddiqui ( NRRCS) , Krishna Khadka (CDO) Prahlad vishwa karma (DEOC) Prem Chand (Program Manager SCI)	DEOC and NRCS Nepalganj
Govind Thapa , KhagendraMalla	Deputy Director District Education Office, Focal Point CCDRR
Moira Reddick	former Coordinator, Nepal Risk Reduction Consortium
Bishnumaya Dhungana Beldangi	BRWF coordinator
Champa Singh Rai	Sanischare Camp Secretary
Chakrapani Pandey	MOHA ,UnderSecretary
Pradeep Vaidya	TUTH, IT department
Laureen Reagan	Directoir DR4 office , USAID
Nicola Murray	UKAID , Disaster resilience Manager
Chiranjibi Gautam	Head DOE
Jamie McGoldrick	Former UN Humanitarian Coordinator for Nepal
Robert Hynderick	Rural Development TA, Delegation of the European Union to Nepal
Wendy Fisher	Education TA, Deleg. of the European Union to Nepal

## India

Ahmed Meer	Project Beneficiary
Ahyan Shandilya	Country Coordinator, India Programme, Handicap International
Ali Mohammad Malik	Labourer, Project Beneficiary
Alka	Save the Children (SC)
Anna Lazar	former Country Director, Terre des Hommes (TDH) and NERSWN
Arshad Ahmed	Project Beneficiary

Asma Dhar	Save the Children (SC)
Bilal Ahmad Sahib	
Bipul Borah	Former Humanitarian Manager Oxfam India, then Sr. Programme Manager for Mercy Corps
Danish	Project Beneficiary
David Burgess	former Head of Regional Office, ECHO
David Sevcik, Maya Nair, Tapan Mahapatra	Head, ECHO South Asia Regional Office Programme Officers
Dr. Arshad	Action Aid ex staff
Farida	Project Beneficiary
Fatima Begum	Project Beneficiary
Fridaali	Student
Gulshan	Project Beneficiary
Haz Begum	Project Beneficiary
Irshad Ahmed	
Jeremy England Surinder Oberoi	Head of Regional Delegation and Political Adviser, ICRC
Lars Bernd	Chief, Disaster Risk Reduction Section, UNICEF India
Leon Prop	Head of the Country Cluster South Asia for the IFRC
Magali Roudaut	Head of Mission - India Doctors Without Borders
Mahek	Project Beneficiary
Majid Dar	Project Beneficiary
Meer	Project Beneficiary
Mohamad Abdulla	Farmer
Mohamad Assadulla	Student, PG History
Mohammed Sharif Bhat	CEO, Save the Children (SC), Kashmir
Mussaffar	Project Beneficiary
Naseer Magrey	Action Aid
Nathalie Praz	Head of Humanitarian Aid of HEKS/EPER and former Terre des Hommes India
Ray Kancharla	National Humanitarian and Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) Manager, Save the Children

Riyaz Ahmad	
Roxana Bano	PG, Sociology
Saleem	Project Beneficiary
Sarabjit Singh	Disaster Risk Reduction Specialist UNICEF
Sehjo Singh	Director, Policy and Programmes Action Aid
Shafia Naqshbandi	Action Aid (AA)
Shahida Akhtar	Student
Sunawala Dar	Project Beneficiary
Tabassum	Project Beneficiary
Vikram Patel	
Vikram Srivastava	Advisor
Vilayat Ali – Harinara	Project Beneficiary
Zubair Ahmad Keen	Additional Director Mercy Corps Yatim Foundation Official J&K Yateem Trust
Abhay Kumar Singh, Sr.	FICCI
Balaka Dey	Project Management Specialist, USAID
Dr. Muzaffar Ahmad	Member, National Disaster Management Authority
Dr. Muzzafar Sahib	National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA)
Dr. Shabin Ahmad	Main Hospital
G.Padmanabhan	Emergency Analyst UNDP
Kamal Kishore	National Disaster Management Authority
Prof. Santosh Kumar	Policy Planning & Community Issues Former Director SAARC Disaster Management Centre Executive Director I/c NIDM Disaster Management Specialist
Sohaib Aftab	National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM)



## Annex 6 – Interview Guide

The interview guide is based on the Evaluation Matrix in the Inception Report.

EQ.	Questions	Sub-Questions	Case Study
	Perspective of the key informant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ What was the nature of the key informant's involvement in the ECHO programme?</li> <li>✓ What relevant experience has the key informant had with ECHO and other secondments, either in this country or elsewhere?</li> </ul>	
1	To what extent have needs assessments been of good quality?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ How was the needs assessment carried out?</li> <li>✓ To what extent was the assessment information relevant? How was the quality of the assessment data? Was adequate data available at the right time?</li> <li>✓ How were local partners involved in assessments?</li> <li>✓ How were affected communities involved in assessments?</li> <li>✓ For partners – what role did ECHO play during assessments?</li> </ul>	
2	What was the fit between needs assessments and projects funded?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ How was assessment data used in project management or otherwise?</li> <li>✓ To what extent did project activities meet identified needs?</li> <li>✓ Were there any needs identified that were not funded by ECHO? If so, what happened?</li> </ul>	1 – Resilience
3	To what extent has DG ECHO ensured having put in place and implemented appropriate entry and exit strategies for its interventions?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ What were the entry and exit strategies used?</li> <li>✓ How were these strategies informed by needs?</li> <li>✓ How were affected communities and other stakeholders involved?</li> <li>✓ What role, if any, did local partners play in entry and/or exit strategies?</li> <li>✓ Were these strategies revised? If so, why and how?</li> <li>✓ How were the entry and exit strategies used? What worked well and what were the challenges? How could they have been improved?</li> </ul>	2 – early recovery /LRRD 3 – Complex contexts

EQ.	Questions	Sub-Questions	Case Study
4	How well aligned were ECHO's operations with ECHO's policies?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Which of ECHO's policies and related guidance were most relevant to this intervention? Why?</li> <li>✓ To what extent did ECHO's policies inform the design, implementation and monitoring of the intervention? What other policies and guidelines were used and to what extent did these align with or differ with ECHO's policies.</li> <li>✓ What were the challenges in applying ECHO's policies?</li> </ul>	1 – Resilience 2 – early recovery /LRRD 3 – Complex contexts
5	To what extent has ECHO's crisis response been well articulated to interventions of other actors addressing the same crises (such as Civil Protection, Development, local authorities, other donors)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ To what extent was there coherence between ECHO emergency operations and those of other actors (EU Civil Protection, EU Volunteers, host governments, UN agencies, other donors, etc.)?</li> <li>✓ Did ECHO take any specific measures to improve this coherence of their response to crises? If so, what were they, and what was the result?</li> <li>✓ How does ECHO mainly coordinate and with whom? What are their main strengths and weaknesses in comparison with other donor coordination?</li> </ul>	3 – Complex contexts
6	What was the EU Added Value of the ECHO actions in the region during the evaluation period?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ What are the areas where ECHO's adds significant value? Are these consistent with their priority objectives, including those relevant to resilience and advocacy?</li> <li>✓ Are there any areas where they are working where their value added is questionable? Are there any areas where ECHO should be supporting where they are not currently actively involved? Why?</li> <li>✓ Has the level of funding been appropriate in comparison to other donors? Why/why not?</li> <li>✓ To what extent has ECHO adapted their funding based on local capacities and support by other donors? How was this done? Was this done appropriately?</li> <li>✓ How flexible is ECHO's funding support? To what extent is this based on humanitarian need?</li> </ul>	1 – Resilience 2 – early recovery /LRRD 3 – Complex contexts
7	To what extent has ECHO achieved its objectives in contributing to satisfying	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ How useful is ECHO's strategy, guidance and other forms of support in responding to humanitarian crises and promoting resilience?</li> <li>✓ To what extent have output and outcome objectives been achieved? Why?</li> </ul>	1 – Resilience 3 – Complex contexts

EQ.	Questions	Sub-Questions	Case Study
	the humanitarian needs and building resilience?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Are affected communities aware of the objectives of ECHO's support? What community feedback mechanisms are in place and how do they function? What are perspectives of affected communities on support provided by ECHO?</li> <li>✓ How did local partners contribute to meeting objectives?</li> <li>✓ Has ECHO's advocacy or operations influenced other humanitarian operations (e.g. other donors, government policies, etc.)? If so, how and what happened?</li> </ul>	
8	How successful has ECHO been through its advocacy and communication measures in influencing other actors by direct and indirect advocacy on issues like humanitarian access and space, respect for IHL, addressing gaps in response, applying good practice, and carry out follow-up actions of ECHO's interventions? Is there an 'advocacy gap'?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ What are ECHO's advocacy and communications strategies in the country?</li> <li>✓ To what extent are these aligned with comparable partner strategies?</li> <li>✓ Have ECHO strategies been based on stakeholder mapping and intervention strategies? How?</li> <li>✓ How have these been used? What have been the results? Are there specific examples of good practice that could potentially be replicated?</li> <li>✓ Are there examples where these strategies have contributed to building national capacities? If so, what were the outcomes?</li> </ul>	3 – Complex contexts
9	To what extent were the ECHO humanitarian actions efficient?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ How has ECHO and their partners have tried to improve their efficiency? Has this been successful (give examples)? Are there areas where they need to improve efficiency?</li> <li>✓ How have local partners influenced efficiency?</li> <li>✓ Which aid transfer modalities (cash, in-kind) are ECHO supporting? How do they decide which ones to use? To what extent are their interventions coordinated with the government, the UN and/or other donors?</li> </ul>	1 – Resilience 2 – early recovery /LRRD 3 – Complex contexts
10	What was the Sustainability of the ECHO actions, i.e. how did they manage to	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ To what extent do implementation and exit strategies for ECHO-supported interventions promote sustainability? What is the likelihood that sustainability objectives will be achieved? Why?</li> </ul>	1 – Resilience 2 – early recovery /LRRD

EQ.	Questions	Sub-Questions	Case Study
	achieve lasting effects, including in strengthening national and local governments' long-term development policies and practices and preparedness for future crises?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ To what extent are partners and other external stakeholders, including affected communities, willing to promote sustainability? How?</li> <li>✓ What contribution, if any, have local partners made to sustainability?</li> <li>✓ With short-term interventions, to what extent do these take into longer term development, advocacy and protection issues?</li> <li>✓ If there is a need for continued financial support, how will/has this be accomplished? Is it adequate?</li> <li>✓ Have ECHO interventions contributed to environmental sustainability? If so, how? If not, why not?</li> <li>✓ Has ECHO contributed to building resilience and sustainability of national capacities? If so, how? What have been the main challenges? Are there ways that ECHO could improve its support to national capacities?</li> </ul>	3 – Complex contexts
	Utility of the evaluation: How can this evaluation be useful to stakeholders?	<p>What do you expect from this evaluation?</p> <p>How could be results of this evaluation be useful from your perspective?</p>	
	Additional resources: documents/key informants	Are there any relevant documents that it would be very important for us to review? Is there anyone else that you think we should really try and speak to?	
	Any other comments or suggestions?		



## **Annex 7 – Terms of Reference**

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EUROPEAN COMMISSION  
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR CIVIL PROTECTION AND HUMANITARIAN  
AID OPERATIONS - ECHO  
ECHO A – Emergency Management  
A/3 - Disaster Risk Reduction, EU Aid Volunteers

ANNEX I

### **Terms of Reference**

**For the evaluation of the European Commission's humanitarian  
interventions in India and Nepal, 2013-2017**

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<b>4.</b>	<b>.....</b>	<b>ERROR! BOOKMARK NOT DEFINED.</b>

## 1. EU HUMANITARIAN INTERVENTION

### 1.1. FRAMEWORK

1. The legal base for Humanitarian Aid is provided by Article 214<sup>156</sup> of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, and the Humanitarian Aid Regulation (HAR; No. 1257/96)<sup>157</sup>. The objectives of EU humanitarian assistance are outlined in these documents, and could – for evaluation purposes – be paraphrased as follows: *From a donor perspective and in coordination with other main humanitarian actors, to provide the right amount and type of aid, at the right time, and in an appropriate way, to the most vulnerable people affected by natural and/or manmade disasters, in order to save lives, alleviate suffering and maintain human dignity.*

2. The humanitarian aid budget is implemented through annual funding decisions adopted by the Commission, which are directly based on Article 15 of the HAR. In general, there are two types of financial decisions: The World Wide Decision (WWD), which is adopted in the context of non-emergency situations, and ad-hoc decisions which are adopted in emergency situations. The WWD defines inter alia the total budget, and budget available for specific objectives, mechanisms of flexibility. It is taken for humanitarian operations in each country/region at the time of establishing the budget. The funding decision also specifies potential partners, and possible areas of intervention. The operational information about crises and countries for which humanitarian aid should be granted is provided through '[Humanitarian Implementation Plans](#)' (HIPs). They are a reference for humanitarian actions covered by the WWD and contain an overview of humanitarian needs in a specific country at a specific moment of time.

3. DG ECHO-funded actions are implemented by **Humanitarian Partners** on the basis of framework agreements. These actions cover assistance, relief and protection operations to help people in third countries on a non-discriminatory basis, particularly the most vulnerable among them. Priority is put on people in developing countries, victims of natural disasters, man-made crises, such as wars and outbreaks of fighting, or exceptional situations or circumstances comparable to natural or man-made disasters. The actions should extend the time needed to meet the humanitarian requirements resulting from these different situations. Furthermore, the actions should comprise preparations for risks or prevention of disasters or comparable exceptional circumstances.

4. DG ECHO has a worldwide network of **field offices** that ensure adequate monitoring of projects funded, provide up-to-date analyses of existing and forecasted needs in a given country or region, contribute to the development of intervention strategies and policy development, provide technical support to EU funded operations, and facilitate donor coordination at field level.

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<sup>156</sup> <http://www.lisbon-treaty.org/wcm/the-lisbon-treaty/treaty-on-the-functioning-of-the-european-union-and-comments/part-5-external-action-by-the-union/title-3-cooperation-with-third-countries-and-humanitarian-aid/chapter-3-humanitarian-aid/502-article-214.html>

<sup>157</sup> Council Regulation 1257/96 concerning humanitarian aid

5. DG ECHO has developed a two-phase **framework for assessing and analysing needs** in specific countries and crises. This framework provides the evidence base for prioritisation of needs, funding allocation, and development of the HIPs.

The first phase is a global evaluation with two dimensions:

- Index for Risk Management (INFORM) is a tool based on national indicators and data which allows for a comparative analysis of countries to identify their level of risk to humanitarian crisis and disaster. It includes three dimensions of risk: natural and man-made hazards exposure, population vulnerability and national coping capacity. The INFORM data are also used for calculating a Crisis Index that identifies countries suffering from a natural disaster and/or conflict and/or hosting a large number of uprooted people.
- The Forgotten Crisis Assessment (FCA) identifies serious humanitarian crisis situations where the affected populations do not receive enough international aid or even none at all. These crises are characterised by low media coverage, a lack of donor interest (as measured through aid per capita) and a weak political commitment to solve the crisis, resulting in an insufficient presence of humanitarian actors.

The second phase of the framework focuses on context and response analysis:

- Integrated Analysis Framework (IAF) is an in-depth assessment carried out by European Commission's humanitarian experts. It consists of a qualitative assessment of humanitarian needs per single crisis, also taking into account the population affected and foreseeable trends.

## 1.2. SCOPE & RATIONALE

1. The European Union aims at being a **reference humanitarian donor**<sup>158</sup>, which provides a basis for its EU Added Value<sup>159</sup>. By this the European Commission ensures that its interventions are coherent with the **humanitarian principles**<sup>160</sup>, are relevant in targeting the most vulnerable beneficiaries, are duly informed by needs assessments, and promote resilience<sup>161</sup> building to the extent possible. The Commission also takes the role of – when necessary – leading, shaping, and coordinating the response to crises, while respecting the overall coordination role of the UN OCHA.

2. Interventions have a focus on **funding critical sectors and addressing gaps** in the global response, mobilising partners and supporting the overall capacity of the

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<sup>158</sup> I.e. a principled donor, providing leadership and shaping humanitarian response.

<sup>159</sup> Under the principle of subsidiarity (Article 5 Treaty on European Union), the EU should only act when the objectives can be better achieved by Union action rather than by potentially varying action by Member States. It requires consideration of the value and improvements which are caused by the EU rather than another party taking action.

<sup>160</sup> Humanity, Impartiality, Neutrality and Independence

<sup>161</sup> [The EU Approach to Resilience: learning from food security crises](#)

humanitarian system. As a consequence of the principled approach and addressing gaps in overall response, the EU intervenes in **forgotten crises**<sup>162</sup>, i.e. severe, protracted humanitarian crisis situations where affected populations are receiving no or insufficient international aid and where there is little possibility or no political commitment to solve the crisis, accompanied by a lack of media interest. This refers primarily to protracted conflict situations, but can also refer to crises resulting from the cumulative effect of recurring natural disasters, or, a combination of different factors. Although the bulk of EU funding went to major, recognised crisis like the Syrian, it allocated in 2015 almost 17% of its initial humanitarian aid budget to forgotten crises, including the Sahrawi refugees in Algeria, the Rohingya people in Myanmar/Burma and Bangladesh, and the Colombian refugees in Ecuador and Venezuela.

3. Actions funded comprise **assistance, relief and protection** operations on a non-discriminatory 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, such as wars and outbreaks of fighting, or exceptional situations or circumstances comparable to natural or man-made disasters. The actions should extend the time needed to meet the humanitarian requirements resulting from these different situations. EU humanitarian aid covers intervention areas such as:

- food and nutrition;
- shelter;
- health care;
- water and sanitation;
- protection; and
- education in emergencies.

4. In the frame of **Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR)**<sup>163</sup> systematic efforts are undertaken to prevent and prepare for adverse events. This involves analyses and management of causal factors of disasters in terms of reducing exposure to hazards, decreasing people vulnerability, wise management of land and the environment. DRR aims at strengthening resilience to shocks triggered by natural hazards. It also supports climate change adaptation. Humanitarian action should be based on risk assessments and focus on risk reduction while keeping a people-centred approach with special attention given to gender equality and inclusion of vulnerable groups. DG ECHO's DRR initiatives often take the shape of community-based demonstration projects ('seed money'), aiming at handing over successful results to other actors (governments, development and humanitarian) for replication and scaling-up. Thus, DG ECHO must ensure vertical and horizontal linkages to relevant actors that are mandated and capable of exploiting those results.

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<sup>162</sup> See also [http://ec.europa.eu/echo/what/humanitarian-aid/needs-assessments\\_en](http://ec.europa.eu/echo/what/humanitarian-aid/needs-assessments_en)

<sup>163</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/policies/prevention\\_preparedness/DRR\\_thematic\\_policy\\_doc.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/policies/prevention_preparedness/DRR_thematic_policy_doc.pdf)

5. A complementary component is **humanitarian advocacy**, by which DG ECHO strives to influence other actors on topics such as humanitarian access, respect of International Humanitarian Law, adherence to the Humanitarian Principles and Good Humanitarian Donorship, and uptake of project results in the area of Disaster Risk Reduction (etc.).

## 2. CONTEXT OF THE EVALUATION

### 2.1. INDIA

The country is exposed to regular hydro-meteorological and geo-physical disasters, protracted conflicts (with displacement of people and violations of International Humanitarian Law), and malnutrition – one third of the world's malnourished children live in India, with an estimated mortality of 500,000 – 1 million/year. Overall, floods, cyclones, earthquakes, droughts and landslides have inflicted tremendous suffering on the people of India over the years. Low castes and tribal populations, whose social and economic indicators lag behind national averages, are most impacted. This was again demonstrated during the 2013 Cyclone Phailin in Odisha, which affected hundreds of thousands of people.

Frequent natural disasters and situations of instability in the state of Jammu and Kashmir, as well as in central and north-eastern India, generate significant humanitarian needs among the country's most vulnerable populations. Over 700 000 of the state's residents, who have witnessed violence for years, bear symptoms of depression and post-traumatic stress. Many also need livelihood support, as insecurity hampers economic activities.

Central India, particularly southern Chhattisgarh, has seen sporadic bursts of violence between Maoist insurgents and security forces in recent years. Indigenous people living in remote forests have been the most affected. Such instability limits their access to already inadequate basic services, including health care.

North-east India is a quagmire of insurgencies. The resulting violence affects thousands of people. Ethnic tensions over land rights flare up time and again. According to the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, an estimated 616 000 people were displaced in India as a result of armed conflict and inter-communal violence as of April 2015. The prolonged conflict has disrupted access to education for thousands of children who are currently living in relief camps. Lack of access to health care services and potential child labour and sexual exploitation are another major concern.

To address the problems, the government of India has built capacity for preparedness and response to humanitarian crises, including the world's largest child nutrition programme. India rarely requests international assistance for humanitarian crises, and access to certain crisis-affected areas could be difficult for international humanitarian workers.

### 2.2. NEPAL

During the period of 2013-2017 the humanitarian crises in Nepal related largely to natural disasters (earthquakes, floods, etc.) and the situation of the Bhutanese refugees.

Nepal faces numerous natural disasters every year. Around 1 000 people are killed yearly by landslides and floods during the monsoon season. The threat of earthquakes, glacial lake outbursts, avalanches as well as cold and heat waves always looms over the country. Two devastating earthquakes struck central Nepal in April and May 2015. Almost 9 000 people died, over 22 000 were injured and more than 600 000 houses were destroyed.

Around 88% of the Bhutanese refugees have now been resettled, with some 12,600 people remaining in two camps in Nepal.

The political uncertainty following the 10-year Maoist insurgency that ended in 2006 continues. A new Constituent Assembly elected in the November 2013 elections eventually resumed the task of finalising the country's constitution, which was adopted in mid-2015.

Although the capacity of Nepal to respond to natural disasters has improved, its response to major disasters remains problematic.

### 3. ECHO RESPONSE

#### 3.1. INDIA

The European Commission has been present in India since 1995 and has responded to all major emergencies, including the Orissa cyclone in 1999, the Gujarat earthquake in 2001, the Tsunami in 2004, the Jammu and Kashmir earthquake in 2005, the Bihar floods in 2008 and Cyclone Phailin in 2013. The EU's total humanitarian assistance to India to date exceeds €128.9 million.

Interventions during the evaluation period focused on food assistance, health services, and protection, including in contexts of forgotten crises such as the conflicts in Jammu and Kashmir, districts of central India, and in the north-eastern states, as well as on relief assistance following several major natural disasters. The allocated EU budget was approximately **EUR 21 million for the period 2013-2017**. The interventions have been gradually phased out, and **no funding** has been allocated in 2017.

In 2016, the Commission has provided €500.000 to fund a project focusing on access to education for displaced children in conflict-torn Assam. The funds will also be used to deliver much-needed health care assistance and increased protection to affected children.

In 2015, €3.4 million was allocated to provide psycho-social support and livelihood means to people affected by conflict in Jammu and Kashmir and the north-eastern states, as well as health and protection services to communities in remote settlements in Chhattisgarh and Andhra Pradesh.

Between 2001 and 2014, as part of its Disaster Preparedness Programme (DIPECHO), the Commission released more than €8 million to support vulnerable communities in reducing the impact of floods, cyclones and other natural disasters through community-based initiatives, such as the creation of early warning systems and the building of adapted

physical infrastructure. Over the years, disaster risk reduction initiatives have been integrated in all humanitarian response programming.

### 3.2. NEPAL

Overall, the interventions during the evaluation period focused on DRR, shelter, and food assistance. The allocated budget from the EU was approximately **EUR 29 million for the period 2013-2017**, whereof 61% was spent in 2015 when the earthquake took place, and in 2017 the allocations have basically gone back to the pre-2015 level.

A significant part of the European Commission's humanitarian assistance to Nepal goes towards helping communities resist, withstand and cope against natural disasters through the creation of community-based rescue mechanisms, disaster-resilient infrastructure, early warning systems and flood management. The funding also helps enhance the capacity of the medical community to cope with mass casualty situations that could be provoked by an earthquake through retro-fitting of hospitals in Kathmandu and stockpiling of fuels and surgical kits.

In response to the 2015 earthquake, the European Commission released €16.4 million to help address the most urgent humanitarian needs, including clean water, medicine, emergency shelter and telecommunications. The European Commission aid to the earthquake victims totalled about €150 million, including funds for early recovery and rehabilitation. This funding came in addition to the deployment of European Commission's humanitarian aid and civil protection experts to the crisis area, and to the search and rescue and first-aid teams, as well as relief items, sent from EU Member States through the EU Civil Protection Mechanism. The European Commission's Emergency Response Coordination Centre monitored developments on a 24/7 basis and coordinated support from Europe.

Nepal is one of the flagship countries of the EU's [Action Plan for Resilience in Crisis Prone Countries 2013-2020](#).

## 4. PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION

### 4.1. PURPOSE AND GENERAL SCOPE

Based on Regulation (EC) 1257/96 and the EU Financial Regulation, the purpose of this Request for Services is to have an independent overall evaluation of the ECHO actions in India and Nepal during the period 2013-2017, which should feed into the already ongoing comprehensive evaluation of the European Commission's humanitarian aid, 2012-2016.

To be particularly noted is that:

- The contexts of the two countries are highly **disparate**, which means that conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation must – to a certain extent – be provided separately for the two countries;



- The **timetable** of the current evaluation must be adapted to that of the above-mentioned comprehensive evaluation to ensure that results are available when needed. Furthermore, the evaluators of the two exercises must **liaise** for a timely exchange of the relevant information. Further details regarding timing are provided under section 8 below.

Specifically, the evaluation should provide:

- A comprehensive, retrospective assessment of DG ECHO's strategy/approach (as formalised by the Humanitarian Implementation Plans) covering the evaluation issues of **relevance, coherence, EU Added Value, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability**;
- A maximum of **5 prospective, strategic recommendations** to support ECHO's future funding decisions. These strategic recommendations could possibly be supported by further, related, operational recommendations.

The main users of the evaluation report include *inter alia* ECHO staff at HQ, regional and country level, national and regional stakeholders, the participating implementing partners, and other humanitarian and development donors and agencies.

## 4.2. EVALUATION QUESTIONS

The conclusions of the evaluation will be presented in the report in the form of evidence-based, reasoned answers to the evaluation questions presented below. These questions should be further tailored to by the Evaluator, and finally agreed with the Steering Group in the inception phase. Relevant focal issues for each country to be examined in the context of each evaluation question will be discussed and agreed at that stage. Although responses to some questions may be aligned for India and Nepal, the evaluator should be prepared to provide separate responses for the two countries considering the difference of contexts.

### Relevance

1. To what extent have needs assessments been of good quality?
2. What was the fit between needs assessments and projects funded?
3. To what extent has DG ECHO ensured having put in place and implemented appropriate entry and exit strategies for its interventions?

### Coherence

4. How well aligned were ECHO's operations with ECHO's policies?;

5. To what extent has ECHO's crisis response been well articulated to interventions of other actors addressing the same crises (such as Civil Protection, Development, local authorities)?

### **EU Added Value**

6. What was the EU Added Value of the ECHO actions in the region during the evaluation period? Issues to consider are e.g. how ECHO has drawn on its specific role and mandate to create a specific added value, which could/would not be achieved by other actors;

### **Effectiveness**

7. To what extent has ECHO achieved its objectives in contributing to satisfying the humanitarian needs and building resilience?
8. How successful has ECHO been through its advocacy and communication measures in influencing other actors by direct and indirect advocacy on issues like humanitarian access and space, respect for IHL, addressing gaps in response, applying good practice, and carry out follow-up actions of ECHO's interventions? Is there an 'advocacy gap'?

### **Efficiency**

9. To what extent were the ECHO humanitarian actions efficient? Issues to consider are e.g. use of synergies, avoiding duplications, choice of transfer modalities, and efficiency of management and monitoring processes.

### **Sustainability/Connectedness**

10. What was the Sustainability of the ECHO actions, i.e. how did they manage to achieve lasting effects, including in strengthening national and local governments' long-term development policies and practices and preparedness for future crises? Issues to consider are e.g. contribution to LRRD and Resilience. What could be further done (enabling factors, tools, mechanism, change in strategy, etc.) to increase the uptake of results and lessons learned from relief projects into development planning/programming?

## **4.3. SUPPLEMENTARY TASKS**

The Contractor should:

- Reconstruct the **intervention logic** for the ECHO-funded actions in the region. This should clarify how each type of ECHO intervention contributes resilience building, and the roles of other actors (beneficiary governments, development actors) having the same/similar objectives;

- Perform a selection of at least three **case studies** on themes relevant for this evaluation. The topics will be agreed with the ISG in the Inception phase, and the tenderer may provide a proposal in the offer;
- On the basis of the research carried out for responding to the evaluation questions, and at a general level, identify the main factors **limiting the success of the projects** funded in the countries over the period covered by the evaluation. *COMMENT: This relates to an audit recommendation; success-limiting factors should be identified in order to develop indicators for focused monitoring, with the overall purpose of strengthening the monitoring system;*
- Provide a statement about the **validity of the evaluation results**, i.e. to what extent it has been possible to provide reliable statements on all essential aspects of the intervention examined. Issues to be referred to may include scoping of the evaluation exercise, availability of data, unexpected problems encountered in the evaluation process, proportionality between budget and objectives of the assignment, etc.;
- Make a proposal for the **dissemination** of the evaluation results;
- Provide a French **translation** (in addition to the English version) of the executive summary of the Final Report;
- Provide an **abstract** of the evaluation of no more than 200 words.

## 5. METHODOLOGY AND PROJECT PHASES

In their offer, the bidders must describe the methodological approach they propose in order to address the evaluation questions listed above, as well as the other tasks.

This will include a proposal for indicative **judgment criteria**<sup>164</sup> that they may consider useful for addressing each evaluation question. The judgement criteria, as well as the information sources to be used in addressing these criteria, will be discussed and validated by the Commission during the desk phase.

To the extent possible the methodology should promote the participation in the evaluation exercise of all actors concerned, including beneficiaries and local communities when relevant and feasible.

The conclusions of the evaluation must be presented in a transparent way, with clear references to the sources on which they are based.

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<sup>164</sup> A judgement criterion specifies an aspect of the evaluated intervention that will allow its merits or success to be assessed. E.g., if the question is "To what extent has DG ECHO assistance, both overall and by sector been appropriate and impacted positively the targeted population?", a general judgement criterion might be "Assistance goes to the people most in need of assistance". In developing judgment criteria, the tenderers may make use of existing methodological, technical or political guidance provided by actors in the field of Humanitarian Assistance such as HAP, the Sphere Project, GHD, etc.

## Deliverables

Within the framework of the present evaluation, the contractors will produce the following deliverables, in accordance with the schedule defined in this chapter:

1. Inception Report
2. Progress Report
3. Report on preliminary conclusions
4. Final Report + annexes

## Meetings

It is expected that the contractor participate in **three** meetings in Brussels with the evaluation Steering Group, as specified below. For these meetings **minutes should be drafted by the contractor**, to be agreed among the participants.

### 5.1. INCEPTION PHASE

The inception phase starts from the moment the contract is signed. During the inception phase the evaluation team will analyse the intervention logic on the basis of official documents and propose the evaluation questions and judgment criteria. The team then will specify the indicators, and develop the final definition of the methodology and the schedule for the field visits.

**No kick-off meeting** is planned for this evaluation. Necessary initial exchanges will instead be carried out by phone and email.

### Inception report

The Inception Report will be produced after the kick-off meeting and will contain, at a minimum, the following elements:

- a finalised evaluation framework covering all evaluation questions;
- an intervention logic;
- A complete research framework, including the field visits;
- a description of the methodology for data collection and analysis, including the chain of reasoning for responding to the evaluation questions, and indicating limitations;
- draft questionnaires and interview guides; and
- a final detailed work plan and timetable.

### Inception meeting

One week after the submission of the Inception report the evaluation team will present its overall approach in the Inception Meeting which will take place in Brussels at DG ECHO

headquarters with the relevant Commission staff. The Inception report will be discussed and the evaluation team will have the possibility to ask for additional information and/or clarification on the requirements of the ToR, as well as to obtain relevant security instructions and possibly technical support relative to the execution of the tasks. The Inception Report will be revised if needed according to the mutually agreed amendments and approved by the Commission.

## 5.2. RESEARCH PHASE

The **Desk and Field Phases** will be merged for this evaluation, and the desk and field research will to a certain extent have to be carried out in parallel. The research phase will cover:

- Collection and assessment of secondary data;
- Meetings with Commission staff, other donors, organisations and partners, as appropriate;
- Field visits to the two countries, of which the details will be discussed and agreed with the Commission in the Inception phase. The travel and accommodation arrangements, the organisation of meetings, and the securing of visas will remain the sole responsibility of the contractor. At the end of the mission the consultants should meet with the Delegation, DG ECHO's experts and DG ECHO's partners for discussion of observations arising from the evaluation. The evaluation team is required to share their findings with the NGOs/IOs concerned to allow them to comment upon. The purpose is to promote dialogue, mutual learning and ownership and to build capacity of the Commission's partners.

A **Progress Report** should be delivered to the Commission, covering the results of the Research phase. The format and contents are to be discussed and agreed in the Inception Phase.

A meeting will be organized in Brussels to present the Progress Report to the Steering Committee. The evaluator will duly consider all comments from the Steering Committee, as a condition for approval. In case of disagreement, the evaluator will provide an argued reply explaining why a certain comment cannot be accepted.

## 5.3. SYNTHESIS PHASE

**Report on preliminary conclusions:** This report must be delivered in end-September for the purpose of providing timely inputs for DG ECHO's comprehensive evaluation on humanitarian aid. The exact format and contents of this report will be discussed and agreed with the Commission in the Inception phase.

**Draft Final Report:** Should deliver the results of all tasks covered by these Terms of Reference, and must be clear enough for any potential reader to understand.

The structure of the report should follow a broad classification into three parts:

- **Executive Summary:** It sets out, in no more than 5 pages, a summary of the evaluation's main conclusions and the supporting main evidence;
- **Main body:** The main report must be limited to 50 pages and present, in full, the results of the analyses and conclusions arising from the evaluation. It must also contain a description of the subject evaluated, the context of the evaluation, and the methodology used; and
- **Annexes:** These must collate the technical details of the evaluation, and must include the Terms of Reference, questionnaire templates, interview guides, any additional tables or graphics, and references and a full quotation of all sources.

### **Draft Report Meeting**

A **meeting** will be organised in Brussels after the submission of the first draft final report. The evaluator will make a PowerPoint presentation to the Steering Committee on the main findings, conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation. The date for the meeting will be agreed between the Steering Committee and the evaluator. The Steering Committee will provide comments to the draft final report. The comments should be taken into account in the final report.

While finalising the report and its annexes, the evaluators shall always highlight changes (using track changes) and modifications introduced as resulting from the meeting and the comments received from DG ECHO Evaluation Sector and the Steering Committee.

In case of disagreement, the evaluator will provide an argued reply explaining why a certain comment cannot be accepted. In case of substantial disagreements, the evaluator may be called for another meeting in Brussels to further discuss the subject of disagreement. The expenses for such a meeting will be covered by the existing budget of the Specific Contract.

### ***Final Report***

On the basis of the comments made by the Steering Committee, the evaluator shall make appropriate amendments, insofar as these do not interfere with the independence of the evaluator in respect of the conclusions they have reached and the recommendations made. The Executive Summary should be translated into French and Portuguese by a professional translator, once it has been approved by the Steering Committee.

The Final Report should be accompanied by a PowerPoint presentation in electronic form, covering the main conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation. The evaluator may be requested to present the evaluation results once in Brussels to DG ECHO's staff and / or stakeholders.

For a further detailed description of the format required for the Final Report (incl. EU Bookshop requirements), see Annex.

#### 5.4. DISSEMINATION AND FOLLOW-UP PHASE

The evaluation report is an important working tool for DG ECHO, and once finalised it will be published in the public domain on the Internet. Its use is intended for DG ECHO's operational and policy staff, EU Member States and citizens, and other international and national actors.

Following the approval of the Final Report, DG ECHO will proceed with the dissemination and follow-up of the results of the evaluation.

#### 6. MANAGEMENT AND SUPERVISION OF THE EVALUATION

The Evaluation Sector of DG ECHO is responsible for the management and the monitoring of the evaluation, in consultation with the Unit(s) responsible for the evaluation subject. The DG ECHO Evaluation Sector, and in particular the internal manager assigned to the evaluation, should therefore always be kept informed and consulted by the evaluator and copied on all correspondence with other DG ECHO staff.

The DG ECHO Evaluation manager is the contact person for the evaluator and shall assist the team during their mission in tasks such as providing documents and facilitating contacts.

A Steering Committee, made up of Commission staff involved in the activity evaluated, will provide general assistance to and feedback on the evaluation exercise, and discuss the conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation.

#### 7. AMOUNT OF THE CONTRACT

The maximum budget allocated to this study is **200 000 €**.

#### 8. TIMETABLE

The duration of the contract is **7 months** starting from **1 June 2017**.

The evaluation starts after the contract has been signed by both parties, and no expenses may be incurred before that. The main part of the existing relevant documents will be provided after the signature of the contract.

The timing of the following milestones is **indicative**:

Timing	Report	Meeting
T+3 weeks	Draft Inception Report	
T+4 weeks		Inception meeting
T+13 weeks	Draft Progress Report	
T+14 weeks		Progress Report meeting
T+17	Report on preliminary conclusions	
T+24 weeks	Draft Final Report	
T+25 weeks		Draft Final Report meeting
T+ 28 weeks	Final Report	



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