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DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR HUMANITARIAN AID - ECHO

**HUMANITARIAN AID  
for  
conflict-affected people and the Bhutanese refugees in  
NEPAL**

**GLOBAL PLAN 2006**

**Humanitarian Aid Committee  
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## *Table of contents*

### *Explanatory Memorandum*

<b>1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2. CONTEXT AND SITUATION.....</b>	<b>3</b>
2.1. GENERAL CONTEXT .....	3
2.2. CURRENT SITUATION .....	5
<b>3. IDENTIFICATION AND ASSESSMENT OF HUMANITARIAN NEEDS .....</b>	<b>7</b>
3.1. RURAL POPULATION OF REMOTE HILLY DISTRICTS .....	7
3.2. BHUTANESE REFUGEES: FOOD AID .....	10
<b>4. PROPOSED DG ECHO STRATEGY .....</b>	<b>11</b>
4.1. COHERENCE WITH DG ECHO'S OVERALL STRATEGIC PRIORITIES.....	11
4.2. IMPACT OF PREVIOUS HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE .....	11
4.3. COORDINATION WITH ACTIVITIES OF OTHER DONORS AND INSTITUTIONS.....	12
4.4. RISK ASSESSMENT AND ASSUMPTIONS .....	12
4.5. DG ECHO STRATEGY .....	14
4.6. DURATION .....	17
4.7. AMOUNT OF DECISION AND STRATEGIC PROGRAMMING MATRIX .....	17
<b>5. EVALUATION .....</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>6. BUDGET IMPACT ARTICLE .....</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>7. ANNEXES .....</b>	<b>22</b>
ANNEX 1: STATISTICS ON THE HUMANITARIAN SITUATION .....	23
ANNEX 2: MAP OF COUNTRY AND LOCATION OF DG ECHO PREVIOUS OPERATIONS.....	24
ANNEX 3: LIST OF DG ECHO'S PREVIOUS OPERATIONS.....	25
ANNEX 4: OTHER DONORS' ASSISTANCE.....	26
ANNEX 5: LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS.....	27
<b>DECISION OF THE COMMISSION .....</b>	<b>28</b>
ANNEX: BREAKDOWN OF ALLOCATIONS BY SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES .....	30

## **1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Nepal, the poorest country in South Asia, has been the theatre of two forgotten crises for more than ten years.

Since the proclamation of the "Peoples' war" by Maoist insurgency groups in 1996, it is estimated that the ten-year insurgency has killed nearly 13,000 people to date, with a sharp increase since 2002 and an escalation from both sides since the King assumed full executive powers on 1 February 2005. Moreover, violence and human rights abuses by both sides has led to increased migration of young men to India and to the fertile plain of the Terai, leaving the women, children and elderly of the rural hilly districts caught in the middle of the conflict. This particularly affects landless families or those with little land, as local sources of work or income have been significantly affected by the conflict, who are therefore becoming food insecure. Additionally, provision of basic health, sanitation and educational services is poor and sometimes absent in the most remote areas of these districts. These vulnerable populations trapped in rural and remote areas have been the main target of DG ECHO<sup>1</sup> assistance. Although people have been displaced because of the conflict, for which an unconfirmed figure of minimum 200,000 people has been given, it is extremely difficult to differentiate conflict-affected displacement from the traditional economic migration to the Terai and India.

Nepal is also facing another humanitarian crisis of the more than 107,000 Bhutanese refugees who have been living in camps in two eastern districts of Nepal since the early nineties with no political solution in sight. These refugees do not have the right to work or to own land in Nepal and therefore rely almost entirely on external assistance to survive.

DG ECHO is one of the major humanitarian donors in Nepal, with interventions in favour of the Bhutanese refugees starting as early as 1995. The strategy for 2006 builds on DG ECHO's interventions since 2002, the principal objective being to provide assistance to the rural population of Nepal affected by the conflict and to Bhutanese refugees.

Under this Global Plan at least 170,000 people living in the remote rural districts of Nepal will receive protection assistance and will see their living conditions improved. Also, around 107,000 Bhutanese refugees in seven camps in South East Nepal will benefit from DG ECHO's intervention. In total more than 270,000 persons will be assisted.

This Global Plan proposes humanitarian operations for a total amount of EUR 5 million. Projects will have an average duration of 12 months within an 18-month decision implementation period.

## **2. CONTEXT AND SITUATION**

### **2.1. General context**

Landlocked between China and India, mountainous with three physically diverse broad geographical areas: Terai Region in the south; the central Hill Region; and the high

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<sup>1</sup> Directorate-General for Humanitarian Aid – ECHO.

Himalayas, the Kingdom of Nepal is a constitutional monarchy. Nepal is one of the world's poorest countries. Almost 90% of its 25 million inhabitants live in rural areas, and about 42% of them live below the poverty line<sup>2</sup>. Maternal mortality is one of the highest in the world at 415 per 100,000 live births and adult literacy among the lowest at less than 60%.

Since the proclamation of the "Peoples' war" by Maoist insurgency groups in 1996, it is estimated that the ten-year insurgency has killed nearly 13,000 people to date, including 10,800 since 2002 and nearly 1,600 in 2005<sup>3</sup>. It is almost impossible to verify casualty figures independently, as the rebels never respond to government claims on the number of casualties inflicted to the insurgents. Battles are usually fought in remote, inaccessible areas, making it very difficult to confirm what has actually taken place.

The government has maintained control of cities and district capitals, but not of the rural areas in most of the 75 districts of Nepal. Widespread human rights violations, including extrajudicial executions and deliberate and unlawful killings, disappearances, torture and deaths in custody, arbitrary arrest and detention, continue to be perpetrated by both the Maoist insurgents and the security forces<sup>4</sup>.

Moreover, Nepal is also facing another forgotten crisis. Beginning in 1990 and peaking in mid 1992, asylum seekers arrived from southern Bhutan to the far South Eastern corner of Nepal, where they have been accommodated in camps since 1992. Following the change of Bhutanese law on nationality, most of these people were forced to leave Bhutan and denied citizenship, as well as the right to land ownership. About 80,000 people initially settled in seven camps, but over the past twelve years their number has increased to approximately 106,800 due mainly to the birth rate<sup>5</sup>. Over 21,000 children have been born in the camps and are under 10 years old. Nepal however considers them Bhutanese citizens, and does not wish to support their resettlement within Nepal because of the already high land pressure.

In December 2000, the terms of reference for a joint verification exercise were adopted by the two countries. Verification is to be followed by "harmonisation" and "categorisation" of all families in the camps before envisaging "repatriation".

The verification process started in late March 2001 in one camp only (Khudunabari camp), at a very slow pace (about 15 family cases were processed each day), and ended on 14 December 2001 (12,090 persons). The official purpose of the exercise was to determine who can be considered as a "real" Bhutanese citizen and thus entitled to return. Between March 2001 and early 2003, the verification in the remaining six camps was suspended.

However before the donor meeting on Bhutan in February 2003, Bhutan announced that the verification process would resume and the Joint Verification Team (JVT) started verifying the 600 refugees who were absent during the process completed in December

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<sup>2</sup> 2005 Human Development Index (HDI) rank : 136 out of 177. Source: UNDP

<sup>3</sup> Source: Informal Sector Service Centre (INSEC). <http://www.inseconline.org>

<sup>4</sup> See for example Amnesty International annual report 2005. On 12 April 2005, Nepal accepted the establishment of an office of the United Nation's Office of the Commissioner for Human Rights (UNOHCHR) and the subsequent deployment of international monitors to investigate human rights abuses and violations of International Humanitarian Law.

<sup>5</sup> WFP/UNHCR Joint Assessment Mission (JAM), draft Report 2004 (03.2005).

2001. The results of the JVT, which classified the refugees of Khudunabari camp in four categories, were the following:

- Category I – Bhutanese citizens who were forcibly expelled: 2.4%;
- Category II – Bhutanese citizens having voluntarily emigrated: 70.55%;
- Category III – Non-Bhutanese: 24.2%;
- Category IV – Bhutanese citizens with a criminal record: 2.4%.

## **2.2. Current situation**

There has been an escalation in Maoist violence since the King dismissed the government, and assumed full executive powers in February 2005.

In December 2005, the Maoists and seven political parties announced an agreement in which the Maoists committed to give up violence in due course and both sides agreed to go for a constituent assembly. However, the ceasefire unilaterally declared by the Maoists on 3 September 2005, during which violence continued although on a more limited scale, ended on 3 January 2006, and battles in remote areas, political murders, “bandhs” (strikes declared by the insurgents) restarted on a larger scale, notably during the preparation of the municipal elections held on 8 February. These elections were boycotted by the political parties and resulted in a very low voter turnout (20%) and less than 50% of available seats covered by eligible candidates. In a statement dated 18 February 2006, the Maoists announced new protest programmes, including restriction of vehicle movements and blockades, mainly in Kathmandu valley and district, zonal and regional headquarters, starting from 14 March, and a countrywide bandh (transportation, industries, markets, educational institutions and offices) starting from 3 April for an indefinite period. Between 6 and 24 April, the seven alliance parties conducted a general strike aimed at restoring the parliament to plan for a constituent assembly. On 24 April, the King accepted to reinstate the House of Representatives which was dissolved on 22 May 2002. Subsequently the parties recommended the designation of a new prime minister and the Maoist movement announced a three-month unilateral ceasefire on 27 April.

It is difficult to provide an accurate estimate of the number of IDPs because of the conflict, especially as that there is no legal framework to identify them. In a DG ECHO mission in November 2005, The UN coordinator provided the following figures: 5,000 IDPs registered by the government, 23,000 IDPs directly linked to the conflict according to the Royal Nepalese Army (RNA). The Global IDP database of the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) mentions 200,000 IDPs and the Minister of Finance indicated in June 2005 that the number ranged from 300,000 to 600,000. There has always been a seasonal migration from the hilly districts to the fertile plains of the Terai and to India. It is however acknowledged that the phenomenon has been accentuated and the mission visited the biggest camp in Rajhena near Nepalgang in the Mid Western Region, with 1,000 inhabitants. The number of clearly identified IDPs is not very high at the moment and it is difficult to distinguish between economic migration and migration due to fear of the conflict, with the exception of the first Maoists targets who were the administration’s representatives and fled to the regional capitals or Kathmandu<sup>6</sup>. Both factors are probably involved in the decision of IDPs to leave their home.

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<sup>6</sup> See for example the draft report of a Joint inter agency (UNHCR, UNICEF, UNOCHA, UNOHCHR and NRC) mission to the Mid-Western region conducted in December 2005.

With regard to the Bhutanese refugees, the situation is one of deadlock, and there is no likelihood of return in the foreseeable future. The Bhutanese government does not want the refugees to return, the government of Nepal will not allow closure of the camps and local integration, and has so far discouraged a formal head count registration procedure. As a result the camps are likely to stay in place, and there will be a continuing need to assist the refugees. The head count is resisted by the government of Nepal on the grounds that this will encourage the government of Bhutan to believe that they accept the permanence of the refugees within Nepal. In late 2004, the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) gained agreement, in principle, from the government of Nepal to undertake a head count in the camps<sup>7</sup>, but this does not represent formal or official verification, and in any case, the government has imposed further conditions and UNHCR has thus far been prevented from initiating the exercise on the ground<sup>8</sup>.

With regard to the estimated 106,800 Bhutanese refugees, 294 "Category I" refugees in Khudanabari camp have been verified for return, but even these have not yet been accepted by Bhutan. Bhutan has indicated that refugees classified in category II willing to return will have to re-apply for Bhutanese citizenship once in Bhutan and will have to wait at least two years for a response, without access to land. The government of Nepal, supported by UNHCR, insists on a "comprehensive solution" fearing that anything less will result in them being left with a case-load of elderly, infirm, illiterate refugees (this applies to both repatriation to Bhutan, and to third party resettlement).

The verification process was again suspended in December 2004, when an assessment team from Bhutan was attacked in Khudunabari camp; since then the government of Bhutan has continued to cite security concerns as the reason for their unwillingness to send their part of the verification team.

In October 2005, for the first time ever, the United Nations decided to launch a Consolidated Appeal Process (CAP) for Nepal for the period October 2005 to December 2006. However, at the last minute the government decided not to endorse the CAP, and therefore it was not officially launched. However, it resulted in a first comprehensive Consolidated Humanitarian Action Plan (CHAP), based on the conclusion that "many of the traditional indicators of a humanitarian crisis have been at what may have been considered 'emergency' levels for generations, though with structural origins. The conflict has exacerbated the situation, and development progress has slowed down, in some cases even been undone"<sup>9</sup>.

The CHAP is a tentative attempt to gather the various humanitarian activities implemented in Nepal in one document. It has also been successful in bringing Nepal and its two forgotten crises to the forefront of international attention. It includes not only humanitarian but also human rights programmes through UNOHCHR for an amount of USD12 million (of a total CAP of USD 64.5 million), as well as disaster preparedness. As of 1 March 2006, the CAP was only 21% funded. DG ECHO is already contributing

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<sup>7</sup> UNHCR have the appropriate system in place to deliver on this, under DG ECHO's Thematic Funding contract ECHO/THM/210/2003/02002 "Project Profile".

<sup>8</sup> The 2004 JAM draft report specifically recommends the government of Nepal to allow UNHCR to undertake the registration/profiling exercise as soon as possible.

<sup>9</sup> Source: Nepal CAP 2005, page 16.

to the CAP through its 2005 Funding Decision which supports two programmes carried out by the World Food Programme (WFP): Protecting Livelihood in Crisis (PLIC) and food aid programme to the Bhutanese refugees. The CHAP 2005-2006 will be reviewed in May 2006 and it is likely that a new CHAP/CAP for 2007 will be elaborated during the second semester of 2006.

### **3. IDENTIFICATION AND ASSESSMENT OF HUMANITARIAN NEEDS**

#### **3.1. Rural population of remote hilly districts**

##### ***3.1.1 Protection***

The entire civilian population of Nepal can be considered to be affected by the conflict. Both parties have indicated their willingness to respect obligations to protect civilians. Nonetheless summary executions, kidnappings, assassinations and extortions still regularly occur. The phenomenon of disappearances is also a serious concern. Civilians may be forced to cooperate by one side and then punished for collaboration by the other.

In areas where normal lines of communication have been disrupted by fighting, family members are not able to maintain contact. In 2002, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) started to develop its Red Cross message system in areas where postal and telephone systems stopped functioning (more than 3,000 messages exchanged in 2005). The system is not yet very well known as the needs have only become apparent with the recent escalation in the conflict. Training for members of the Nepalese Red Cross Society is therefore necessary.

Since the resurgence of fighting in August 2003, the ICRC has registered an annual average of over 1,500 detainees held by the police. Also since the end of 2002, the ICRC has been visiting detainees held by the Royal Nepalese Army (RNA), registering nearly 600 detainees. However, given repeated problems concerning these visits, ICRC had temporarily ceased seeking access to detainees held by the RNA authorities and a working group has been established with high-ranking members of the RNA to solve the issue. ICRC resumed visits to detainees held in RNA barracks only in March 2006<sup>10</sup>. The organisation has also worked to rebuild contacts with CPN-Maoist representatives in order to approach them regarding access to detainees they may be holding. But, according to ICRC, information is unavailable about numbers or about the conditions of their detention.

Notwithstanding the training in International Humanitarian Law (IHL) provided by the RNA to its senior officers, there is a need for the general officers to enforce adherence to IHL throughout the ranks. This includes training down to the lowest level.

It seems also that both parties have made the situation worse for children, many of whom have been victims of abduction, interrogation, sexual abuse and physical torture, leading to children fleeing their villages and working in exploitative conditions in urban areas to survive. They are also the main victims of explosive devices, representing 61% of the 125 victims registered in 2005. This proportion is among the highest in the world, compared for example with 58% in Laos and 50% in Afghanistan<sup>11</sup>. They also flee to

<sup>10</sup> Source: ICRC, 17/06/2005 and 10/03/2006.

<sup>11</sup> Source: United Nations Children's Funds (UNICEF) media report on explosions, 23/02/2006.

India and leave schools to live in hostile conditions without any certainty about their future. The number of working children has increased in part because of the conditions created by the current insurgency and it is expected that about 10,000 to 15,000 children will be displaced to urban areas in 2005<sup>12</sup>.

### **3.1.2 Health**

Theoretically, health posts are linked to district hospitals, the highest medical institutions in the district, but in reality, this system is often dysfunctional. The national reference hospital is the Kathmandu hospital and there are five regional hospitals with a theoretical capacity of 200 beds or more. The district hospitals control the Village Development Committee (VDC<sup>13</sup>) health centres. These centres represent the basic healthcare structures. In reality, regional hospitals in the Far Western and the Mid Western regions are not fulfilling their function and are acting as district hospitals only. Moreover, many district hospitals are poorly maintained and understaffed. Similar weaknesses are also found in the health centres and posts and sub-posts of the districts: lack of qualified and/or trained personnel, lack of medicine and poorly maintained buildings. Pharmaceutical supplies are often exhausted during the first few months of the fiscal year, after which only diagnostic activities take place.

Other serious problems facing the healthcare system are the disproportionate concentration of medical facilities and personnel in urban and metropolitan areas, and a strong aversion among doctors, in particular, to postings to rural areas where living conditions are lower compared with the metropolitan standard. There are about 1,000 medical doctors in Nepal, the majority of whom are located in Kathmandu.

The medical data that is available reveals worrying trends, especially regarding children. According to the December 2002 USAID Report on Primary Health Care, the national under-five mortality rate is 91 per 1,000 live births and maternal deaths are estimated at between 740 and 1,500 deaths per 100,000 births. In 2003, the under-five mortality rate rose to 104.7 per 1,000. Only 14% of deliveries take place in health institutions and nationally only 12.5% of deliveries are attended by trained health providers. 26% of newborns have low birth weight, which leaves them prone to illness and death in infancy. Acute respiratory infections (ARI) are responsible for 30-40% of deaths in children under five, with diarrhea responsible for 16-25% of deaths.

### **3.1.3 Water and sanitation**

Assessments by international NGOs have shown that increasing access to drinking water and sanitation at community level is a top priority and also an activity that would be acceptable to both government and Maoists. Most of the community drinking water systems were constructed during the 1980s and 1990s and are no longer functioning well. The Nepalese authorities have not been able to support the communities because of a reduction in their budget as well as the worsening security situation. Also, as indicated above, the Maoists have destroyed some water supply schemes as part of their military operations. As a result, people face problems in getting drinking water and have no other option than to use river water or irrigation channels for their daily use, with a very poor

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<sup>12</sup> Source: International Labour Organisation (ILO).

<sup>13</sup> The lowest level of government administration.

awareness of hygiene and no access to latrines. As a result, people suffer from diarrhoea and other water-borne diseases.

In the villages, to cope with livelihood insecurity, male family members in the hilly areas migrate on a seasonal basis to find employment either in the Nepal lowlands or India. However, due to the conflict situation, this trend has increased sharply, both in number and in the permanence of the migration, leading to fear of men and young boys being pulled into the conflict by both sides. As a result, more women and children are being left behind in the villages, adding greater responsibilities to the women as heads of households.

### **3.1.4 Food security**

Of Nepal's 75 districts, 38 are estimated to have a food deficit with serious constraints on food access, especially in the hills and mountains, which are also prone to localized natural hazards. The following structural factors have contributed to food insecurity and the vulnerability of the assessed areas: harsh environmental conditions, elevated topography and lack of arable land or access to water for irrigation; remoteness leading to difficulty in accessing social and economic facilities, and the increased price of transport of materials in and out of the district; lack of infrastructures and inequity within a district where rich or high-caste villages preferentially benefited from development programmes over poor or low-caste villages. Water and sanitation installations are insufficient for all, traditional farming and livestock techniques persist and there is increased demographic pressure and mismanagement of natural resources<sup>14</sup>.

These structural problems have been exacerbated by the conflict, which acts as an external shock to household and local economies. Frequent conflict-related strikes and blockades compound this situation across Nepal. Already complex coping mechanisms are becoming strained, increasing vulnerability to food insecurity. The trend of migrating for labour to the southern plains or India, which many households in rural Nepal rely on for subsistence, is on the increase and may become unsustainable.<sup>15</sup>

The main impact of the conflict on household-level food security has been to reduce the purchasing power and alternative means to access food. The effects include: limited ability to generate cash income or access to credit to buy food; reduced labour opportunities to directly work for food; reduced availability of food, including food-aid interventions; restricted access to markets as a result of the Maoist permit system and fear and intimidation from both conflict parties; increased food prices.

This is of great concern given that their own food production covers only three to eight months of the year and households depend on the purchase of food or direct labour for food, for the rest of the year.

With limited prospects of an imminent ceasefire, there is a need for activities that can bring short-term relief to vulnerable communities without creating dependency, whilst leaving them with basic community assets.

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<sup>14</sup> Source: WFP, May 2005.

<sup>15</sup> Source: ACF, May 2005.

### **3.2. Bhutanese refugees: Food aid**

The main impediment for the population in the camps is that the Nepalese government has been very firm in not allowing any activity that might give a more “permanent” status to the refugees (official policy of non-integration).

Nepal is not a signatory to the 1951 Refugee Convention. Thus, refugees are considered foreigners with no political rights. Economic activity and property ownership are not allowed. While refugees have freedom of association, the government’s policy of non-integration limits refugees’ access to the economy. As such, they have few means to provide for their basic sustenance without external assistance.

Consequently, no land has been donated for even the most basic cultivation, and, officially, refugees are not allowed to seek work outside, or to set up small enterprises within the camps. In reality, many young adults find work in the neighbouring villages and fields (mostly unskilled), and some have left to become teachers in other parts of Nepal. However, refugee workers do not earn much, as local contractors take advantage of the illegality of the situation to pay extremely low wages. Moreover, local unions often protest to ensure that employment opportunities remain minimal for this Bhutanese population.

Therefore refugees can barely supplement their households with any income, and rely on WFP food rations, vegetables and a number of non-food items supplied by UNHCR. Many try to grow vegetables on scraps of land in between houses (in most cases between one to three square metres), initiated with the assistance of WFP’s Home and Pot Gardening Projects; other micro-projects include vocational training and small income-generating activities for women, but the possibilities to further develop such activities remain limited.

The main problem with food is the possibility of occasional delays in supply due to shortage of WFP funds, last minute procurement and the increasing Maoist-imposed transport strikes. During 2005 however, WFP adapted well to the imposition of strikes and blockades, increasing their local storage capacity to allow pre-positioning of food stocks, and identifying additional off-site storage space, sufficient for eight weeks in the event of a long blockade. This ensured that there was no break in the food pipe-line in 2005.

WFP has been experiencing some difficulties in funding its operation in the camps for the last four years because of donors’ fatigue. The main donors remain the United States, who provides mostly food aid in kind and the European Commission through DG ECHO for food aid and DG RELEX and AIDCO who contribute to UNHCR camp management programme through the Uprooted People budget line. A significant disruption in food deliveries (quantity and quality) would most likely result in tragic humanitarian and political consequences not only for the refugees but for the surrounding communities as well. There is already a high level of tension in this most densely populated area of Nepal because of scarce agricultural land, competition for forest resources and limited employment opportunities. The local communities have no way of absorbing the camp population who would be forced to abandon the camps in search of food if rations were no longer available. Such an eventuality could lead to severe social unrest in a region already vulnerable to the influence of the Maoist insurgency. In addition all camp based services, including health care, education and other support would be jeopardised.

This would put the refugees at considerable risk of severe malnutrition-related diseases, reversing the progress made in their nutritional status achieved through steady food assistance. The most vulnerable refugees (malnourished children, elderly, pregnant woman), all currently assisted under a supplementary feeding programme, would suffer the most if emergency rations were not provided; acute malnutrition and micro-nutrient deficiency disorders are already a concern inside the camps, but lower than corresponding figures in the host districts of Morang and Jhapa<sup>16</sup>.

#### **4. PROPOSED DG ECHO STRATEGY**

##### **4.1. Coherence with DG ECHO's overall strategic priorities**

Nepal is classified according to DG ECHO's Global Needs Assessment (GNA) index as "high-needs" country, and is one of the world's poorest countries. Furthermore, as Nepal is the theatre of two "forgotten crises", it is a priority country for DG ECHO. As for the conflict, the country faces grave and widespread human rights violations and even if the country has not yet evolved into a full humanitarian crisis, living conditions are becoming extremely difficult for the rural population caught between the two sides of the conflict. Added to by the difficulties for DG ECHO partners to access the most remote areas, DG ECHO's response has been, since the conflict worsened in 2002, to gradually increase its financial support from EUR 1.675 million in 2002 to EUR 4 million in 2005. Additionally, an annual support of EUR 2 million has been provided to the Bhutanese refugees through the distribution of food aid since 2001. This aid is managed by WFP and represents around one third of the refugees' food requirements. A DG ECHO Office was opened at the end of 2005 to ensure closer monitoring of the partners' operations and better coordinate with other donors.

##### **4.2. Impact of previous humanitarian response**

The Commission adopted two funding decisions for 2005 of respectively EUR 4 million and EUR 2 million. These amounts are fully contracted.

- *To support the rural population of Nepal affected by the conflict, particularly women and children.*

DG ECHO previous support is still on-going and final results are not yet available. However, based on the interim and preliminary final reports as well as on DG ECHO monitoring missions, the following results for 2005 can be specified:

ICRC ensured the general protection of the population, disseminated International Humanitarian Law to the armed forces, contributed with the Nepalese Red Cross Society (NRCS) to the exchange of Red Cross Messages, and visited prisoners held in police stations jails. However ICRC has not visited any army prisons since 15 April 2005 and a working group with high ranking officers and ICRC has been set up and meets on a monthly basis. Negotiations moved very slowly until March 2006. Police stations and jails continued to be visited. In 2006, ICRC plans to increase the number of its delegates and to open two new sub-offices in Pokhara (Western Region) and in Doti (Far Western Region).

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<sup>16</sup> JAM 2005 report. At present, due to WFP/UNHCR intervention, the rate of global acute malnutrition among children under five is stable at 8.4% in the refugee camps.

Protection of the conflict-affected children in the Mid Western districts of Nepal is being ensured by improving child protection structures at community level, the provision of child protection measures through the undertaking of a full census and registration, and other measures such as psychosocial counseling of children and adolescents, including their family members, and non-formal education.

About 200,000 people living in remote rural districts with no access to basic public services have benefited from improved tertiary health facilities (district hospitals, orthopedic centres and health posts) and attended consultations in medical mobile camps.

Based on the WFP Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping (VAM), support is being provided to food-insecure communities in conflict-affected areas with rice as an incentive for community participation in asset creation/rehabilitation, income generating projects and training. A provision of one to three months of food support annually is given to about 190,000 vulnerable people using government daily work norm rates of 4kgs of rice for Food-for-Work (FFW) projects. Participation is limited to one or two workers per household, according to its size.

- *Food aid for the Bhutanese refugees.*

UNHCR manages the seven camps and provides care and maintenance and protection. NGOs provide health assistance, primary education, vocational training, water and sanitation equipment.

WFP ensures that the camps receive a sustained food supply (mainly rice and cooking oil). DG ECHO support in 2005 ensured that 105,300 refugees received 3,530 MT of food (rice, pulses, oil, sugar, salt, WSB) during the second part of 2005. It allowed the distribution of basic food rations to all refugees, the distribution of supplementary food rations to 3,300 vulnerable refugees, i.e. malnourished children under five, expectant and nursing women, TB patients and elderly sick people.

#### **4.3. Coordination with activities of other donors and institutions**

DG ECHO opened an office in Nepal in November 2005, one of its main tasks being to coordinate its activities with other donors and will ensure close collaboration with the Delegation of the European Commission. DG ECHO representatives participate in the various coordination fora organised by the international community, notably the Basic Operating Guidelines (BOG) meetings (see point 4.4. below). The DG ECHO representative has been particularly active in the planning of the first CHAP for Nepal during the preparatory meeting held in Kathmandu from 20 to 22 June 2005 which led to the production of the CAP on 5 October 2005.

#### **4.4. Risk assessment and assumptions**

Since 2002 EC humanitarian aid funding decisions have encouraged DG ECHO partners to develop an interest in the humanitarian situation of the conflict-affected populations of rural Nepal. Despite the increasing access problems met by INGOs working in rural Nepal, there are now a number of humanitarian partners willing to work in there. However, implementation of the identified operations is very fragile. Partners face two types of difficulties.

First, security represents a major constraint for development and humanitarian aid activities<sup>17</sup>. The intensification of fighting since the breakdown of the ceasefire at the end of August 2003 and the Royal takeover of February 2005 have increased the risks in this regard. Furthermore, the Maoist decision to forbid US-funded organisations in their areas has made it difficult for all Western NGOs. Moreover, Maoist pressure has increased with the creation in January 2004 of a parallel “administration”, called “ethnic people’s autonomous governments”, based on tax extraction and a geographical division competing with the official division, which complicates relations with the rebels. The Maoist hierarchy announced on 22 December 2005 that the movement would cooperate with the UN and bilateral donor agencies and adhere to their Basic Operating Guidelines (BOGs) for humanitarian aid and development work. BOGs provide a framework of good practice for humanitarian aid and development programmes and emphasise that the agencies have the right to suspend or terminate their programmes in the absence of a safe working environment<sup>18</sup>. However the reality in the field with local commanders is somewhat different from the Maoist statement. Also the implementation of a countrywide bandh (transportation, industries, markets, educational institutions and offices) starting on 3 April for an indefinite period, as announced by the Maoists on 18 February will certainly hamper the proper implementation of the programmes, if it is confirmed.

Another constraint is that the Nepalese administration applies a strict regime for NGOs in order to control them in a way which is not compatible with the rules of independence of humanitarian aid organizations. For example, only two non-tourist visas for expatriates are foreseen as a maximum per project. Humanitarian aid INGOs are therefore experiencing many difficulties in obtaining specific recognition from the government and long-term visas for their expatriates, difficulties which add to those of getting the Maoists’ agreement to work in the zones under their control. Furthermore, the Social Welfare Council attempted in November 2005 to introduce a Code of Conduct for NGOs which has been strongly rejected by the donors. The lack of consultation by the authorities as well as the content which clearly targets local human rights NGOs were the reasons for this negative response.

Concerning the Bhutanese refugees, no genuine constraint is foreseen for the implementation of the food aid operation as the camps are well run with experience gained in the operations managed in 2001, 2002 and 2003 by WFP with DG ECHO support, which proved to be successful. However, “donor fatigue” with regard to this humanitarian situation could lead to disruption in support to the refugees and consequently to protests with a possible knock on effect of the Maoist conflict in the camps and surrounding areas. On 2 March 2006, two pipe bombs were thrown into the compound of the World Food Programme office in Damak, causing slight damage but no injuries. There have been no immediate claims of responsibility, but the following day the insurgents apologised for the bombing. Indeed, delay in the settlement of the refugee problem increases the risk of militancy in the camps and influence from the Maoists.

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<sup>17</sup> Two international humanitarian and two national humanitarian aid workers faced a serious security incident in September 2003 in one district of the Mid Western region. In May 2005, two Nepali Nationals working for a foreign development project in Kalikot district in the Western Terai were beaten by Maoists.

<sup>18</sup> Four sets of BOGs have been developed in Nepal: by the donors, by the UN and by international and local NGOs.

Given the slow verification process, the unwillingness of both Nepal and Bhutan to come up with an acceptable solution, and a limited international interest in the fate of the refugees, the prospects of a quick settlement of the problem are not particularly encouraging.

#### **4.5. DG ECHO Strategy<sup>19</sup>**

There is no major change in the 2006 strategy compared to 2005: the civilian population living in remote and hilly districts who are caught between the two conflict sides, and the Bhutanese refugees living in seven camps in two eastern districts of Nepal will be assisted as before.

Due to security and access constraints the remote areas in the hilly districts affected by the conflict still receive relatively little support from other donors and from the Nepalese authorities. Given the difficulties for government officials in accessing these zones, DG ECHO's interventions will continue to have a particular focus on these areas.

The hilly district of Far Western and Mid Western Regions will be the main areas of intervention. The other conflict-affected districts will also be included, and in particular will be part of the protection programmes. Additionally, assistance will be provided to Bhutanese refugees in seven UNHCR-managed camps in the two eastern districts of Morang and Jhapa.

It is estimated that about 170,000 affected people, notably women and children, will be protected and will see their living conditions improve. Additionally, around 107,000 Bhutanese refugees will receive food aid support equalling about one third of their annual requirement.

Should a peace process be engaged, DG ECHO will prepare a gradual phasing out of the country in coordination with DG RELEX which will then launch disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration activities. Should the situation deteriorates, DG ECHO will be ready to launch an additional funding decision before the end of the year.

As for the Bhutanese refugees, DG ECHO phasing out will intervene when a comprehensive solution will be adopted and the camps dismantled.

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<sup>19</sup> Grants for the implementation of humanitarian aid within the meaning of Council Regulation (EC) No.1257/96 of 20 June 1996 concerning humanitarian aid are awarded in accordance with the Financial Regulation, in particular Article 110 thereof, and its Implementing Rules in particular Article 168 thereof (Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1605/2002 of 25 June 2002, OJ L248 of 16 September 2002 and No 2342/2002 of 23 December 2002, OJ L 357 of 31 December 2002).

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

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

[http://europa.eu.int/comm/echo/partners/index\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu.int/comm/echo/partners/index_en.htm)

## **Principal objective:**

To provide assistance to the rural population of Nepal affected by the conflict and to Bhutanese refugees.

## **Specific objectives:**

**Specific objective 1: To provide multi-sectoral humanitarian support to the rural population of Nepal affected by the conflict, particularly women and children.**

### Component

Protection

#### *Activities:*

- Visits to places of detention and improvement of living conditions in these places.
- Restoring family links between prisoners and their families, notably through the exchange of Red Cross Messages.
- Interventions by concerned parties in the areas of abuse of civilians, tracing activities for missing persons, allegation of arrests, and use of children in military operations.
- Dissemination of International Humanitarian Law (IHL) to the governmental security forces and the Maoist combatants.

These activities will take place countrywide.

### Component

Health care and nutrition

#### *Activities*

- Training of medical staff, provision of essential drugs and basic equipment for district hospitals, clinics and health centres and posts in some of the Far and Mid Western Region's districts. Medical data records will be established and epidemiological surveillance systems will be reinstalled.
- Provision of physical rehabilitation services to disabled people.
- Training activities related to hygiene and correct waste disposal practices and protocols for medical staff and personnel in hospitals, health centres and posts.
- Conduct reproductive health camps, train local health providers in reproductive health and develop awareness on reproductive health among the patients.
- Distribution of fortified food for pregnant and lactating women and children 6 to 36 months old and training of health facilities workers to monitor the nutrition status of women and children at health posts.

These activities will take place in the Far Western, Mid Western and Central Regions.

### Component

Water and sanitation

#### *Activities:*

- Rehabilitation and construction of rural drinking water systems, and protection of 25 existing water sources at community level.

- Construction of toilets and pit latrines.
- Training sessions for the beneficiaries on hygiene and sanitary practices, and training in water system management.

These activities will take place in the Far Western and Mid Western Regions.

### Component

Food security

#### *Activities:*

- Introduction of new farming techniques to rural communities through training and distribution of material to interested farmers.
- Grain seeds distribution for cereals, pulses and fodder in 40 communities for demonstrative plots, seed production and nurseries.
- Training for farmers in livestock management, pest control, fertilising and composting, and fodder plantation management.
- Construction of water harvest tanks, wastewater harvest tanks and ram pumps distribution.
- Distribution of adapted and selected animal breeds and animal treatment and training and medicine kit distribution for rural animal health workers.
- Education sessions on preparation of balanced recipes and diets, care/nutrition practices, and promotion sessions on adequate care and feeding/diets of children and pregnant and lactating women.
- Food for work.

These activities will take place in the Far Western, Mid Western and Central Regions.

**Specific objective 2: To supply Bhutanese refugees, settled in camps in South East Nepal, with adequate basic food requirements.**

### Component

Basic food aid

#### *Activities:*

DG ECHO will support WFP in the supply of over 7,000 MT of food rations to be purchased on the local market. The daily WFP general ration provides 1,980 Kcal per person/day towards the recommended minimum requirement of 2,100 KCal. The daily ration will consist of 400 grams of parboiled rice, 60 grams of pulses, 25 grams of Vitamin-A and D fortified vegetable oil, 20 grams of sugar, 7.5 grams of iodised salt, and, on the recommendation of the 2004 JAM, 35 grams of wheat-corn-soy blend (rendering unnecessary the school feeding programme). WFP will distribute the food via the Nepalese Red Cross.

### Component

Supplementary food aid

#### *Activities:*

Additionally, an average of 3,000 vulnerable refugees, i.e. children between 6 and 12 months, malnourished children under five years of age, expectant and nursing mothers, tuberculosis-affected patients, and elderly sick people should receive daily

supplementary food rations consisting of 10 grams of vegetable oil, 80 grams of fortified blended food and 15 grams of sugar. Pending analysis of the impact of the introduction of fortified blended food into the general food distribution, this take-home ration may be increased. It is expected that over 13 MT of food commodities will be distributed each month under this supplementary health-based food programme.

### Component

Food security

#### *Activities:*

Vocational training (562 beneficiaries), pot-gardening training (over 24,000) and small income-generating activities (315) are also to be provided to refugees, the latter two focusing on women.

## **4.6. Duration**

The duration for the implementation of this Decision will be 18 months starting on 1 March 2006. Humanitarian operations funded by this Decision must be implemented within this period. The operations related to the conflict will not start before 1 March 2006. Food aid support to the Bhutanese refugees started on 1 March 2006.

Expenditure under this Decision shall be eligible from 1 March 2006.

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

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

## **4.7. Amount of Decision and strategic programming matrix**

### **4.7.1 Total amount of the Decision: EUR 5,000,000**

#### 4.7.2. STRATEGIC PROGRAMMING MATRIX FOR THE GLOBAL PLAN

Principal objective	<i>To provide assistance to the rural population of Nepal affected by the conflict and to Bhutanese refugees</i>				
Specific objectives	Allocated amount (EUR)	Geographical area of operation	Activities proposed	Expected outputs / indicators	Potential partners
<p><b>Specific objective 1:</b> To provide multi-sectoral humanitarian support to the rural population of Nepal affected by the conflict, particularly women and children.</p>	3,000,000	Rural districts of Nepal	<p><b>- Component : Protection</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visits to places of detention and improvement of living conditions in these places.</li> <li>• Restoring family links between prisoners and their families, notably through the exchange of Red Cross Messages.</li> <li>• Interventions to concerned parties in the areas of abuse of civilians, tracing activities for missing persons, allegation of arrests, and use of children in military operations.</li> <li>• Dissemination of International Humanitarian Law to the governmental security forces and the Maoist combatants.</li> </ul> <p><b>- Component : Health care and nutrition</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training for medical staff, provision of essential drugs and basic equipment for district hospitals, clinics and health centres and posts. Reinstallation of epidemiological surveillance systems.</li> <li>• Provision of physical rehabilitation services for disabled people.</li> <li>• Training activities related to hygiene and correct waste disposal practices and protocols for medical staff.</li> <li>• Reproductive health camps and awareness.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Improved protection for the conflict-affected people of Nepal in accordance with International Humanitarian Law</b></p> <p>- Detainees by both parties are better treated in conformity with IHL and have links with their families, number of people under 18 recruited by armed groups decreases, combatants from both sides are more aware of IHL.</p> <p><b>Around 120,000 affected people have better access to health facilities and improved services.</b></p> <p>- Improvement of health data; increase of activities in hygiene practice.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ACF - FRA</li> <li>- CARE - AUT</li> <li>- CROIX-ROUGE - CICR- ICRC - CH</li> <li>- HANDICAP (FR)</li> <li>- IRC - UK</li> <li>- UNFPA</li> </ul>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Distribution of fortified food for pregnant and lactating women and children 6 to-36 months old and training of health facilities workers to monitor the nutrition status of women and children at health posts.</li> </ul> <p><b>- Component : Water and sanitation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rehabilitation and construction of rural drinking water systems, and protection of existing water sources at community level.</li> <li>• Construction of toilets and pit latrines.</li> <li>• Training sessions for the beneficiaries on hygiene and sanitary practices, and training in water system management.</li> </ul> <p><b>- Component : Food security</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction of new farming techniques for rural communities through training and distribution of material to interested farmers.</li> <li>• Grain seeds distribution for cereals, pulses and fodder for demonstrative plots, seed production and nurseries.</li> <li>• Training for farmers in livestock management, pest control, fertilising and composting, and fodder plantation management.</li> <li>• Construction of water harvest tanks, wastewater harvest tanks and ram pumps distribution.</li> <li>• Distribution of adapted and selected animal breeds and animal treatment and training and medicine kit distribution for rural animal health workers.</li> <li>• Education sessions on preparation of balanced recipes and diets, care/nutrition practices, and</li> </ul>	<p><b>Access to potable water improved and hygiene behavior modified for at least 20,000 people</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No of newly built or rehabilitated water points;</li> <li>No of Latrines built/used and No of communities where hygiene behavior has changed.</li> </ul> <p><b>Improved food security for 30,000 conflict affected people.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reduction of the food gap period.</li> </ul>	
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			<p>promotion sessions on adequate care and feeding/diets of children and pregnant and lactating women.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Food for work.</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Specific objective 2:</b> To supply Bhutanese refugees, settled in camps in South East Nepal, with adequate basic food requirements.</p>	<p><b>2,000,000</b></p>	<p>Bhutanese refugee camps in south east Nepal (Morang and Jhapa districts)</p>	<p><b>- Component : Basic food aid</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Distribution of basic daily food rations to all the refugees in the camps.</li> </ul> <p><b>- Component : Supplementary food aid</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Distribution of supplementary daily food rations to about 3,000 vulnerable refugees.</li> </ul> <p><b>- Component : Food security</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vocational training, pot-gardening and small income-generating activities to approximately 25,000 refugees</li> </ul>	<p><b>Basic nutritional sustenance of refugees maintained.</b></p> <p>-Nutritional and health status of refugees; completion rate of vocational training; repayment rate for micro credit schemes.</p>	<p>- UN - WFP-B</p>
<p><b>Risk assessment</b></p>	<p>- <i>Conflict: Worsening security situation could lead to partners not being able to conduct their operations as envisaged in remote areas.</i></p> <p>- <i>Bhutanese refugees: The overall security situation in the country could worsen which might negatively affect the operation. Increased number of strikes and transport blockades, bombing and Maoists' infiltrations in the camps will also hamper WFP's ability to access and monitor the camps on a daily basis.</i></p>				
<p><b>Assumptions</b></p>	<p>- <i>It is assumed that Maoist blockades will not halt humanitarian aid operations in remote districts.</i></p> <p>- <i>Bhutanese refugees: It is assumed that the EU Uprooted People budget line earmarked for 2006 will be contracted.</i></p>				
<p><b>Total cost</b></p>	<p>5,000,000</p>				

## 5. EVALUATION

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

[http://ec.europa.eu/echo/evaluation/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/echo/evaluation/index_en.htm)

## 6. BUDGET IMPACT ARTICLE 23 02 01

-	CE (EUR)
Initial Available Appropriations for 2006	470,429,000
Supplementary Budgets	-
Transfers Commission	-
<b>Total Available Credits</b>	<b>470,429,000</b>
Total executed to date (by 10/04/2006)	262,550,000
Available remaining	207,879,000
<b>Total amount of the Decision</b>	<b>5,000,000</b>

## **7. ANNEXES**

**Annex 1: Statistics on the humanitarian situation**

**Annex 2: Map of country and location of DG ECHO operations in 2005**

**Annex 3: List of previous DG ECHO operations**

**Annex 4: Other donors' assistance**

**Annex 5: List of abbreviations**

## **Annex 1: Statistics on the humanitarian situation**

### **General**

- Human Development Index rank : 136 / 177 (source Human Development report 2005/UNDP)
- GDP per capita value is USD1,420 while the average in South Asia is USD 2,897. (source Human Development report 2005/UNDP)
- Per capita income of USD250/ year (World Bank, Nepal Country brief, August 2003)
- Human Poverty Index -1 rank : 74 / 103 (source Human Development Report 2005 /UNDP )
- 31% of population below poverty line (source Human Development Report 2005 /UNDP)
- Net enrolment rate in primary education : 84% (source Human Development Report 2005/UNDP)
- 107,000 Bhutanese refugees (UNHCR 2006)
- 200,000 IDPs (IDP project, Norwegian Refugee Council, 2004)
- Adult female literacy rate : 24% (SCF Mother index 2003)

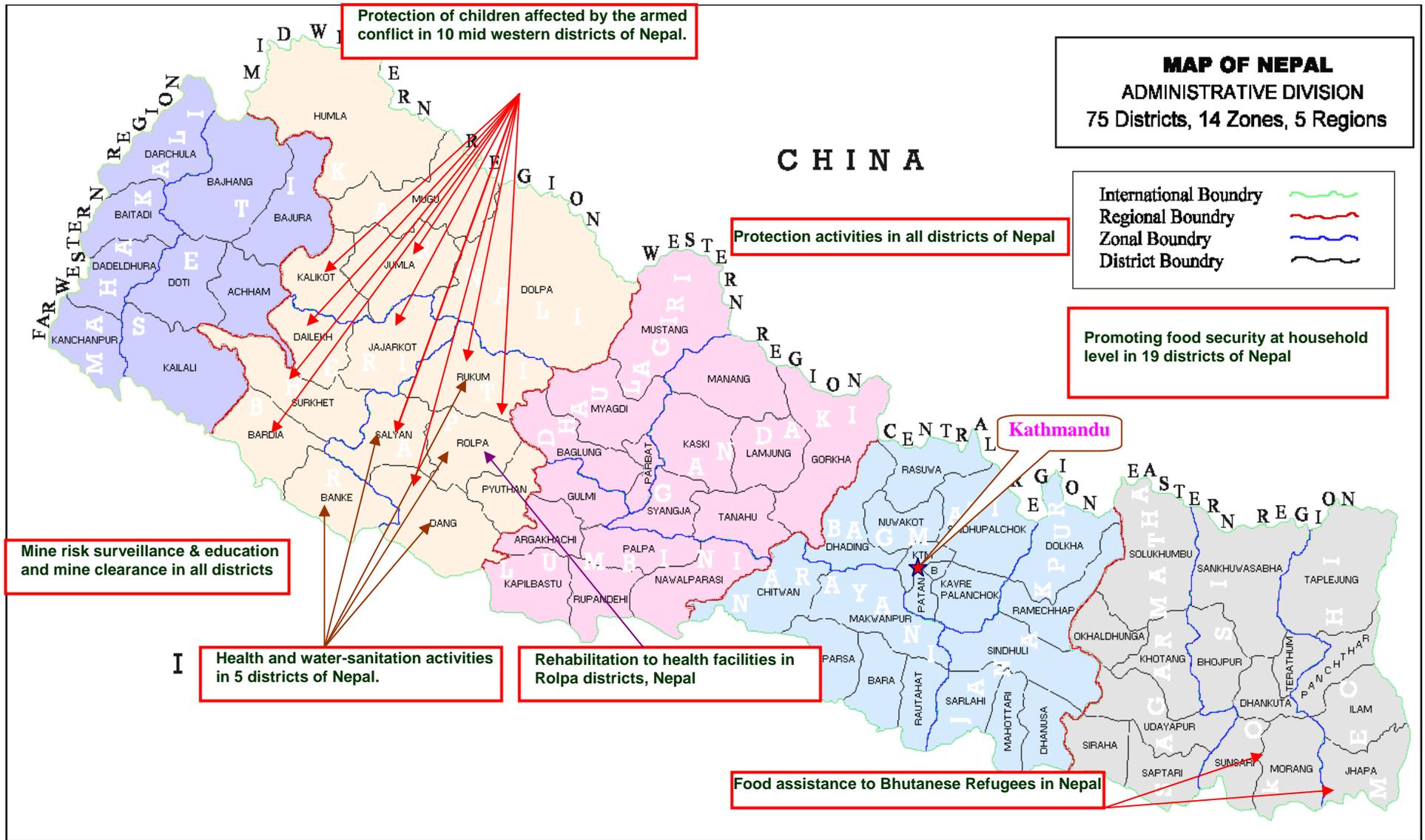
### **Health**

- Mortality rate for under fives (per 1000 live births) : 91 (UNDP Millennium development goals)
- Maternal mortality ratio (per 100,000 live births) : 740 ( UNDP Millennium development goals)
- 92% of birth are delivered at home in rural area ( Central Bureau of Statistics , 2004)
- 4 physicians per 100,000 populations (human development report 2003, UNDP)
- women using modern contraception : 35% (SCF mother index 2003)
- pregnant women with anemia : 65% (SCF mother index 2003 )
- Life expectancy at birth is 61.6, which ranks Nepal 129/177.

### **Nutrition / food security**

- Thirty-nine of Nepal's 75 districts are estimated to be food-deficient with serious constraints on food access, especially in the hills and mountains, which are also prone to localised natural hazards. (WFP/ department of agriculture, 2004)
- Children under five nutrition statistics nationwide: 50.5% stunting; 21.3% severe stunting; 9.6% wasting; 1.1 % severe wasting with prevalence highest in the hills and mountains and in the mid and far western regions (Health and demographic survey, 2001).

**Annex 2: Map of country and location of DG ECHO previous operations**





## Annex 4: Other donors'assistance

### Donors in NEPAL the last 12 months

1. EU Members States (*)		2. European Commission		3. Others	
	EUR		EUR		EUR
Austria		DG ECHO	7,500,000		
Belgium		Other services			
Cyprus					
Czech Republic					
Denmark	268,456				
Estonia					
Finland					
France					
Germany	1,250,000				
Greece					
Hungary					
Ireland					
Italy					
Latvia					
Lithuania					
Luxemburg					
Malta					
Netherlands					
Poland					
Portugal					
Slovakia					
Slovenie					
Spain					
Sweden					
United kingdom					
Subtotal	1,518,456	Subtotal	7,500,000	Subtotal	0
		Grand total	9,018,456		

Dated : 17/02/2006

(\*) Source : DG ECHO 14 Points reporting for Members States. <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/hac>

Empty cells means either no information is available or no contribution.

## Annex 5: List of Abbreviations

<b>ACF</b>	Action Contre la Faim
<b>AIDCO</b>	Europe Aid Co-operation Office
<b>BOGs</b>	Basic Operating Guidelines
<b>CAP</b>	Consolidated Appeals Process
<b>CHAP</b>	Consolidated Humanitarian Action Plan
<b>EC</b>	European Commission
<b>DG ECHO</b>	European Commission: Directorate-General for Humanitarian Aid
<b>EU</b>	European Union
<b>FFW</b>	Food For Work
<b>GP</b>	Global Plan
<b>GNA</b>	DG ECHO Global Needs Assessment
<b>HDI</b>	Human Development Index
<b>ICRC</b>	International Committee of the Red Cross
<b>IDP</b>	Internally Displaced Person
<b>IHL</b>	International Humanitarian Law
<b>ILO</b>	International Labour Organisation
<b>INSEC</b>	Informal Sector Service Centre
<b>JAM</b>	WFP/UNHCR Joint Assessment Mission
<b>NGO</b>	Non-Governmental Organisation
<b>NRC</b>	Norwegian Refugee Council
<b>NRCS</b>	Nepalese Red Cross Society
<b>PLIC</b>	World Food Programme Protecting Livelihood in Crisis Programme
<b>RNA</b>	Royal Nepalese Army
<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>UNHCR</b>	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
<b>UNICEF</b>	United Nations Children's Funds
<b>UNOCHA</b>	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
<b>UNOHCHR</b>	United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
<b>USAID</b>	United States Agency for International Development
<b>VAM</b>	World Food Programme Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping
<b>VDC</b>	Village Development Committee
<b>WFP</b>	World Food Programme

**COMMISSION DECISION**  
**of**  
**on the financing of humanitarian operations from the budget of the European Union in**  
**NEPAL**

**THE COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES,**

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

Whereas:

- (1) The internal conflict which started in Nepal in 1996 has killed about 13,000 people, including 10,800 since 2002;
- (2) This forgotten crisis, exacerbated by access constraints for humanitarian organisations, has not so far received significant attention from the international community;
- (3) Basic needs such as protection, health care, provision of drinking water and sanitation, and food security are not adequately met, particularly in the remote and hilly Maoist-controlled areas;
- (4) Nepal has been faced with another humanitarian and forgotten crisis since the arrival during the early nineties of 80,000 Bhutanese people of Nepalese origin who left or were expelled from Bhutan and settled in refugee camps in the Jhapa and Morang districts in South East Nepal;
- (5) The number of refugees in the seven UNHCR-managed camps is today estimated at more than 107,000 people, of whom 20% were born in the camps;
- (6) In accordance with the Nepalese government policy of non-integration, the refugees do not have the right to develop economic activities outside the camps and rely therefore on external support for their survival;
- (7) In March 2001, Nepal and Bhutan started a joint verification process to determine possible repatriation of the refugees, but this exercise is progressing very slowly and has been blocked since the end of 2004;
- (8) An assessment of the humanitarian situation leads to the conclusion that humanitarian aid operations should be financed by the Community for a period of 18 months;
- (9) It is estimated that an amount of EUR 5,000,000 from budget article 23 02 01 of the general budget of the European Union is necessary to provide humanitarian assistance to more than 270,000 people affected by the conflict in Nepal and Bhutanese refugees taking into account the available budget, other donors interventions and other factors;

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<sup>20</sup> OJ L 163, 2.7.1996, p. 1-6  
[ECHO/NPL/BUD/2006/01000](#)

- (10) In accordance with Article 17 (3) of Council Regulation (EC) No.1257/96 of 20 June 1996 concerning humanitarian aid, the Humanitarian Aid Committee gave a favourable opinion on 23 May 2006.

HAS DECIDED AS FOLLOWS:

*Article 1*

1. In accordance with the objectives and general principles of humanitarian aid, the Commission hereby approves an amount of EUR 5,000,000 for humanitarian aid operations (Global Plan) for conflict-affected people and the Bhutanese refugees in Nepal from article 23 02 01 of the 2006 general budget of the European Union.

2. In accordance with Article 2 of Council Regulation No.1257/96, the humanitarian operations shall be implemented in the pursuance of the following specific objectives:

- To provide multi-sectoral humanitarian support to the rural population of Nepal affected by the conflict, particularly women and children.
- To supply Bhutanese refugees, settled in camps in South East Nepal, with adequate basic food requirements.

The amounts allocated to each of these specific objectives are listed in the annex to this Decision.

*Article 2*

The Commission may, where this is justified by the humanitarian situation, re-allocate the funding levels established for one of the specific objectives set out in Article 1(2) to another objective mentioned therein, provided that the re-allocated amount represents less than 20% of the global amount covered by this Decision.

*Article 3*

1. The duration of the implementation of this Decision shall be for a period of 18 months, starting on 01 March 2006.
2. Expenditure under this Decision shall be eligible from 01 March 2006.
3. If the actions envisaged in this Decision are suspended due to *force majeure* or comparable circumstances, the period of suspension will not be taken into account for the calculation of the duration of the implementation of this decision.

*Article 4*

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

Done at Brussels,

For the Commission

Member of the Commission

## Annex: Breakdown of allocations by specific objectives

<b>Specific objectives</b>	<b>Amount per specific objective (EUR)</b>
To provide multi-sectoral humanitarian support to the rural population of Nepal affected by the conflict, particularly women and children.	3,000,000
To supply Bhutanese refugees, settled in camps in South East Nepal, with adequate basic food requirements.	2,000,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5,000,000</b>