

## **FACT SHEET A.7**

### **TRANSMISSION OF DOCUMENTS VIA THE eTOOLS APPLICATION**

*Applicable to NGOs, International Organisations, Specialised agencies,*

*UN*

#### **1. Introduction**

The “etools” is the name of a system developed by DG ECHO, which automates the preparation, submission and approval of project proposals, project reports and modification requests made by DG ECHO partners.

It aims at speeding up the process for treating humanitarian aid projects and to increase the overall quality of the process. The advantages of shifting from *paper Single Form*<sup>1</sup> to *electronic Single form* (eSingle Form) are numerous: instant transmission of data, reduced possibility of errors, usage of standard lists (e.g. sectors), information generated automatically, automatic and uniform archiving, no risk of losing information or previous version, easier access to same information for all people concerned, easier statistics, automatic registration, real-time vision on project status, less paper.

The format of the eSingle Form is similar to the paper version of the Single Form. The same information is requested. To differentiate the paper and electronic copy, the documents relating to the eSingle-Form are called *eDocuments*. The different eDocuments are:

- eRequest (referred to as RQ)
- eModification Request (referred to as MR).
- eIntermediate Report (referred to as IR).
- eFinal Report (referred to as FR).

In the text below, eSingle Form refers to these eDocuments without distinction.

The purpose of this Fact Sheet is to provide guidance on submission of documents via etools. Guidelines on how to use the etools are available on DG ECHO website ([http://ec.europa.eu/echo/about/actors/etools\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/echo/about/actors/etools_en.htm))

#### **2. Access to the eSingle Form application**

The *eSingle Form* is accessible through APPEL (<https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/appel>) i.e. DG ECHO's application for electronic exchange of information between DG ECHO and its partners. In order to be able to connect to APPEL and use it safely, the partner will use its *ECAS account*.

#### **3. Users, legal representative and contact persons**

Each organisation will be responsible for the management of its own staff user rights and can decide on the best workflow for the transmission of documents to DG ECHO, either via headquarter, regional centres or in the field.

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<sup>1</sup> Paper Single Form refers to Single Form submitted to DG ECHO either in paper copy or via email. .  
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As for the paper Single Form, the Partner will continue to create and update the list of legal representatives and the email addresses through the APPEL interface.

#### **4. Transmission of eDocuments**

As soon as the APPEL account is accessible, the partner can start working on eSingle Form and submit proposals to DG ECHO.

When a project proposal is transmitted through APPEL, all the other documents relating to the project (eReport, eModifications, etc) have to be transmitted via the same system.

The eDocuments encoded in APPEL are not accessible to DG ECHO while the status of the Single Form is "draft". After submission to DG ECHO, all eDocuments are registered and given a reference number.

The Partner can see at any moment the status of the proposal (Draft, submitted, active, favourable, refused, etc) as well as the status of the project (Under negotiation, Ongoing or closed).

eDocuments transmitted via APPEL do not have to be transmitted to DG ECHO by other means (fax, mail, email).

Each time the Partner submit an eDocument to DG ECHO, the Desk Officer will receive a notification. However, if they wish so, the Partners can contact by phone or by email the Desk Officer to inform of the upcoming submission of the eDocument.

Currently, the system does not allow DG ECHO to reply to the submission of eDocument using the eTools. The communication between DG ECHO and its partners such as letters and emails are not supported by the eSingle Form application. To approve or refuse an eDocument DG ECHO will continue sending emails or PDF documents. The signature of the agreement will continue on paper. (see for details below).

#### **5. Reference number and Receipt, registration dates.**

##### **5.1 Reference**

When encoding a new project, a request number will be attributed to the project composed of the year and the sequence order. (e.g. 2010/0008)

When submitting the RQ, a more detailed reference number will appear on the screen, consisting of:

Year/sequence number /type of document/document number/version number.

E.g.: **2010/00008/RQ/1/3** - relates to the third version of an eRequest submitted in 2010. This was the 8<sup>th</sup> request submitted in the system.  
**2010/00008/IR/2/2** - relates to second version of the second Interim Report.

The two first elements of the reference number (in bold) are common to all the edocuments of the same project.

In article 1.2 of the Agreement, the reference number will consist of the year, the DG ECHO eTools internal code and the project sequence order. (e.g. 10.9900008)

## 5.2 Dates

The **reception** and **registration date** is the date of submission of the eDocuments. There is no difference anymore between the two dates.

After having submitted an eDocument, the Partner will receive a message informing of the successful submission of the document.

Final reports received electronically after 17:00 (Brussels time) will be considered as having arrived the following working day for the calculation of payment delays.

## 6. Communication workflow under eTools

### 6.1 Proposal stage

After the submission of the eRequest a message will appear on the screen indicating that the project has been created and that the workflow has been launched. This message is replacing the letter "*Acknowledgement receipt*". It can be printed by the partner for its files.

The RQ will be received by DG ECHO Archives Service which will attribute the RQ to the relevant Desk Officer. The desk will carry out an administrative check to verify that the proposal is receivable and eligible. The Desk Office will then forward the RQ to DG ECHO Field Expert for comment.

When the status of the proposal is mentioned as active, the Partner can submit a new version of the RQ. The Partner can submit a new version either upon its own initiative or upon request of DG ECHO (request usually submitted by email). DG ECHO will not have access to the revised text until it is officially re-submitted. DG ECHO will only have access to the previous version formally submitted.

As soon as the Desk Officer and Field Expert have finalised their appraisal, the RQ will be locked and it will not be possible for the Partner to submit new version of the request.

The Partner will know that the project has been approved by DG ECHO management when the status of the RQ indicates "favourable" (green light). This status appears when the agreement is **signed by DG ECHO** and is ready to be sent to the Partner. DG ECHO will send by registered mail to the Partner two signed copies of the agreement together with a copy of the logframe and table 11 (extracted from the RQ). The Partner will sign and return the agreement<sup>2</sup>.

In case the eRequest is rejected, DG ECHO will send a letter explaining the reason for rejection. The status will show the project as "Refused".

### 6.2. Implementation

As soon as the agreement is signed and returned to DG ECHO, the status will show the project as "ongoing". The system allows now the submission of eModification and eIntermediate report.

#### 6.2.1. eIntermediate report

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<sup>2</sup> Section 1.6 of Fact Sheet A6 does not apply under the eTools application.

The eIntermediate Report (IR) must only be used to report progress values. The IR is based on the last agreed (favourable) Single Form at the time of its creation. Changes to the project must be requested through the eModification-Request (MR). For this reason most of the fields cannot be updated in the IR, only the specific fields relating to intermediate report will allow to report progress.

To make sure that the IR is consistent with the latest changes, it is therefore highly recommended to submit an eModification and get it approved by DG ECHO before the creation of the IR. However, the system allows the Partner to work simultaneously on the eMR and eIR. Should the submission of the IR be delayed because of the MR approval procedure, the Partner should inform DG ECHO to see which steps should be taken.

The IR will present the progress values and explain the progress made in the activities. Should DG ECHO needs additional information, the Desk Officer will send by email the list of questions and comments. Unilateral modifications foreseen by the General conditions and Fact Sheet A4, which do not have to be validated by DG ECHO can be introduced in the IR. The Partner should not introduce in the IR modifications that require DG ECHO approval, as there is a risk that the modification be not validated.

## **6.2.2 Request for second pre-financing**

Request for second pre-financing can be either attached as an annex to the IR or to a MR. Should the request be made outside those documents, the Partner will send the request as a PDF attached to an email to DG ECHO central Mailbox.

## **6.2.3. eModification (MR)**

The eModification will be used to request the type of modifications explained in Fact Sheet A4, with one exception, the confirmation reply which has to be requested by email or letter.

The Partner will encode the MR in the system and submit it. A message will appear on the screen confirming the submission. The DG ECHO can either accept or refuse the MR.

In case of refusal, the desk will send an email to the partner explaining the reasons for rejection.

If the MR is accepted, the Desk Office will prepare either a letter confirming the changes (exchange of letters) or a supplementary agreement. Both documents will be sent either as PDF-document attached to a mail for the exchange of letter or by registered mail for the supplementary agreement.

## **6.2.4 Suspension**

The Partner will inform as soon as possible DG ECHO of difficulties with might have possible negative impacts on the implementation of the Action. If these difficulties materialise, the Partner will follow the procedure described in Fact Sheet A5 and send a formal communication to DG ECHO by email. The suspension will only be mentioned in an eSingle Form if it triggers changes.

## **6.3 Closing the Action**

### **6.3.1 eFinal report (FR)**

The eFinal report should be introduced in the system within the same deadlines as the paper final report. The financial report and its annexes will have to be annexed to the eFinal Report. It is not required to send a paper version of the report anymore.

If applicable, DG ECHO will continue to send by email in PDF the letters relating to the submission of the final report, such as: reminder of late final report, extension of deadline for report validation, absence of financial report, etc.

Should the FR be of bad quality or incomplete, DG ECHO will have the possibility to reject the report and request a new submission.

The "Stock the Clock letter" requesting complementary information will continue to be sent as PDF document by email. Reply to requests will be done by the Partner either by email to the DG ECHO mailbox as it is not possible to submit new version of the final report once it has been sent to DG ECHO.

Final payment advice will be sent by DG ECHO in a PDF document by email.

### **6.3.2 Ex-Tempore Modifications**

eModifications are not possible after the end date of the agreement. Ex-tempore modifications will have to be requested by email to the DG ECHO central Mailbox.

## **7. Support**

- The **Partners Help Desk Website** (<http://www.dgecho-partners-helpdesk.eu>) can be consulted to get further information on the etools and to have access to the trainings registration forms.
- The Partners can also send their questions in writing to the FPA Partners mailbox ([ECHO-FPA-PARTNERS@ec.europa.eu](mailto:ECHO-FPA-PARTNERS@ec.europa.eu))
- The Helpdesk can not answer operational questions for which the operational desk remains the main contact point.
- An Online line Help is also available for each section of the eSingle Form.
- The Offline module is hosted at the following address <http://www.osor.eu/projects/echooffline> where the latest offline version is always available. In addition, a forum is open to ask questions, make comments about the use of the program.
- DG ECHO's internet: [http://ec.europa.eu/echo/about/actors/etools\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/echo/about/actors/etools_en.htm)

**ANNEX –eTOOLS and TRANSMISSIONS OF DOCUMENTS – OVERVIEW TABLE**

The table uses the following abbreviations or terms:

R	Registered letter or equivalent such as courier service
eM	e-Mail
etools	submission using APPEL
PDF	PDF-Document such as a scanned version of a signed paper copy
Head of Unit	Address of Head of Unit of DG ECHO as identified in Article 7 of the agreement
Contact Person DG ECHO	Contact person of DG ECHO as identified in Article 7 of the agreement ( <a href="mailto:name.surname@ec.europa.eu">name.surname@ec.europa.eu</a> )
Contact Persons Partner	Contact persons of Partner as identified in Article 7 of the agreement
ECHO Mailbox	<a href="mailto:Echo-central-mailbox@ec.europa.eu">Echo-central-mailbox@ec.europa.eu</a>
DG ECHO Mngmt	DG ECHO management
DG ECHO Dir	DG ECHO Director

DOCUMENT	FROM	TO	Paper	Electronic	Address	IN COPY Electronic	Address
<b>I. Preparation of the Action</b>							
First version of eRequest (201X/000X/RQ/01/01)	Partner ECAS Sender	DG ECHO		etools			
Revised version of eRequest (201X/000X/RQ/01/02)	Partner ECAS Sender	DG ECHO		etools			
Comments/response DG ECHO on first or revised version of proposal	DG ECHO desk	Partner		eM	Contact persons Partner <sup>1</sup>		
In case of approval of proposal, two copies of the agreements signed by DG ECHO	DG ECHO Mngmt	Partner	R		<u>Paper</u> : address legal representative Partner	PDF	Head of Delegation Technical Assistant
Agreement and final Single Form signed and returned by Partner	Partner	DG ECHO	R		<u>Paper</u> : Head of Unit		
Refusal of action proposal	DG ECHO Mngmt	Partner		PDF	<u>Electronic</u> : official e-mail address Partner	PDF	Contact persons Partner
Material error in Agreement	Partner	DG ECHO		eM	<u>Contact person DG ECHO</u>		

<sup>1</sup> If the Partner did not identify contact persons, DG ECHO shall send its comments or response to the Partner's official e-mail address.  
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DOCUMENT	FROM	TO	Paper	Electronic	Address	IN COPY Electronic	Address
Correction Material error in Agreement	DG ECHO Mngmt	Partner		PDF	<u>Official e-mail address Partner</u>	PDF	Contact persons Partner
<b>II. Implementation of the Action</b>							
Request for confirmation reply	Partner	DG ECHO		eM	ECHO Mailbox	eM	Contact person DG ECHO
Confirmation reply	DG ECHO desk	Partner		eM	e-mail address person who requested confirmation reply (usually Partner's contact person)	eM	Contact persons Partner
Informing DG ECHO of a unilateral modification, outside the reporting (e.g. change contact persons)	Partner	DG ECHO		eM	ECHO Mailbox	eM	Contact person DG ECHO
Informing Partner of a change of DG ECHO's contact persons	DG ECHO desk	Partner		eM	<u>Electronic:</u> official e-mail address Partner	eM	Contact persons Partner
Changes in bank account	Partner	DG ECHO		Etools			
Notification of events that could lead to suspension	Partner (field or HQ)	DG ECHO		eM	Contact Person D ECHO		
Suspension request and resumption notification by Partner	Partner	DG ECHO		PDF	ECHO Mailbox	eM	Contact person DG ECHO
Amendment request, 201X/0000X/MR/01/01	Partner	DG ECHO		eTools	APPEL		
DG ECHO reply by exchange of letters	DG ECHO Mngmt	Partner		PDF	<u>Electronic:</u> official e-mail address Partner	PDF	Contact persons Partner
DG ECHO reply by supplementary agreement	DG ECHO Mngmt	Partner	R		<u>Paper:</u> address legal representative Partner	PDF	Head of Delegation Technical Assistant
Supplementary agreement signed and returned by Partner	Partner	DG ECHO	R		<u>Paper:</u> Head of Unit	eM	Contact persons Partner
Request second pre-financing if not made in intermediate report	Partner	DG ECHO		PDF	ECHO Mailbox	PDF	Contact person DG ECHO
Intermediate report 201X/0000X/IR/01/01	Partner ECAS Sender	DG ECHO		etools	APPEL		
Reminder that intermediate report was not sent	DG ECHO Mngmt	Partner		PDF	<u>Electronic:</u> official e-mail address Partner	PDF	Contact persons Partner
Request for complementary information	DG ECHO desk	Partner		eM	<u>Electronic:</u> official e-mail address Partner	eM	Contact persons Partner

DOCUMENT	FROM	TO	Paper	Electronic	Address	IN COPY Electronic	Address
Reply to request for complementary information or 201X/0000X/IR/01/02	Partner	DG ECHO		etools/eM	APPEL/ECHO Mailbox	eM	Contact person DG ECHO
<b>III. Closing the action</b>							
Request to transfer remaining supplies to follow-up action or to donate to local authorities	Partner	DG ECHO		eM	ECHO Mailbox	eM	Contact person DG ECHO
Reply to request to transfer remaining supplies to follow-up project or to donate to local authorities.	DG ECHO Mngmt	Partner		PDF	<u>Electronic:</u> official e-mail address Partner	PDF	Contact persons Partner
Final reports 201X/0000X/FR/01/01	Partner ECAS Sender	DG ECHO		etools	<u>APPEL</u>		
Reminder that final reports were not sent	DG ECHO	Partner		PDF	<u>Electronic:</u> official e-mail address Partner	PDF	Contact persons Partner
Reminder of absence of final financial report	DG ECHO	Partner		PDF	<u>Electronic:</u> official e-mail address Partner	PDF	Contact persons Partner
Reminder of absence of paper copy of final report	DG ECHO	Partner		PDF	<u>Electronic:</u> official e-mail address Partner	PDF	Contact persons Partner
In case of late submission of final reports by Partner, extension of DG ECHO's own deadline to accept and validate the final reports.	DG ECHO Mngmt	Partner		PDF	<u>Electronic:</u> official e-mail address Partner	PDF	Contact persons Partner
Request for complementary information for final reports ("stop the clock")	DG ECHO Mngmt	Partner		PDF	<u>Paper:</u> address legal representative Partner <u>Electronic:</u> official e-mail address Partner	PDF	Contact persons Partner
Reply to request for complementary information 201X/0000X/FR/01/0X	Partner	DG ECHO		eM	APPEL/ECHO Mailbox	eM	Contact person DG ECHO
Termination with advance notice by the Partner	Partner	DG ECHO	R	PDF	<u>Paper:</u> Head of Unit <u>Electronic:</u> ECHO Mailbox	PDF	Contact person DG ECHO
Termination with advance notice by DG ECHO	DG ECHO Dir	Partner	R	PDF	<u>Paper:</u> address legal representative Partner <u>Electronic:</u> official e-mail address Partner	PDF	Contact persons Partner

<b>DOCUMENT</b>	<b>FROM</b>	<b>TO</b>	<b>Paper</b>	<b>Electronic</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>IN COPY Electronic</b>	<b>Address</b>
Termination with immediate effect by DG ECHO	DG ECHO Dir	Partner	R	PDF	<u>Paper:</u> address legal representative Partner <u>Electronic:</u> official e-mail address Partner	PDF	Contact persons Partner
Final payment advice by DG ECHO	DG ECHO	Partner		PDF	<u>Electronic:</u> official e-mail address Partner	PDF	Contact persons Partner