

FOUR FACTORS OF SUCCESS

APPROPRIATENESS AND OWNERSHIP. For a project to become sustainable, it is necessary to have access to resources enabling maintenance, repair, regular refresher training, etc. The appropriateness of technological and organizational choices has a major impact on sustainability and replicability.

Some projects have to include sophisticated technology (radars, telemetric systems, etc.) and are based on scientific studies (seismic micro zoning, flood modeling, etc.). However, in many vulnerable communities, hand-operated sirens, church bells and solar-operated telecommunication systems provide a cost-effective alternative.

SOCIAL MOBILIZATION AND PARTICIPATORY APPROACHES. The involvement of communities and the relevant authorities in risk identification and project design and implementation is one of the preconditions for sustainable impacts. Social mobilization, awareness-raising and community participation are crucial means towards this end. However, involving the community in risk analysis and the identification of the most vulnerable people is a challenging exercise. The local community needs to be able to organize itself and mobilize its own resources and civil society organizations need to engage in advocacy vis-à-vis local and national authorities.

The success of the DIPECHO projects in Thanh Hoa in Vietnam and in Saint Bernard in the Philippines show that working together with local government units from start to finish is crucial for them to become sustainable, replicated and adopted on a larger scale.

CAPACITY OF THE IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS. Partners need to be able to assess the risks faced by communities and to work with them for designing the appropriate response for different vulnerable groups. To do so, they need to combine both development and humanitarian perspectives, they need to be 'learning' organisations and they need to be committed to DRR activities beyond DG ECHO's short-term funding.

School-based disaster preparedness sessions supported by DIPECHO in Northern Vietnam have reached an estimated half a million 4th and 5th grade schoolchildren and over 15,000 primary school teachers. Using innovative and child-friendly methods, such as the simulation exercises and drills used in Yen Bai province, they have been very effective in preparing children to cope with disasters.

COMMUNICATION, ADVOCACY AND COORDINATION. To ensure pilot projects are replicated on a bigger scale and the community-based approach is disseminated among disaster risk reduction and preparedness institutions, partners have to advocate at national, regional and global levels. When DIPECHO partners have come together as one coherent and cohesive group and spoken with a single voice along with the communities, their message has had greater impact.

Policies and programmes in Cambodia, Indonesia, the Philippines and Vietnam show that DIPECHO has contributed to institutionalizing the relations between national and ASEAN institutions in a multi-stakeholder partnership which has contributed to making the region safer.



© Croix-Rouge française et Croix-Rouge haïtienne



PREPAREDNESS SAVES LIVES: lessons learned from DIPECHO's 16 years of community-based disaster preparedness and risk reduction

PERSPECTIVES: WALK THE TALK

The growing influence of the concept of resilience and issues related to climate change adaptation are likely to increase the importance given to risk-informed programming across all EU instruments and among donors. Integrating DRR into EU programming procedures is an ambitious objective in line with new resilience-based approaches. Other development actors and donors need to strongly engage in this field to fully integrate disaster risk reduction and preparedness into their development agenda.

Disaster preparedness and risk reduction are primarily the responsibility of local, national and regional institutions. International actors should therefore invest heavily in strengthening these institutions and supporting them by replicating, scaling up these activities and ensuring that DRR is further integrated in national and regional policies.

Accelerated urbanisation in at-risk areas poses new challenges and requires adapted approaches. The recent integration of Civil Protection into ECHO is an opportunity for Civil Protection specialists to train their counterparts in Urban Search and Rescue methodologies.

More effective disaster preparedness and risk reduction will require continual learning, testing of new solutions and expansion to all areas at risk. With the DIPECHO programme encouraging its partners to innovate and learn, the European Commission is making a significant contribution to the DRR agenda and more broadly to increasing resilience of the most vulnerable.

In line with the lessons learnt from its Drought risk reduction programme in the Horn of Africa, ECHO is currently cooperating with DEVCO in major programmes addressing risks in arid areas of Sahel (AGIR) and the Horn of Africa (SHARE).



FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

tel.: (+32 2) 295 44 00

e-mail: echo-info@ec.europa.eu

website: <http://ec.europa.eu/echo>



© Alexandre Latour

Humanitarian
Aid and Civil
Protection

WHAT IS DIPECHO?

PROMOTING COMMUNITY-BASED DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

In most disasters, local people and authorities are the first to respond before any other response can reach the area. Their ability to cope with the consequences of the disaster depends a great deal on whether they have been prepared, trained and equipped to do so. The objective of the DIPECHO (Disaster Preparedness ECHO) programme is therefore to promote *community-based disaster mitigation and preparedness*. DIPECHO projects are carried out by European-based aid agencies and UN agencies in close cooperation with local NGOs and authorities for a maximum of 18 months. Few other donors have been engaged in this area, and DIPECHO projects demonstrate that a community-based approach can be effective in limiting damage and saving lives. Launched in 1996, the programme's budget has increased to over €35M in 2012. It currently covers eight disaster prone regions: the Caribbean, Central America, South America, Southern Africa and Indian Ocean region, Central Asia, South Asia, South-East Asia and the Pacific.



IMPACTS OF DIPECHO ACTIVITIES

DIPECHO projects have an immediate impact on the communities concerned and, as pilot projects, they also aim to encourage other stakeholders to adopt the strategies that they promote.

IMPACT ON COMMUNITIES

There is significant evidence that DIPECHO-supported communities have coped better with disasters than unprepared communities.

In Haiti, large-scale awareness campaigns and mitigation activities have been conducted to teach thousands of vulnerable children and adults how to react in the event of a disaster. These have had a very clear impact on the preparedness of communities and local institutions, particularly in remote, highly vulnerable areas. This was the case, for example, when typhoons hit in 2004 and 2008. In 2010, disaster management committees from the North were deployed to Port-au-Prince to participate in the earthquake relief operation and disseminated preventive messages during the cholera outbreak.

When typhoon Frank hit Southern Leyte in Philippines on June 20, 2008, just 25 days after the installation of the Community Based Early Warning System, the Data Centre's siren sounded a series of alerts and critical flood warnings. The siren was triggered by the real-time data sent from the unmanned water-level sensor station located upstream on the Lower Bantawon River. This warning enabled the Local Government Unit of Saint Bernard to evacuate people from flood-prone areas.

IMPACT ON LOCAL, NATIONAL OR REGIONAL INSTITUTIONS

DIPECHO has increased the visibility of the community-based approach in many national and regional institutions in charge of DRR, leading to its integration into national policy in a number of countries.

Through its field programmes and specific investment with national, regional and global mechanisms, DIPECHO contributed to give a higher profile to community-based approaches in national DRR law and policies in Vietnam, Nepal, Haiti, as well as at regional level, for instance with ASEAN.

IMPACT ON ECHO PARTNERS AND DONORS

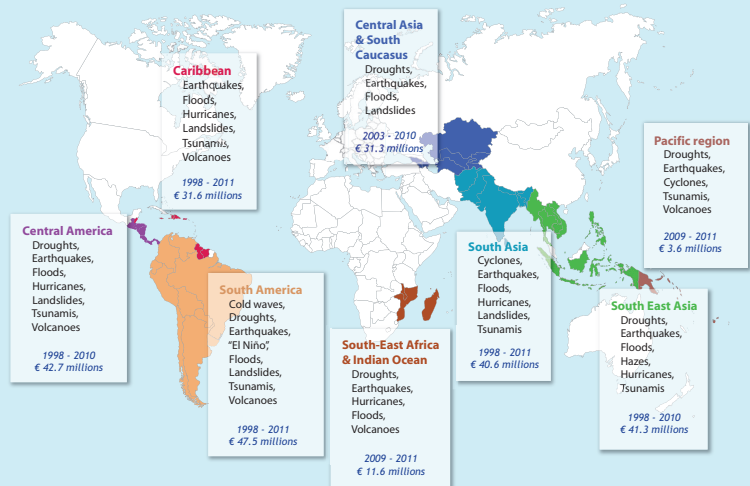
DIPECHO enabled its partners to promote community-based DRR and reduce risk through disaster mitigation. It has also provided necessary funding for partners to pursue advocacy strategies for greater integration of the approach at partnership level. These efforts contributed to developing this expertise within ECHO and its community of partners. In addition, DIPECHO highlighted the importance of community-based DRR amongst other donors.

In the Caribbean, DIPECHO has been a catalyst in encouraging other international donors (DFID, CIDA, OFDA) to adopt ambitious DRR policies and disaster management plans which has led to greater cooperation between regional and international organisations and donors on this issue.

ENSURING THE SUCCESS OF DIPECHO PROJECTS

A key objective of DIPECHO projects is that they should be sustainable and that they should be replicated on a bigger scale, and this depends on both internal and external factors.

Regions targeted by DIPECHO and the major risks they face



DIPECHO FUNDED AREAS OF ACTIVITY

- local level disaster management: early warning systems, mapping and data computerization, local capacity building and training.
- Institutional linkages in particular at regional, national and sub-national levels: advocacy, and facilitation of coordination.
- Information, Education, Communication, targeting direct and indirect beneficiaries: public awareness campaigns, education and dissemination
- Small-scale infrastructure and services at community level.
- Constituting stocks of emergency and relief items
- Livelihoods and economic assets protection: supporting beneficiaries to adapt, prepare or protect their livelihoods.

The increasing need for disaster risk reduction: With the growing threat of disasters due to accelerated urbanization and climate change, the DIPECHO programme is part of the European Commission's commitment to Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR).

DRR BEYOND DIPECHO

DRR saves lives and livelihoods: Reducing the risk of disaster is part of the humanitarian imperative to help those in need rather than waiting until a disaster happens before providing a humanitarian response. Reducing the risk of disaster also protects economic assets and livelihoods. Good DRR is a sound investment.

DRR is essential to and strengthens resilience: DRR enables communities to anticipate, absorb and bounce back from shocks. DRR is the foundation of the Build Back Better and Do No Harm approaches. DRR is essential to sustainable development

ECHO supports DRR through a community based and people-centred approach: People in disaster-affected communities are the first responders as they help each other in immediate life-saving and recovery actions. By adopting a people-centred approach to DRR, ECHO empowers those most at risk, strengthens the key institutions and reduces the need for aid and the potential for dependency.

DRR is a shared responsibility: While recognising the core responsibility of the State, ECHO understands that DRR requires and fosters coordination at various levels. In particular, it requires development and humanitarian actors to work together.

With its new policy for integrating DRR in humanitarian aid, promotion of risk informed programming and special initiatives for the Horn of Africa (SHARE) and the Sahel (AGIR), ECHO promotes DRR beyond DIPECHO.

