



## Disaster Risk Reduction

ECHO FACTSHEET

### Facts & Figures

The EU is committed to strengthening resilience worldwide. Resilience is embedded into the majority of humanitarian and development actions.

For example, more than 65% of all EU-funded humanitarian projects include DRR activities.

In 2017, EU-funding for DRR activities reduced disaster risks for approximately 21 million people worldwide.

Food, Water and Sanitation and Health are the sectors where most ECHO-funded DRR activities are undertaken.



Civil protection field exercise in an earthquake setting

© Modex/Mareike Harms 2018

### Key messages

- Disasters, caused by man-made or natural hazards such as fires, civil unrest, earthquakes, floods, drought and cyclones cannot be prevented. However, the number of lives they take and the damage they cause can be greatly reduced.
- Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) embraces measures taken to reduce hazard intensity, provide protection, and address the reasons why people are exposed and vulnerable.
- During an emergency, quick and effective action is required. If the appropriate action is not taken, or if the response is delayed, lives, resources, houses and livelihoods will be needlessly lost.
- A vital part of DRR consists of the protection of lives and livelihoods through better preparedness. Communities are empowered to strengthen their capacities with simple measures such as training, establishing early warning systems and contingency plans, making shelters safe, and protecting livestock and assets from natural hazards.
- DRR is cost effective: on average, every euro spent of DRR activities saves between four and seven euros that would be spent to respond to the impact of disasters.
- In June 2016, the European Commission launched an action plan to implement the Sendai Framework and promote the integration of disaster risk reduction in EU policies, embracing a multi-hazard approach and including all of society.

European Civil Protection and  
Humanitarian Aid Operations

B-1049 Brussels, Belgium

Tel.: (+32 2) 295 44 00

Fax: (+32 2) 295 45 72

email:

[echo-info@ec.europa.eu](mailto:echo-info@ec.europa.eu)

Website:

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



\* All the latest ECHO  
Factsheets:  
[bit.ly/echo-fs](http://bit.ly/echo-fs)

## EU's contribution to Disaster Risk Reduction

The European Commission's investment in DRR contributes to global efforts to build a culture of safety and resilience among vulnerable communities around the world.

For nearly 20 years the Commission's Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations department has consistently funded DRR programmes, in particular through the "DIPECHO" programme with an aim of reducing the impact of natural disasters on populations and allowing early warning and early action.

Since 2015, a new, more strategic and operational approach to DRR has been implemented by the DG to strengthen coherence with other EU-funded humanitarian projects, better match local systems and EU development co-operation.

The Commission addresses DRR also in the area of civil protection within the European Union, within the context of the European Neighbourhood Policy and in enlargement countries.

## DRR in main humanitarian sectors

### Disaster preparedness – DIPECHO

The DIPECHO programme is present in nine disaster-prone regions throughout the world. It helps the most vulnerable communities in rural and urban areas to be better prepared for and more resilient to natural hazards. It does this through activities such as setting up disaster committees, developing contingency plans, early warning systems and evacuation routes, and identifying safe places to evacuate to. Projects also promote coordination between disaster management institutions at all levels, from local to national and supra-national, in order to ensure that legislation is adopted or adapted and budgets are foreseen for preparedness and timely response.

### Health

Investment in making health systems accessible and more disaster-resilient should always be based on an assessment of local hazards, vulnerabilities and existing capacities. Following a disaster or epidemic, health systems should be further strengthened to cope with current and future risks.

### Food security and Livelihoods

There is a direct correlation between disaster risk and food insecurity. When a disaster occurs, exposure to high levels of disaster risk and lack of capacity to manage these risks trap poor households in a cycle of food insecurity and poverty that quickly deteriorates into a food crisis and acute under-nutrition. Food assistance interventions contribute to disaster risk reduction mainly by protecting livelihood assets (particularly human and social capital). The EU's humanitarian food assistance seeks to avoid undermining community resilience and their coping capacity.

### Water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH)

DRR considerations in WASH interventions are dependent on the type of hazard faced and a community's level of vulnerability. A rapid-onset event (e.g. flood, earthquake, hurricane) can destroy or severely damage infrastructure and limit the capacity of service providers (e.g. community, government or private sector) to operate and maintain systems. A slow onset or chronic event, such as drought, can critically reduce normal water resources by drying up surface water and lowering groundwater tables.

### Shelter

Shelter represents a key asset for any family, and its loss or damage can result in increased vulnerability and exposure. A lack of adequate and safe shelter presents major risks to people affected by disaster. Shelters which are poorly located, designed, constructed and/or maintained are a leading cause of death during natural hazards such as earthquakes, floods or typhoons.

