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HUMANITARIAN AID OFFICE**

**EVALUATION OF THE FIRST
DIPECHO ACTION PLAN FOR SOUTH ASIA
2002**

FINAL REPORT

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Executive Summary

The First DIPECHO Action Plan for South Asia (hereafter referred to as the Action Plan) was adopted in mid-2001 and covers five countries in the region: Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. This region is characterised by high levels of poverty, very dense populations and is subject to severe and repeated natural disasters. The Action Plan has two main objectives: firstly, to reduce the physical vulnerability of target communities specifically to flooding events, and secondly to strengthen local level management capacities of those institutions responsible for disaster preparedness (DP) and management (DM). One of the strategic approaches adopted by DIPECHO for this Action Plan was that projects should demonstrate best practice in vulnerability reduction and that they should be both practical and reproducible. The Action Plan comprised of eight projects with a total value of €2.8 million¹, executed by European non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in conjunction with national and local NGO partners.

Purpose and Methodology

In mid-2002 ECHO decided to carry out a review of the first Action Plan for South Asia. This document presents the findings of an evaluation mission undertaken by two independent consultants who visited the region between 24th of November and 23rd of December 2002². The overall aim of the evaluation is to assess the design and impact of the Action Plan; this includes making individual assessments of the eight projects as well as an evaluation of the overall DIPECHO regional strategy itself. In addition, the evaluation team was tasked with assessing the need for continued support to DP in the region and, if appropriate, to recommend an intervention strategy based on the lessons learned from the evaluation of the first Action Plan.

The evaluation team visited all eight projects in four countries in the region (Pakistan was not included because of the very limited scale of DIPECHO intervention). The approach taken by the team for the evaluation was to combine a quantitative assessment of progress towards achieving stated targets, with a qualitative appraisal of the impact of activities. The latter was achieved largely through interviews and open discussions with key stakeholders such as implementing NGO staff, community members and local government officials. In addition, the team held meetings with representatives of the EC Country Delegations, national government authorities and key stakeholders from the disaster management sector in all four countries.

Main Conclusions

Individual Projects:

With only minor exceptions, the eight projects evaluated by the team were all found to be well designed and executed, with appropriate activities that have contributed to achieving the stated goals of the first Action Plan. The majority of the projects achieved their stated output targets, although four required no-cost extensions due to delays in the start-up of activities. There have been some very successful projects implemented under the first Action Plan, many of which have resulted in a clear reduction in vulnerability to natural hazards at the community level. There have also been successes in capacity building of locally based NGOs and improvements in the co-ordination between civil society and government. An estimated 15,000 people have been provided with training, orientation and management skills and approximately 1.3 million have benefited indirectly from mitigation works and improved local level disaster planning³. There have been a number of good examples of how projects

¹ See Annex I for a summary of the projects, budgets and implementing NGOs.

² AguaConsult provided the two consultants: Harold Lockwood (team leader) and Tony Conlay.

³ See Annex II for a breakdown of beneficiary population by NGO project.

have successfully addressed the issue of gender and caste, or ethnicity, under the first Action Plan. Projects working in very restrictive social and cultural contexts have managed to have a positive impact on disadvantaged groups by adopting participatory approaches. Six of the eight projects worked primarily at community-level and shared broadly similar methodologies, involving participatory approaches, training and the formation of community-level DM structures. The remaining two projects concentrated more on the capacity building of intermediary organisations, which in turn were tasked with working at community-level.

Whilst the majority of projects reviewed by the evaluation team were generally well managed and made efficient use of resources, several projects had overly complex management structures with multiple partners. In those projects the roles and responsibilities between the various levels appear to have become blurred and project impact at community level was less effective. The role of the European NGOs in project management varied, but in overall terms the evaluation team considers that the success of projects was largely determined by the calibre of the local partner. In a number of cases the European NGOs have merely served as an administrative mechanism for the transfer of funds and provided little added value.

The long-term sustainability of these projects at local level is uncertain. In some cases, especially where a livelihoods component has been integrated into the DP activities, there is a greater likelihood that community management structures will be maintained. However, even the best performing communities will require a minimum level of follow-up support and guidance if they are to continue to function effectively.

Overall First DIPECHO Action Plan for South Asia:

When considered on aggregate the eight projects have had a positive impact at community level and developed innovative approaches that have led to changes in the way communities respond to, and manage, natural disasters. Therefore, the strategy for local level capacity building adopted under the first Action Plan is relevant and has been successful, especially in complementing the work of government agencies. In general project beneficiaries have been well targeted on the basis of vulnerability. One very significant, but less tangible, impact of the Action Plan is the raising of awareness about DP issues and the contribution to institutional capacity building at the local level.

On the other hand, the evaluation team considers that the regional approach adopted under the first Action Plan is neither relevant nor appropriate in South Asia given the nature of the region and the limited resources available to DIPECHO. The coherence of activities and co-ordination with external stakeholders, both national and international organisations, has been poor and there has been only limited dialogue with EC Delegations and Member States regarding complementary approaches to DP. The regional ECHO office is poorly resourced and appears to consider DP as a low priority. A lack of consistent monitoring and effective technical support for the Action Plan has resulted in a limited impact at regional level. DIPECHO activities are not widely known outside of the implementing NGO partners and whilst the strategy of promoting pilot activities for replication is an appropriate one, this has only been partially successful in practice and mainly limited to the immediate local operating area of most projects. The strategy of focussing on flooding as the main hazard is appropriate; however, given the range of disaster types in the region, there is no reason why this could not be extended using similar approaches developed under the first Action Plan.

Governments in several countries in the region, most notably India and Bangladesh, have made significant progress towards reforming the way in which they approach disaster management. These reforms have been supported by UN agencies and have attracted considerable donor support, including that of the European Commission (see section 4.1). These developments have obvious and significant ramifications for any future DIPECHO planning in the region. Based on the evaluation of the First DIPECHO Action Plan, the

evaluation team considers that there is a demonstrated need and justification for continued support for DP interventions to countries in the region.

Key Lessons Learned:

- Working directly with communities and local government structures is an appropriate and effective level of intervention, which can complement broader reforms of the DM sector carried out by central governments; NGOs are well placed to work at this level.
- Effective reduction of vulnerability requires a sound background in community development and participatory approaches; however, such approaches cannot be successfully achieved in the short-term and the creation of durable and effective community structures requires a time horizon of two to five years. Therefore continuity of funding support is a critical issue for many smaller NGOs.
- Projects that incorporate livelihoods components, thereby linking relief activities with broader developmental benefits, are much more likely to be sustainable.
- Community-based DP projects that include local government representatives at the lowest levels throughout the project cycle are likely to have a greater impact on the beneficiary community.
- Without a strong level of co-ordination and monitoring the potential value of good projects will not be fully maximised in terms of replication at scale; achieving any strategic added-value also requires efforts to build linkages with external stakeholders.
- In light of the increased interest of other European Commission Services in DM in the region, there is considerable scope for establishing complementary approaches and linking relief interventions with longer-term development programmes.

Recommendations:

- There is a demonstrated need for community-based and local level approaches to vulnerability reduction; ECHO should therefore continue this strategy and consider further support for such activities in a second round of funding for 2003 – 2004. Funding should include a component that allows NGO partners to provide some limited follow-up support to communities included in the First Action Plan (see section 4.2.2 for detailed country-specific operational recommendations).
- Given the South Asia context, there is little added-value in attempting to adopt a regional approach, especially considering the small scale of DIPECHO financing; therefore, future activities should focus on smaller portfolios of country specific projects or geographically concentrated projects addressing a specific type of hazard.
- Likely operational partners would include those NGOs that have performed well under the first Action Plan; however, ECHO should invest more time and attention to assess project proposals, and where possible local implementing partners, prior to approval.
- In order to achieve a more coherent approach to DP within the development context, ECHO should engage much more closely with other European Commission Services prior to making any new funding decisions, especially for India and Bangladesh.
- In order to allow for long-term support to operational partners, ECHO should investigate alternative mechanisms that allow for funding continuity regardless of individual donor constraints; examples of these are the UNDP framework of support to DM in India, Bangladesh and Nepal, and the IFRC regional DP programme.
- Wherever possible future DIPECHO activities should seek to co-ordinate more closely with existing national frameworks of support for DP and establish better linkages with key international stakeholders active in the sector.
- Although flooding is probably the most common disaster hazard to affect all countries in the region, future DIPECHO activities should not necessarily be limited to this one hazard type and could include seismic hazards and landslides.

- Future DIPECHO-funded projects should continue to have a primary focus on training, social organisation and community capacity building. The financing of large-scale physical infrastructure works should be avoided; however, where there is a demonstrated need, DIPECHO should consider funding the construction of appropriate, small-scale infrastructure that is within the capacity of the community to manage and maintain.
- In future DIPECHO should provide sufficient resources to allow for adequate and effective co-ordination, monitoring and dissemination functions, either by better resourcing of the ECHO regional office or by funding of a dedicated agency to co-ordinate other operational partners; if necessary a separate call for proposals should be made to facilitate this process.
- In order to improve the status and likely impact of any future activities there should be a greater level of engagement from DIPECHO in Brussels, more clearly defined management targets for the ECHO regional office and improved technical capacity for back-stopping on DP issues at both levels.

1. Introduction And Background to the Evaluation

1.1 First DIPECHO Action Plan for South Asia

The First DIPECHO Action Plan for South Asia was adopted in mid-2001 and covers five countries in the region: Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. The Action Plan itself was drawn up on the basis of a diagnostic study carried out in 1999⁴ and, in common with other regional DIPECHO Action Plans, has the overarching goal of reducing the vulnerability of exposed communities, by both lessening the human, social and economic costs of natural disasters, as well as reducing the costs of post-event relief operations and minimising setbacks suffered by the broader development process.

In the specific case of South Asia, the Action Plan was designed to address two key factors that heighten the vulnerability of populations in the region; firstly by reducing physical vulnerability of communities and secondly by strengthening local level management capacities of those institutions responsible for disaster preparedness (DP) and disaster management (DM). In addition, ECHO made the decision that this first Action Plan would target flooding as the main hazard in the region, whether caused by cyclonic activity, monsoon or simply heavy rainfall. One of the strategic approaches adopted by DIPECHO for this first Action Plan was that projects should serve as pilots, or demonstrations, of best practice in vulnerability reduction and that they should be both “practical and reproducible”.

Following the original tendering process, ECHO received 13 proposals from ten separate organisations to an aggregate value of €5.4 million, of which nine projects with a total value of €3.2 million were subsequently approved on the basis of an appraisal process. Four of these proposals included projects with activities in more than one country; most of the projects started in November or December of 2001 and were of an initial period of twelve-months. One of the nine projects was to be executed at regional level by the Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre (ADPC) and was designed to promote co-ordination of the DIPECHO activities, largely through exchanges and dissemination of lessons learned. It is significant to note that due to administrative restrictions the ADPC project was not able to proceed as planned, therefore the Action Plan finally comprised of eight projects with a total value of €2.8 million. At the time, the cancellation of the regional project was seen by ECHO as a significant setback to the coherence of the overall Action Plan.

In accordance with DIPECHO funding requirements the contracts for all projects were drawn up with European NGOs, which had developed proposals together with national NGO

⁴ “Diagnostic Study for the DIPECHO Action Plan for South Asia”, European Commission Humanitarian Aid Office, July 1999

partners in the countries concerned. Two basic management models were adopted, with half of the projects being implemented directly by the national NGO partners (DCA, ITDG, BRC and SRC) and the remaining projects implemented through smaller local NGOs which were essentially sub-contracted and managed by the national NGO (Oxfam, CARE, MPDL and APS). All of the projects shared common goals in terms of increasing the capacity of local institutions and were designed to target particularly vulnerable populations in areas of the countries known to suffer from repeated flooding events.

1.1 Purpose of the Evaluation

In mid-2002 ECHO decided to carry out a review of the first Action Plan for South Asia. This document presents the findings of an evaluation mission undertaken by two independent consultants who visited the region between 24th of November and 23rd of December 2002. The terms of reference for the evaluation team are given in Annex I. The overall aim of the evaluation is to assess the design and impact of the Action Plan and to analyse the need for a Second Action Plan for the region; the evaluation has three specific objectives, as follows:

- i. To make an individual assessment of the eight projects with specific reference to their efficiency, results and impact in terms of meeting DIPECHO objectives as laid out in the Action Plan.
- ii. To make an assessment of the overall DIPECHO regional plan itself, to determine its impact after the first year, relevance to the current situation regarding disaster management and to evaluate the original strategy for the plan.
- iii. To assess the need for a possible second Action Plan and, where appropriate, recommend a strategy for such a plan, taking into account the lessons learned from the evaluation of the first Action Plan.

1.3 Methodology

The evaluation team visited four countries in the region (Pakistan was not included because of the very limited scale of DIPECHO intervention) and all eight of the DIPECHO projects. The team carried out interviews with project managers and field staff and visited a total of 19 communities to meet with the target beneficiaries. In addition, wherever possible in all four countries the evaluation team met with individuals from organisations directly engaged in disaster management; these included government officials at national and local levels, UN agencies and international NGOs. The evaluation team also met with representatives of the E.C. Delegations. However, in Nepal despite approaches to the Delegation, it was not possible to arrange for a meeting with the team⁵. A full itinerary and list of persons interviewed is given at Annex III.

The approach taken by the team for the evaluation was to combine a quantitative assessment of progress towards achieving stated targets, with a qualitative appraisal of the impact of activities. The latter was achieved largely through interviews and open discussions with key stakeholders from the implementing NGOs, members of community disaster management groups and local government officials. Wherever possible, anecdotal evidence and preliminary inferences were triangulated with interviews from a range of different stakeholders before arriving at final conclusions. Prior to starting the fieldwork, extensive meetings were held with the regional ECHO Correspondent in order to review global issues and benefit from internal monitoring data and views on the progress of individual projects.

⁵ Information regarding EC plans for involvement in disaster management in Nepal was provided by the Regional Office in New Delhi which has the mandate for India, Nepal and Sri Lanka

2. Evaluation of Individual DIPECHO-Funded Projects

2.1 Lessons Learned and Conclusions Regarding Operational Projects

On the basis of the review of the eight individual projects, the evaluation team concludes that there have been some very successful interventions carried out under the First DIPECHO Action Plan for South Asia, with many resulting in concrete improvements in the capacity of communities to manage disasters at a local level. A number of important patterns and lessons emerge from the evaluation of the eight individual DIPECHO-funded projects, relating to both project design and implementation. Firstly, it is evident that the most successful projects evaluated under the Action Plan are those based on solid community development approaches where a broad cross-section of the beneficiary population participates in the process of vulnerability analysis and planning. However, it is equally clear that there is no “quick-fix” approach to establishing successful and durable community structures. Therefore, organisations tasked with implementing CBDP projects must not only have the relevant experience and capacity in participatory approaches to community development, but also be given sufficient time to carry out these types of activities.

Whilst the majority of projects reviewed by the evaluation team were generally well managed and made efficient use of resources, a pattern emerges concerning the complexity of the management structures and the number of “layers” involved before reaching implementation level. In general those projects with only two layers, such as the BRC, were the most effective in terms of quality and timeliness of project interventions. Conversely, in those projects with three or more layers of management, such as the Oxfam regional project, roles and responsibilities between the various levels appear to have become blurred and project impact at community level was less effective. The most extreme example of this was the APS project in Nepal, which included no less than five layers, involving four separate organisations; the quality of the final results seen by the evaluation team indicated that no one single organisation took on the responsibility for work at the field level.

In the case of Nepal, two separately funded DIPECHO projects (BRC and APS) were largely implemented by the same local partner, the Nepalese Red Cross Society. This has obvious implications for duplication of overhead costs, but of equal concern is the potential loss of coherence across the design and execution of activities. There are also real concerns about absorption capacity and the danger of overloading one single implementing partner through multiple funding sources; however, in this particular case the NRCS is recognised as being a capable organisation with sufficient operational capacity.

Finally, it is clear that under the Action Plan very similar projects were implemented in geographic clusters for populations facing the same type of disaster hazard; for example, cyclones along the eastern seaboard of India, rapid on-set river flooding and landslides in the *terai* region of Nepal and slow on-set flooding in the *Chars* region of Bangladesh. In each case, a number of DIPECHO partners have all developed very similar training and resource materials in parallel with only slight variations (excepting India where two local languages, Orissa and Telgu are required). The evaluation team considers that there was a lack of sharing of materials, as well as implementation methodologies, between NGOs operating in the same clusters at the start of the projects.

Conclusions:

- Effective reduction of vulnerability at community level requires participatory approaches; therefore, implementing partners must have good experience in community development work as well as an interest in promoting DP.

- Such participatory approaches cannot be successfully achieved in the short-term; the creation of durable and effective community DM structures requires a time horizon of two to five years.
- Projects with multiple management layers tend to be less effective at implementing community-based initiatives than those with only one or two levels of management responsibility.
- Multiple funding of the same implementation partner can lead to duplication of costs, may overwhelm absorption capacity and jeopardise programmatic coherence in DP.
- There is scope for sharing of methodologies and standardising educational materials for populations facing the same disaster hazards; this can lead to both cost savings for project development and better coherence with regard to approaches to DP.

2.2 Sustainability of Projects and Linkages Between Relief and Development

Given the short duration of the Action Plan to date it is difficult to make any definitive judgements about the long-term sustainability of project outputs. As mentioned above, the main constraint identified in the first Action Plan is the short time frame for implementation, which in some cases has been less than 12 months due to administrative delays. This has implications for sustainability for both communities and local institutions. Sustaining new community management structures requires a far longer time horizon and the danger is that without follow-up support and guidance, even at much less intensive levels, these structures will disintegrate or become much less effective. For institutions at the local level, many of which do not have the resources to retain project staff beyond the DIPECHO funding period, it will also be difficult to maintain a focus on DP and to replicate successful approaches. With the exception of some of the larger NGOs with the resources and long-term commitment to mainstreaming DP within their programmes (such as DCA or the Red Cross), the evaluation team considers that it is unlikely that many of the DIPECHO projects will be sustainable at the institutional level in the medium to long-term.

Despite these difficulties, there is clear evidence from the first Action Plan that community-based approaches can work well and that there have been successes in building awareness and capacity amongst local NGO partners and lower tiers of government. Involvement of local and district government officials as part of the process of project implementation has undoubtedly built important linkages which can be expanded on in the future. The DIPECHO interventions have demonstrated that there is a clear role for local NGOs in facilitating linkages between civil society and government. Consequently, some communities are now not only more pro-active in terms of coping with disasters, but they are also better informed about the role of government, what they should expect in terms of assistance and are more confident in articulating their demands.

The importance of sustainability and linking relief activities with longer-term development is highlighted by a number of different projects in which emphasis has been placed on supporting community level income generation activities linked to DP; for example by establishing revolving saving funds in cash or in food grains, the pro-active management of communally held forestry assets or the communal use of boats for fishing. All of these initiatives have allowed for modest financing of DP measures such as the repair of damaged river training spurs or planting of saplings. More importantly, by providing the required training and improved management capacity, these activities have created a focal point around DP and allowed poor communities to build up economic and social capital in non-disaster periods. This has enabled communities to not only be better prepared against the impact of a natural disaster, but to also meet their immediate response needs and speed up the recovery process by supporting long-term development efforts. The experiences reviewed by the evaluation team highlight the fact that for highly vulnerable populations, disaster preparedness and management is closely linked with broader development efforts. This lesson also supports the argument for incorporating DP components into the design of mainstream development programmes.

Conclusions:

- Without continued, modest levels of follow-up and support, some of the community-based structures established under the Action Plan are unlikely to be sustained over the long-term.
- Some of the larger national NGO partners will manage to maintain a focus on DP and incorporate this into their on-going programmes; however, the smaller local NGOs are unlikely to be able to maintain a focus on DP without continued financial support.
- Community-based DP projects that include local government representatives at the lowest levels throughout the project cycle are likely to have a greater impact on disaster management amongst the beneficiary population by strengthening the understanding between grass-root organisations and those formal authorities with the mandate for disaster management.
- Community-based DP projects that incorporate livelihoods components are more likely to result in self-sustaining community management structures by integrating relief activities with broader developmental benefits.

3. Evaluation of the First DIPECHO Action Plan for South Asia

3.1 Strategic Approach and Relevance of the Action Plan

When considering the sheer size of the region, both in terms of population and geography, and the limited financial and human resources available to DIPECHO, the concept of a regional approach in South Asia is problematic. In reality the first Action Plan has only been regional in an administrative sense and can be better described as a grouping of similar projects in five countries. Given the very diverse nature of these countries, geo-political tensions and the difficulty of working across international borders, it is difficult to establish a truly regional programme with limited resources. Adopting a regional approach is predicated on pro-active management and effective co-ordination, all of which should bring projects together and achieve synergies through lesson learning, sharing of methodologies and resource materials. The ADPC project was originally intended to provide these functions, but in its absence there has been very little oversight and guidance to make the first Action Plan relevant at the regional level in South Asia.

Despite the lack of coherence at the regional level, the Action Plan is relevant and appropriate at the local level. In almost all cases reviewed by the evaluation team the targeted beneficiary populations were found to be amongst the poorest and most vulnerable to natural disasters. In many projects, awareness of DP and coping capacity has been increased through knowledge and skills-based training of communities, local NGOs and local government. In countries where there are new and significant sectoral reforms underway in disaster management at national level (most notably India and Bangladesh), the focus on local level interventions is highly relevant and complementary to the initiatives of central government.

Whilst the evaluation team considers that significant efforts have been made in all eight projects to develop and demonstrate best practice for reducing vulnerability to flooding, it is evident that the dissemination and replication of these experiences has been limited to the local operating environment of the partner NGOs. There are only a few instances where pilot approaches have been shared more widely with other agencies involved in disaster management; most notably by DCA/LWS in India whose participatory approaches to forming community-based structures are now being incorporated into the work of the Orissa State Disaster Mitigation Authority.

The focus on flooding in the first Action Plan was appropriate, considering that this is one of the most common natural disasters facing all countries. Given the limited resources available to ECHO it was also logical to try to focus on one hazard; however, as all countries in the region face many other hazards, limiting the focus to one type of disaster is somewhat academic. It is more significant to note that, with certain modifications, the principles and methodologies of community-based approaches developed under the first Action Plan for flooding are appropriate and could equally be applied to other disaster typologies.

Conclusions:

- The regional approach adopted under the first Action Plan is not relevant or appropriate in South Asia given the nature of the region and the limited resources available to DIPECHO.
- The strategy for local level capacity building adopted under the first Action Plan is relevant and has been successful, especially in complementing the work of government agencies; project beneficiaries have been well targeted on the basis of vulnerability.
- The strategy of promoting pilot activities for replication is an appropriate one, but has only been partially successful in practice; replication of good practice has been very limited beyond the local geographic area of most projects.
- The strategy of focussing on flooding as the main hazard in the region is appropriate; however, there is no reason why this could not be extended to address other disaster events.

3.2 Appropriateness of Projects within the Action Plan

Given the objectives of the Action Plan, the evaluation team considers that most of the eight projects were well designed, with appropriate activities and have contributed to achieving those stated goals; that is to say they have all attempted to address the vulnerability of populations and/or to strengthen management capacity of local institutions. In more than half of the projects, activities were carried out directly at community level often involving the creation of some form of disaster management committee. In several other cases (SRC, Oxfam and to a lesser extent ITDG in Nepal), more effort and resources were focussed on improving the capacity of intermediary institutions, which in turn worked with the communities. The evaluation team considers this to be an equally effective approach as it contributes to long-term institutional capacity building, although there is the danger that in short-duration projects, the practical benefits do not reach down to community level.

However, the evaluation team does have reservations about the appropriateness of a number of activities or sub-components of several projects. For example, the development of a DM resource centre under the CARE project in India was an extremely ambitious undertaking and appears to have little short or medium term relevance to either main objective as set out in the first Action Plan. A number of projects included activities dealing with procurement and stockpiling of relief materials (the Red Cross in Nepal and Sri Lanka and community stockpiles with DCA/LWF Nepal). Although the establishment of emergency first aid stocks is mentioned in the original DIPECHO Action Plan, large scale stockpiling by major response agencies such as the Red Cross essentially constitutes preparing for response, which is a quite separate issue to that of DP, especially when considered as a community-based, bottom-up process.

Conclusions:

- The overwhelming majority of projects were well designed and included appropriate activities that have contributed to achieving the stated goals of the first Action Plan.

- A small number of components of some projects were not appropriate given the overall framework of the Action Plan and, in a very few instances, would appear to be more in-keeping with the aims of the implementing partners.

3.3 Local Level Impact of the Action Plan

Under the first Action Plan impact at the community level has generally been very positive, with an estimated 15,000 people directly engaged in project activities and approximately 1.3 million people indirectly benefiting from mitigation works and improved local level disaster planning. There have been some very encouraging experiences and innovative methodologies with projects having real impact in terms of changing the way communities respond to, and manage, natural disasters such as flooding. In a number of cases, there have been real-life tests of new organisational structures, preparedness procedures and physical mitigation works: cyclone warnings in India, severe floods in the *terai* plains of Nepal and the annual flooding in Bangladesh have all presented challenges to local communities over the last year. A small number of the DIPECHO projects have had less of an impact at the local level, either because of lack of time to reach the community (in the case of the SRC in Sri Lanka), or because they have taken a more top-down approach and concentrated on institutional level capacity building (Oxfam in Nepal and parts of the CARE India project).

There have been a number of good examples of how projects have successfully addressed the issue of gender and caste, or ethnicity, under the first Action Plan. Projects working in very restrictive social and cultural contexts have managed to have a positive impact on disadvantaged groups by adopting participatory approaches. For example, women and members of lower caste groups have been successfully incorporated into DM structures with decision-making powers in India. There are also positive and very practical examples of how other vulnerable groups within communities such as the elderly and the physically handicapped have been targeted under DIPECHO-financed projects. In many cases community DP committees have drawn up contingency plans, identifying households with special needs to enable priority action in the case of an evacuation. Where there are limited levels of adult literacy, a number of projects have successfully involved children as change agents for adults by focusing on DP issues in school.

In a limited number of projects there have been successful impacts at local level in the use of environmental resources as tools for mitigation works through bio-engineering. However, given the underlying causes of many flooding disasters in the region, international political sensitivities and the sheer scale of the problem, these types of DP projects only impact on the immediate environment of the community. As part of the process of community training and awareness some projects in Nepal did attempt to make linkages between the use of forestry resources and vulnerability to flooding, although again only at a very local level.

One major positive impact of the Action Plan at local level concerns attitudes towards DP. Projects have included orientation and training of NGO and CBO staff, community volunteers, locally elected government officials, civil servants and members of the Red Cross/Red Crescent. In some projects, networks for DP have either been established or existing ones strengthened (CARE, India and BRC Nepal respectively). In many countries DP is a relatively new concept, especially for government staff, which have traditionally viewed their function as primarily one of response. Although most of the INGOs have some experience in DP, it is true to say that many of their local NGO implementing partners do not and have been on a steep learning curve in this first year. There is no question that several hundred individuals from across a range of organisations have been exposed to new ideas and are better informed and skilled as a result of these projects. Therefore, the evaluation team considers that the first Action Plan has made an important contribution to general institutional capacity building at the local level and has successfully promoted the concepts of prevention

and mitigation. This achievement is difficult to quantify, but should not be underestimated in terms of promoting a positive change in attitudes towards management of natural disasters.

Conclusions:

- The first Action Plan has had a positive impact at community level and included innovative approaches that have led to changes in the way communities respond to, and manage, natural disasters.
- At local level, the Action Plan has generally been successful in targeting and addressing the needs of particularly vulnerable groups, including women, the elderly and the handicapped.
- There has been limited success in the use of natural resources as an aid to mitigation; however, the Action Plan has not been able to address the causal relationships between environment and risk reduction at scale.
- The first Action Plan has had a very positive impact in terms of raising awareness about DP and has made a significant contribution to institutional capacity building at the local level.

3.4 Regional Level Impact and Co-ordination of the Action Plan

The evaluation team considers that there has been little impact brought about by the Action Plan at regional level in the first year of operation. As discussed in section 3.1 this is due in part to the difficulty of taking a coherent approach to such a vast region. Although there have been a number of efforts to promote co-ordination organised by various NGOs, there has been only limited success in the dissemination of lessons learned more widely, as some of these events were targeted at “internal” audiences with staff from the same family of NGO partners. Generally speaking it is those NGO partners with an existing regional presence and a strong track record in DP that have taken a regional perspective (DCA, Oxfam and ITDG). It is significant to note that ECHO itself has not made any attempt to bring all DIPECHO partners together at regional level to address co-ordination issues and to promote lesson-learning during the lifetime of the Action Plan.

The evaluation team considers that the regional impact of the Action Plan has been limited by a lack of pro-active and systematic follow-up and co-ordination efforts on the part of ECHO. Except in Bangladesh, which benefited from an in-country ECHO Correspondent for the first six months of the Action Plan, the DIPECHO profile is not well known outside of the NGO implementing partners. There has been little, if any, effective co-ordination of DIPECHO activities with existing disaster prevention or preparedness programmes. Lack of follow-up has also meant that there has been little lesson learning at programmatic level and few strategic linkages established between DIPECHO and other key stakeholders at national or regional level (such as UNDP or the IFRC). Clearly, the first Action Plan has suffered from the failure of the ADPC project to materialise, which was designed to fulfil these co-ordination functions and it was unfortunate that it was cancelled. However, given that this was a known factor early on in the process, it is surprising that DIPECHO did not make other arrangements to put in place some form of consistent oversight and co-ordination mechanism to fill this vacuum.

It is apparent that there has been limited communication between ECHO and other Commission services (again excepting in Bangladesh) concerning a common approach to DP issues and attempts to complement DIPECHO projects with longer-term development activities funded by the Commission. The same situation would appear to apply to EU Member States with bi-lateral programmes of support for DP. In Bangladesh there has been good co-ordination with the UK, which has been a long-standing donor of DP, as well as with smaller programmes funded by the Netherlands, Sweden and Denmark. But in all other

countries, the evaluation team understands that there has been very limited dialogue between ECHO and Member States regarding DP.

Conclusions:

- The first Action Plan has had a very limited impact at regional level; there has been some lesson learning and dissemination of experience, but this has mainly been achieved on the initiative of the partner NGOs.
- In general (excepting Bangladesh) the DIPECHO programme does not have a very high profile; strategic linkages and efforts to integrate DIPECHO actions with other key players, either national governments or international agencies, has been poor.
- There has been limited communication between ECHO and other Commission Services or Member States regarding DP programmes and the potential for co-ordinated or coherent approaches (again with the exception of Bangladesh).

3.5 Management of the First Action Plan

In purely financial terms, the first DIPECHO Action Plan accounts for approximately 15% of the overall regional ECHO budget in South Asia. The ECHO Correspondent confirms that he spends a similar proportion of his time on DP issues; however, it appears that these inputs tend to be less intensive, more fragmented and are frequently delayed or postponed on the basis of other competing demands, which seem to have a higher priority. There are many concrete examples of this, such as the inability to attend one of the few regional DP seminars organised by ITDG in Pakistan. In theory, the DIPECHO projects should receive at least three monitoring visits during the project cycle. In practice, no project has received three visits and no visit has ever been made to the Oxfam project in India. Monitoring and regular guidance for projects was much better in Bangladesh during the first six months of 2002.

One direct result of this lack of monitoring is the limited amount of technical guidance and oversight provided to NGO partners (except in Bangladesh). It has also undoubtedly been a factor in the limited value of the projects as pilot or demonstration efforts beyond the immediate NGO operating areas. In addition, there have been cases of duplication of effort and wastage of resources; for example, the parallel development of training materials by several projects working with homogenous target populations, or the purchase of two entirely incompatible GIS financed by DIPECHO for two Red Cross national societies (Nepal and Sri Lanka).

The evaluation team recognises that this lack of oversight and guidance from ECHO is due in part to human resources constraints, especially following the departure of the international ECHO Correspondent based in Dhaka about half way through the Action Plan period. A recently hired national staff member based in Delhi has gone some way to ease this situation. However, the evaluation team has concerns about the level of authority and technical capacity in the regional office and the ability to effectively engage with project partners.

More significantly, it was apparent to the evaluation team that the input and attention given to DP appears to be based largely on individual motivation, rather than being institutionalised and driven by management targets and clearly prioritised tasks. The generally low priority for DP also appears to be reflected by the apparent lack of any “push” factor from ECHO Brussels. The desk officer with responsibility for DIPECHO in South Asia never actually visited the region during the lifetime of the first Action Plan and the ECHO Correspondent reports that there has been limited follow-up in terms of technical guidance and oversight from Brussels.

Conclusions:

- Monitoring and supervision of the first Action Plan has not been effective and this has led to a number of operational problems and duplication of effort.
- Management of the DIPECHO Action Plan has suffered from a poorly resourced ECHO regional office with limited technical capacity in DP issues.
- DP is not reflected as a high priority within ECHO, either at headquarters or in the region, and there is a lack of clear management systems for setting and achieving targets in support of DP work.

4. Implementation Strategy for Future DIPECHO Activities in South Asia

4.1 Disaster Management Context in South Asia

Any future DIPECHO planning for South Asia must take account of recent developments in the field of disaster management and assess the changes, if any, in vulnerability of populations to natural or man-made disasters. The design of the First DIPECHO Action Plan was based on the diagnostic study carried out for ECHO in 1999. Since that time, whilst there have been no significant changes in the type and scope of disasters facing vulnerable populations, there have been a number of important new initiatives on the part of national governments and international agencies. A brief synopsis of these developments, by country visited by the evaluation team, is given at annex IV.

4.1.1 National Government Initiatives

As stated in the diagnostic study there is a large body of knowledge and resources available with NGOs concerning disaster management in the region, but there has been a lack of co-ordination and weak national level capacity to benefit from these experiences. Based on discussions with a range of stakeholders the evaluation team considers that this situation is now in the process of improving. In all four countries, but especially in India and Bangladesh, central governments have now recognised the importance of addressing disaster management in a holistic way, with emphasis on mainstreaming preparedness and mitigation activities into the development process.

In India the federal government has embarked on a major reform of the sector with the establishment of a new Ministry of Disaster Management and a long-term plan for addressing vulnerability reduction in 12 of the most vulnerable states in the country. This ambitious plan is supported by UNDP, which has drawn up a US\$50 million programme over five years and is now underway.

Likewise in Bangladesh there is a major new initiative, also being facilitated by UNDP, which is aimed at strengthening the government as well as establishing a national level Comprehensive Disaster Management Plan (CDMP). Significantly the reforms in both India and Bangladesh recognise the importance of based-community approaches at the local level and the role NGOs can play. Operational activities under the CDMP are due to start in 2003.

In Nepal for obvious reasons the government has been focussed much more on internal security issues and there has been little apparent progress in terms of disaster management. However, UNDP has drawn up a five-year programme of capacity building aimed at addressing both policy issues and operational capacity.

In Sri Lanka there has been a new initiative to create a fully-fledged Ministry of Disaster Management, which has just been finalised with the appointment a new minister. It has been reported that the GoSL intends to increase the amount of funding available for DP as oppose to response; however, all of these new developments must be seen in the context of the evolving peace negotiations which will dominate both government and donor interests for the foreseeable future.

4.1.2 Regional Initiatives

As is evidenced from the raft of new initiatives outlined above, UNDP is taking a pro-active role in supporting DM in many countries in the region and has fielded a regional disaster reduction programme advisor from their central Bureau of Crisis Prevention and Recovery. UNDP has stated that there is a continued requirement for community-based interventions, such as those supported by DIPECHO, to complement the reform initiatives being undertaken by governments in the region. Over the last two years IFRC has been developing a regional strategy for DP, which recognises the importance of preparedness in providing an effective link between emergency response, rehabilitation and development. As indicated in the diagnostic study, a number of international and national NGOs continue to be engaged in disaster related activities, including CARE, LWF, Oxfam and ITDG all of whom have on-going community-based programmes in various countries.

4.1.3 European Commission Services

The E.C. Delegation in India has indicated that it intends to provide significant financing to the UNDP/GoI programme and is also encouraging member states to make additional bi-lateral pledges of support. The Delegation anticipates that it will provide in the order of €10 million for DP over the next five year period, approximately €6 million of which will go to the UNDP programme, with the balance being used to support local and community level projects. The E.C. Delegation has made clear that this is a country-specific programme, and that no direct support for DP will be allocated to either Nepal or Sri Lanka. In order to programme this financial support, the E.C. Delegation has applied for a full-time DP resource person. In Bangladesh, the Commission has been an active participant in the planning process for the CDMP, through the ECHO office in Dhaka. Under the new National Indicative Programme for the period 2003 – 2005 (yet to be finally approved), DP has been included as one of the components, although there is not yet clarity about the size of the budget allocation. These developments in both India and Bangladesh have obvious and significant implications for any future DIPECHO plans in the region.

4.2 Recommendations for Future DIPECHO Actions in South Asia

The following recommendations to ECHO for the future of DP work in the South Asia region are based on the conclusions highlighted in sections 2 and 3 of this document. The recommendations also take into account recent developments in the sector as summarised above and, most significantly, the plans of other Commission services. Lastly, the recommendations account for the fact that there will be no additional funding or human resources for DIPECHO in the next financial year, as indicated by ECHO in the briefing for the evaluation team.

4.2.1 Strategic Recommendations

- There is a demonstrated need for community-based and local level approaches to support vulnerability reduction in the region and ECHO should continue to consider support to this level of intervention in a second round of funding for 2003 - 2004.
- ECHO should continue to partner with international and national NGOs with experience in DP and community development work.
- Community-based approaches are effective but cannot be implemented in a short time frame (i.e. one year funding cycles); therefore, ECHO should seek alternative funding mechanisms that allow for continuity of interventions; for example financing via multi-lateral agencies such as UNDP or IFRC, or partnering with other Commission Services.

- In order to achieve a more coherent approach to DP within the development context, ECHO should engage much more closely with other Commission Services prior to making any new funding decisions.
- Wherever possible future DIPECHO activities should seek to co-ordinate more closely with existing national frameworks of support for DP and establish better linkages with key international stakeholders active in the sector.
- Although flooding is probably the most common disaster hazard to affect all countries in the region, future DIPECHO activities should not necessarily be limited to this one hazard type.
- Given the South Asia context, there is little added-value in attempting to adopt a regional approach, especially considering the small scale of DIPECHO financing; therefore, future activities should focus on smaller portfolios of country specific projects or geographically concentrated projects addressing a specific type of hazard.
- In order to maximise the impact of DIPECHO in the region, greater efforts should be given to disseminate successful practices, both within the group of implementing partners and externally. Such dissemination can be achieved by having a dedicated organisation facilitating the process (see below), through workshops, improved documentation and regular linkages with key players.
- Any future DIPECHO Action Plan should include sufficient resources to allow for effective (hands-on) co-ordination, monitoring and dissemination, either internally or by out-sourcing to a separate agency. If necessary a separate call for proposals should be designed to address this requirement, with a dedicated NGO or other agency mandated to co-ordinate operational partners.
- In order to improve the status and likely impact of any future DIPECHO Action Plan there should be a greater level of engagement from DIPECHO in Brussels, more clearly defined management targets for the ECHO regional office and improved technical capacity for back-stopping on DP issues at both levels.
- Any further funding of existing DIPECHO partners in South Asia should include sufficient resources to allow for limited follow-up activities to communities supported during the First Action Plan, as well as to work in new communities.

4.2.2 Operational Recommendations

General Operational Recommendations

- Priority should be given to community-based DP projects that are designed to incorporate a livelihoods component.
- Priority should be given to community-based DP projects that are designed to include government representation at the lowest possible local levels.
- Priority should be given to proposals that focus on promoting the interests of, and empowering, women and other more vulnerable groups within society.
- ECHO should encourage projects that promote an understanding of the causal relationship between use of natural resources and vulnerability to natural disasters at the local level.
- ECHO should invest more time and attention to investigate potential project implementing partners prior to approving proposals, in order to assess their track-record in DP and their capacity to work with participatory approaches more generally.
- Where possible project management structures for implementing community-based initiatives should be limited to a maximum of two layers (not including ECHO as the donor agency);
- Multiple funding of the same implementation partner should be avoided if possible.
- Where similar projects are being implemented under the same general conditions, greater efforts should be made to share methodologies and standardise materials, thereby economising on costs and developing a coherent approach to DP work.

- Disaster types to be considered under any future DIPECHO funding could include any or all of the following: cyclonic flooding, rapid on-set (flash) flooding, slow-on-set flooding, earthquakes, and landslides; response to droughts should not be included at this stage.
- Projects for further DIPECHO support should continue to have a primary focus on software aspects, such as community organisation, training and capacity building. Large-scale physical infrastructure projects should be avoided; however, where small-scale physical mitigation works are appropriate to the needs of local communities these should be included. Examples of such appropriate infrastructure would include the following: small-scale river training spurs and embankment protection works, planting of trees and grasses for soil stabilisation (bio-engineering), check-dams, small-scale terracing and the construction of raised platforms at either household or community level.

India

- It is recommended that no funding decisions be made before ECHO has engaged fully with the EC Delegation and considered joint funding of projects, either directly or under the umbrella of the UNDP programme of support to the GoI. By seeking this partnership there is considerable scope for linking DP activities with the broader development work funded by the Commission, as well as opportunities for joint management and oversight of projects.
- There should be a greater level of engagement under any new DIPECHO Action Plan in India with the newly created Ministry of Disaster Management and state level disaster management structures, as well as with international agencies active in the sector such as the World Bank, UNDP and the IFRC.
- Given the scale of the country, any future DIPECHO Action Plan in India should focus on only one or two states known to suffer from a particular hazard or set of hazards. Cyclonic flooding occurs in the coastal states of West Bengal, Orissa, Tamil Nadu and A.P., slow on-set river flooding occurs regularly in U.P., Bihar, Assam and West Bengal and earthquake hazards are highest in the northern sector of the country, extending from Gujarat and Rajasthan in the west to Assam in the east.
- Likely operational partners would include those NGOs which have performed well under the First DIPECHO Action Plan; communities that have been targeted in the First Action Plan should be given limited follow-up in any second round of funding.

Bangladesh

- It is recommended that no funding decisions should be made until ECHO has a clearer understanding of EC Delegation plans for future support to DP in the country.
- ECHO should resume its participation in the framework support process of the CDMP and explore opportunities for channelling funding to NGOs through the umbrella of the UNDP programme of support to the GoB.
- Likely operational partners would include those NGOs which have performed well under the First DIPECHO Action Plan; communities that have been targeted in the First Action Plan should be given limited follow-up in any second round of funding.
- Cyclonic flooding and storm surges occur along coastal areas of the country and severe, annual flooding occurs along the two main river corridors; populations living on the *Chars* areas in Bangladesh are particularly prone to flooding. There is a risk of seismic activity primarily in the north-east of the country, although even the central area (including Dhaka) is at risk.

Nepal

- The situation in Nepal is complicated by on-going insecurity in the country and it is unlikely that the government will be fully engaged in DP issues for the foreseeable future. However, there is scope for DIPECHO to inform itself more fully by investigating the proposed programme of support for DP put forward by UNDP.
- Flash flooding and landslides are prevalent in the *terrai* plains area of the country and earthquakes occur regularly in all regions, but are likely to have the greatest impact in the Kathmandu valley area due to the higher population densities; any decisions about the geographical targeting of interventions will be greatly influenced by security constraints.
- The DP Network is a valuable forum for sharing of experience and co-ordination amongst NGOs active in the sector; supporting this network would provide a continuing opportunity for DIPECHO to have a strategic impact on DP in Nepal.

Sri Lanka

- Given the relative socio-economic situation in Sri Lanka, it is not recommended that DIPECHO provide direct funding to dedicated DP projects. Instead it is recommended that DIPECHO provide technical assistance and advice to the EC Delegation for existing and future integrated development projects that include DP components.

Annex I: TERMS OF REFERENCE

For the evaluation of the First DIPECHO Action Plan in South Asia

Contract n°: ECHO/EVA/210/2002/01009

Name of consultants: Messrs. H. Lockwood and A. Conlay (AguaConsult)

Introduction

Since 1994 ECHO has been financing disaster prevention, mitigation and preparedness operations in disaster prone regions of the developing world. These operations are proposed and implemented by European NGOs, international organisations and universities/research institutes.

These operations have been financed in two ways:

- as a component of humanitarian aid operations and in particular within Global Plans to answer to complex emergencies, contributing to link emergency aid, rehabilitation and development;
- in the form of projects, programmes or action plans financed on the B7-219 specific budget line for prevention and preparedness projects and programmes.

The objectives of ECHO disaster-prevention and preparedness policy are to help to reduce vulnerability to risk, to ensure appropriate preparedness through the development of human resources and institutional strengthening. ECHO's main focus is on **promoting and initiating appropriate short-term preparedness activities** to mitigate the impact and risks of natural disaster on the most vulnerable sections of the population and improve their reaction capacity. ECHO finances activities such as training, institutional strengthening, awareness-raising campaigns, early-warning systems or relief organisation. Regardless of the level at which an action is implemented - even the regional level - a project must meet and reflect the needs of **local communities**.

In 1996, in order to concentrate more accurately on priority needs in a more consistent way, ECHO took a regional and proactive approach by developing the DIPECHO (Disaster Preparedness ECHO) programme. To start with, three regions among the more disaster prone were selected: South East Asia and Bangladesh, Central America and the Caribbean. In 1998, and considering the exposure to natural hazards and the vulnerability of the people of the Andean region and South Asian countries, ECHO decided to extend the DIPECHO programme to the Andean Community and to South Asia.

The DIPECHO overall approach is currently being reviewed and a general evaluation of the general DIPECHO programme is scheduled to be undertaken shortly. In the meantime most of the regional DIPECHO programmes have been evaluated separately. The most recent evaluation has been on the DIPECHO programme in the Andean Community, undertaken in April 2001. ECHO has also carried out a feasibility study earlier this year on the future DIPECHO programme in Central Asia.

The first DIPECHO Action Plan for South Asia (India, Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Pakistan) comprised 9 projects for a total amount of 3.2 M € and was adopted in July 2001. It reflected the main findings of the diagnostic study carried out in 1999 plus the conclusions of DPP (Disaster Preparedness and Prevention) operations carried out since 1994. This Action Plan was drawn up "to offer practical and reproducible ways of dealing with the two factors that heighten the vulnerability of the South Asian population: **physical vulnerability and weak institutional management**". According to the Plan ECHO intended to focus on activities at local level following a bottom-up approach. A few regional projects were also

approved. Notwithstanding the earthquakes that struck the State of Gujarat in India at the time of the elaboration of the Plan, ECHO decided that this Action Plan would aim at reducing the vulnerability of the population to the effects of floods, which are considered to be the main hazard in the region. In fact, only a few projects were received by ECHO following its call for proposals for DIPECHO projects in South Asia.

Following on from other evaluations of its DIPECHO activities, ECHO has now decided to evaluate 8 projects included in the July 2001 funding decision, that are being carried out in India, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh. It should be noted that activities in Pakistan are minor. The evaluation has as a global objective to assess the results of these actions and to provide with the necessary information for the planning of future DIPECHO actions within the region.

The analysis of the projects should take into account, as far as possible, the following categories:

- a. preparedness projects or activities: early alert, communication systems and life-saving; institutional strengthening at local level; training, information and awareness.
- b. mitigation projects or activities: small-scale mitigation pilot projects.
- c. level of action: local, national; regional.

Operations to be evaluated

Name of recipient	Beneficiary country	Title of action	Amount €	% of total Action Plan budget
Disaster Relief Agency (NL)	India	Anhra Pradesh Disaster mitigation and preparedness project - APDMP	300,000	9.375
MPDL (E)	India	Community Based Disaster Preparedness in the Coastal districts of Andhra Pradesh	350,000	10.9375
Belgian Red Cross (B)	Nepal	Disaster Preparedness program: Human resource development,; strengthening of management capacities; development of DP network and Community Based Disaster Preparedness	200,000	6.25
Spanish Red Cross (E)	Sri Lanka	Strengthening Disaster Management Capabilities of communities vulnerable to disasters	400,000	12.5
APS (I)	Bangladesh/Nepal	Flood effects mitigation on rural population	400,000	12.5
Dan Church Aid (DK)	India/Bangladesh/ Nepal	Asian Zone Emergency and Environment Co-operation Network (AZEECON):	450,000	14.0625

		Community based Preparedness and capacity building in disaster prone areas		
Oxfam (UK)	India/Bangladesh/ Nepal	Reduce the vulnerability of poor communities in the Ganges and Brahmaputra River Basin	450,000	14.0625
ITDG (UK)	Pakistan/Bangladesh/Nepal	Application of alternative strategies for Community Based flood preparedness	250,000	7.8125

Purposes of the evaluation

Article 18 of Regulation (EC) 1257/96 concerning humanitarian aid states “the Commission shall regularly assess aid operations financed by the Community in order to establish whether they have achieved its objectives and to produce guidelines for improving the effectiveness of future operations”.

Global objective

To assess the set up and impact of the First DIPECHO Action Plan for South Asia and to analyse the need for a second Action Plan. In case the need is recognised, recommendations should be drawn to help ECHO to establish the guidelines and priorities for its Second DIPECHO action Plan for South Asia to be launched next year. These guidelines and priorities will be published on ECHO web site as part of a call for proposals for DIPECHO projects.

Specific objectives

To have a structured evaluation of the results of the individual projects of the First DIPECHO Action Plan for South Asia on one hand and of the overall regional intervention strategy on the other - relevance, impact (both on beneficiaries and on local/regional structures), effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and the development of durable solutions-. The evaluation should look at the way these results have been achieved, providing recommendations for future action.

Desired results

The desired results of the evaluation are:

To have an **individual assessment** of the 8 DIPECHO operations and of their context including:

- an analysis of the results of each individual project with regards to the main evaluation criteria cited on 3.2 above.

The analysis of the efficiency of the operations should include a brief analysis of the operational capacities of the partners as well as of their managerial capacities towards the mobilisation of civil organisations, the participation of public authorities and the degree to which they are able to trigger the effective implication of beneficiaries in the implementation of the projects.

- assessing the complementarity and coherence of the projects in the frame of the link between emergency aid, prevention and development actions (LRRD).

To have an assessment of whether the projects evaluated are appropriate in the frame of the overall objectives of the DIPECHO regional Action Plan. This should be done by:

- providing a short description of the political and social-economic situation, disaster preparedness and prevention needs and, where existing, any local capacities available to respond to local needs. This analysis should include an overview which places in context the Action Plan financed by DIPECHO;

- analysing the local/regional impact of the Plan: strengthening of regional/local structures, exchange of experience between authorities and populations in the region together with interactions at local and regional levels. Given the large population in the areas covered and the small amounts of funds available, ECHO decided to focus its DIPECHO activities in South Asia at the local and regional level: some attention should be given as to whether this policy should be continued.

- assessing the co-ordination and complementarity of the Action Plan projects with regards to existing disaster prevention and preparedness projects in the region (specially from EU Member States and from other Commission services);

To **recommend a strategy** and projects for the next DIPECHO Action Plan envisaged for the region. This analysis should include:

- a short study of the **most vulnerable areas** to allow a diagnostic on the vulnerability of the local populations in those areas. A list of the priority zones will have to be elaborated and justified. In this context an assessment would be useful of the perception of natural catastrophes for the local populations and of the impact they have on their behaviour. The analysis should also permit an appreciation of the capacities both of the local population and of local public authorities to deal with problems pinpointed.

- an assessment of the **capacity** of regional, national or local organisations to organise preparedness and prevention activities in those regions.

- to recommend **an intervention strategy for the region** which would take into account the lessons learned of the first Plan (first and second bullet points) and which will serve as a basis for the preparation of the second Action Plan.

- to recommend **precise and concrete proposals** on the future types of projects to be supported within the framework of the next DIPECHO Action Plan in South Asia: type of activities, level of intervention. These recommendations should be elaborated as a response to new or existing needs in terms of risk and vulnerability of the local population.

- To have an assessment as to how to **improve** the co-ordination, complementarity and coherence of the actions implemented in the region:

Between ECHO partner, other donors, international operators and local authorities.

Between ECHO interventions and possible interventions by others in the same areas. Special attention should be paid to existing disaster preparedness and prevention projects in the region (from EU member States and from other Commission Services).

Other issues, which may be relevant for the study, are in order of importance:

- Gender; Effects on the environment; Elderly; Children; Handicapped; Donor communication strategy and visibility; Respect of Human Rights; Security of aid workers.

The consultant will take into account the non-exclusive list of criteria referred to in 3.2. The definition of these criteria and sample questions to be answered regarding each of them are given in annex 2 to these ToR.

The weighting given in the study to these criteria will be influenced by the level of implementation of the action and of the importance given to these by ECHO during the briefing session. The consultant however, as elsewhere, will retain full authority to decide on how to cover the points in his independent report.

Work Plan

The evaluation is made in 3 stages:

Briefing in Brussels: *maximum 2 days*

- A **briefing** at ECHO with the responsible staff during which all the documents available for the mission and necessary clarifications will be provided by the requesting service and other services of the Commission. The briefing should ideally take place not less than **10 days** before the consultants' departure to the field in order to allow enough time for the examination and analysis of the documentation that will be provided.
- **Examination and analysis** of documents (desk study). This phase is to allow a careful planning of the activities/visits to be undertaken in the field.

Field Study: *maximum 31 days*

- The consultant must work in co-operation with the relevant Commission Delegation, ECHO experts, ECHO partners, local authorities, international organisations and other donors;
- The consultant should devote **the beginning of the mission to each country** to preliminary and preparatory discussions with the Delegations, ECHO experts and local ECHO partners;
- **At the end of the missions** the consultant should meet with the Delegation, ECHO experts and ECHO partners for discussion of observations arising from the evaluation.

Debriefing (*maximum 2 days*) **and submission of reports.**

- The first **draft report** in accordance with the format given in point 4.2 below shall be submitted by electronic transmission (Word 7.0 format or a more recent version) to ECHO 15 calendar days after the consultant's return from the field.
- The starting date for the **debriefing** in Brussels will be fixed by ECHO not earlier than 10 working days after the submission of the first draft report(s). Prior to the meeting, ECHO will have transmitted in writing any substantial comments to the consultant.
- On the basis of the results of the debriefing the **draft final report** will be submitted to ECHO within a maximum of 15 calendar days. ECHO should mark its agreement within 15 calendar days or request further amendments.
- Submission of the **final report**.

Reports

The evaluation will result in the drawing up of one report written in a straightforward manner, in English, of a maximum length of 18 pages including the Executive Summary which should appear at the beginning of the report.

The evaluation report is an extremely important working tool for ECHO. The report format appearing below must, therefore, be strictly adhered to:

- *Cover page*

- title of the evaluation report:

- “Evaluation of the First DIPECHO Action Plan in South Asia- 2002.”;

- date of the evaluation;

- name of the consultant;

- indication that “the report has been produced and financed by at the request of the European Commission. The comments contained herein reflect the opinions of the consultant only”.

- *Table of contents*

- *Executive Summary:*

A tightly-drafted, to-the-point and free-standing Executive Summary is an essential component. It should be short, **no more than two or three pages**. It should focus on the key purpose or issues of the evaluation, outline the main points of the analysis, and clearly indicate the main conclusions, lessons learned and specific recommendations. Cross-references should be made to the corresponding page or paragraph numbers in the main text. Member States receive each Executive Summary, which is also published on the ECHO Web Page. The consultant should take this into account when drafting this part of the report.

The structure of the Executive Summary must be as follows:

- EVALUATED ACTION

- DATE OF THE EVALUATION:

- CONSULTANT’S NAME :

- PURPOSE & METHODOLOGY:

- MAIN CONCLUSIONS:

- These conclusions should refer to the study of the main evaluation criteria, cross-cutting issues and desired results dealt with by the consultant and set out under point 3 of the ToR.

- LESSONS LEARNED:

- RECOMMENDATIONS:

- *Main body of the report:* The main report should refer to the points listed under point 3.3. Individual fiches containing the in-depth technical analysis of each specific project will be provided as an annex to the main report. It also shall elaborate, although not necessarily in the same order or following the same structure, the elements included in the Executive Summary. It will include references to the methodology used for the evaluation and the context of the action. In particular, for each key conclusion there should be a corresponding recommendation. Recommendations should be as realistic, operational and pragmatic as possible; that is, they should take careful account of the circumstances currently prevailing in the context of the action, and of the resources available to implement it both locally and in the Commission (15 pages maximum).

- Annexes:
 - Terms of Reference;
 - List of persons interviewed and sites visited;
 - Map of the areas covered by the operations financed under the action;
 - Abbreviations.

Any confidential information shall be presented in a **separate annex**.

Each report shall be drawn up in 20 copies and transmitted to ECHO.

An **electronic copy** of each report (diskette or, preferably, CD ROM, Word 7.0 format or a more recent version) **including all annexes** must be submitted together with the final reports' hard copies.

Required skills for the consultants

- This evaluation is part of a global evaluation that will be carried out by a team of 2 experts with experience both in the humanitarian field and in the evaluation of humanitarian aid. Specific knowledge in Disaster Preparedness with a Community Based orientation is required. These experts must agree to work in high risk areas. Solid experience in relevant fields of work to the evaluation and in the geographic area where the evaluation takes place is also required. Knowledge of the English language is obligatory.
- The members of the team work in close co-ordination. One of them will be designated Team Leader and will have the added responsibility of the overall co-ordination of the mission and of the final coherence of the report, both in terms of content and presentation.

Assignment of tasks

Each team member is jointly responsible for the report.

Timetable

The tasks under this evaluation will be undertaken in a maximum period of 55 working days for the team leader and 50 working days for the second member of the team, and will end no later than 28 February 2003 with the acceptance of the final reports.

Annex II: Breakdown of Beneficiary Population by NGO

DIPECHO Partner		Number of Individuals Directly Trained	Number of Individuals Indirectly Benefited
DCA	LWS India	4,339	375,000
	LWF Nepal	941	600,000
	RDRS Bangladesh	4,156	50,000
Oxfam	Local Partners in India, Nepal and Bangladesh	700	13,000
ITDG	Nepal	192	54,600
	Bangladesh	292	*
APS	ENPHO Nepal	30	6,750
	BDPC Bangladesh	2,205	127,540
SRC	SLRCS Sri Lanka	488	*
BRC	NRCS Nepal	385	75,000
MPDL	Local Partners in India	1,200	11,000
CARE	Local Partners in India	150	30,000
TOTAL		15,078	1,342,890

* Figures not available at the time of the Evaluation Mission

Annex III: List of Persons Interviewed and Sites Visited

25.11.02 Monday, Arrival in Delhi at 01.10

Meeting with Nick Bridger, ECHO Correspondent, Regional Office, New Delhi
Meeting with Thapan Mahapatra, ECHO Programme Assistant, Regional Office, New Delhi
Meeting with Brian O'Neill, EU Counsellor, EC Delegation, India

26.11.02 Tuesday

Meeting with Anil Ka Sinha, NCDM, Govt. of India
Meeting with Alan Bradbury, Regional DP Delegate, IFRC
Meeting with Kamal Kishore, UNDP Regional Disaster Reduction Advisor

27.11.02 Wednesday

Travel by air to Bhubhaneswar, Orissa

Meeting with K.G. Mathaikutty and staff, Lutheran World Service, Orissa
Meeting with Aurobindo Behera, Managing Director, Orissa State Disaster Mitigation Authority

28.11.02 Thursday

Field visit to Puri district:
Interviews with LWS district programme manager and extension staff
Discussion with community, DM Team and self-help group, Chitreswari community, Abadan Gram Panchyat, Kakatpur Block.

Travel on overnight sleeper train to Vijayawada, Andhra Pradesh

29.11.02 Friday

Meeting with CARE-AP staff responsible for APDMP
Meetings with Disaster Mitigation Resource Institute manager and staff
Meeting with District Revenue Collector, Kizishna District
Meeting with Disaster Mitigation and Co-ordination Network NGO members

30.11.02 Saturday

Travel to Ongole by train
Meetings with NGO network partners and visit to Centre of Excellence managed by SNIRD
Field visit to B.S. Parem village and meeting with DM Committee and community
Field visit to ST Colony Ollapalem village and meeting with DM Committee and community
Return to Vijayawada by train

01.12.02 Sunday

Travel to Bapatla by road to MPDL partner NGO office
Meetings with 5 NGO partners and field staff
Field visit to Machavaripalem village and meeting with DM, Water and Sanitation and Food and Fodder Committees and community
Travel by road to Hyderabad (7 hours)

02.12.02 Monday

Travel by air to Kolkata

Meeting with GracyKutty Oxfam India project and regional management staff, Kolkata

03.12.02 Tuesday

Travel by air to Delhi

Meetings requested with EC Delegations in Nepal, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh through ECHO Regional Office
De-briefing to Nick Bridger, ECHO Correspondent, Regional Office, New Delhi
Logistical arrangements and ticketing

04.12.02 Wednesday
Travel by air to Nepal

05.12.02 Thursday

No response from EC Delegation in Nepal regarding meeting on 11.12.02
Joint meeting with all DIPECHO Nepal project partners
Meeting with Wouter Doevenspeck, Belgian Red Cross and Bishnu Deukota, Head of DM Department Nepalese Red Cross Society
Meeting with Man Thapa, Disaster Management Programme Officer, UNDP, Nepal
Registration and security briefing at British Embassy, Kathmandu
Meeting with Oxfam regional and country management staff

06.12.02 Friday

Travel by air to Bhairahawa

Field visit to two Oxfam project sites, Rampurkadauna VDC, Nwalparasi District
Meeting with staff from Campaign Service Centre, local implementing partner

07.12.02 Saturday

Meeting with ITDG project managers, Bharatpur, Chitawan District
Field visit to ITDG community and project sites, Bhandara and Piple, Chitawan District

08.12.02 Sunday

Meeting with NRCS District chapter chairman, Hetuada, Makwanpur District
Field visit to Juina community and sub-chapter RC office, Makwanpur District

09.12.02 Monday

Meeting with ENPHO project staff and site visit to APS project, Tekantola and Sukambasi communities, Rautahat District

10.12.02 Tuesday

Meeting with DCA-LWF project managers and field staff, Damak, Jhapa District
Field visits to DCA-LWF project sites, Lakhampur and Khudunabari communities, Jhapa District

Return by air to Kathmandu

11.12.02 Wednesday

No response from EC Delegation in Nepal regarding meeting.
Follow-up meetings with NRCS senior management
Inspection of GIS hardware and software, NRCS HQ
Telephone interview with ENPHO country office managers

12.12.02 Thursday

Travel by air to Colombo, Sri Lanka

13.12.02 Friday

E.C. Delegation staff in field - confirmed meeting for 15.12.02
Meeting with Vishaka Hidellage, Country Director ITDG Sri Lanka and Ahmed Arshad, DM Programme manager
Meeting with Adolfo Cires, SRC Delegate
Meeting with Gamini Pinnalawattie, ex-SLRCS DP advisor and M.D. Sumanadasa, SLRC, DIPECHO project manager
Meetings with SLRC DIPECHO training co-ordinator, Colombo
Field visit to Yatawara community, Kalutara district
Meeting with RC District chairperson and Branch Development Officer and volunteers

14.12.02 Saturday

Visit SLRC/DIPECHO central warehouse

Field visit to Gallatura and Wallatamuka villages, Ayagama division, Ratnapura district

Meeting with RC District chairperson and Branch Development Officer and volunteers

Meeting with SLRC trainer of trainers and field co-ordinator at volunteer training course, Ratnapura district

15.12.02 Sunday

Follow-up meeting with SRC delegate, Colombo

Meeting with Borja Miguelez, EC Delegation, Colombo (HoD and DhoD out of station for Christmas)

Overnight Travel to Dhaka via Bangkok**16.12.02 Monday**

Meeting with Farid Hassan Ahmed, Oxfam Regional Co-ordinator, Dhaka

Meeting with Alan Jesen, DCA Regional Co-ordinator, Dhaka

17.12.02 Tuesday

Confirmed meeting with EC Delegation in Bangladesh to take place on 22.12.02 (HoD out of country until 21.12.02)

Registration and security briefing, British High Commission, Dhaka

Meeting with Mohammed Ali Ashraf, UNDP, Dhaka

Meeting with Mohammed Taher, DM consultant, Verulam Associates Ltd, Dhaka

18.12.02 Wednesday**Travel by car to Rangpur**

Meeting with Farid Hassan Ahmed and Sue Chowdry, Oxfam Regional staff

19.12.02 Thursday

Meeting with Oxfam partner NGO, SKS in Gaibandha district

Field visits to Khanchapara and Shadarachur, Fulchuri Upazilla, Gaibandha district

Travel by car to Tangail**20.12.02 Friday**

Meeting with APS project partner, Siadur Rahman, Director BDPC, Sirajgong district

Field visit to Muradpur and Sumsunahar villages, Chowhali Upazilla, Sirajgong district

21.12.02 Saturday**Travel by car to Faridpur – road traffic accident and return to Dhaka**

Meeting with Nazmul, ITDG Bangladesh

22.12.02 Sunday

Meeting with Mastafuzar Ramanan, DCA partner NGO, RDRS, Dhaka

Meeting with Mr Ensko Kentschynskyj, Head of EC Delegation, Bangladesh

Telephone discussion with Mr Fabrizio Senesi, Regional Director APS

23.12.02 Monday

Return to UK by air

Annex IV: Up-date on Disaster Management Context By Country

INDIA

As stated in the 1999 diagnostic study, large segments of the population in India remain highly vulnerable to a range of natural disasters, including drought, floods, cyclones and earthquakes. However, in terms of the institutional arrangements governing disaster management, there has been considerable progress and reform since the original study. In particular, the Federal government has carried out a major process of consultation and reform over the last two years, resulting in the establishment of a new Ministry of Disaster Management with representation at cabinet level. There has clearly been a paradigm shift away from a largely response based approach to one which attempts to mainstream disaster preparedness and mitigation activities into the development process. This is an ambitious new plan, which has gathered significant support from international donor agencies; however, the GoI has taken a long-term and realistic approach to changing attitudes at all levels.

In practical terms, DP would now appear to be a high priority for the GoI and there is a clear recognition that INGOs and national NGOs have a role in promoting community organisation at the local level as a complementary component. The UNDP has already developed a five-year US\$50 million programme in support of this government initiative, including a disaster management and vulnerability reduction component, which it intends to roll out in 12 states down to district level. The E.C. Delegation in India has indicated that it intends to provide significant financing to this UNDP/GoI programme and is also encouraging member states, and the World Bank, to make additional bi-lateral pledges of support. The Delegation anticipates that it will provide in the order of €10 million for DP over the next five year period, approximately €6 million of which will go to the UNDP programme, with the balance being used to support local and community level projects. The E.C. Delegation has made clear that this is a country-specific programme, and that no direct support for DP will be allocated to either Nepal or Sri Lanka. In order to programme this financial support, the E.C. Delegation has applied for a full-time DP resource person. These developments have obvious and significant implication for any future DIPECHO plans in the region.

NEPAL

Earthquakes, floods and landslides continue to pose significant threats to a large proportion of the population in Nepal, particularly in the central valley (for earthquakes) and the lowland belt, or *terai*, bordering India for flooding. In 2002 this area suffered extensive flooding and massive silt deposits, which has damaged infrastructure, is increasingly threatening local settlements and destroying livelihoods. In terms of institutional arrangements, little apparent progress has been made by the GoN on promoting DP and it remains largely geared to response, as outlined in the diagnostic study. The increased insecurity and on-going conflict with Maoist groups has had a significant impact on the government's apparent ability to manage disasters. For obvious reasons, most government resources have been directed towards security concerns, and therefore little if any progress has been made in promoting DP or addressing some of the underlying causes, including up-land deforestation and other livelihood related practices. Secondly, in mid-2002 all local and district level elected government structures were dissolved as part of the state of emergency. This decision has had an enormous impact on local government capacity and decision-making, which in turn has limited the ability of NGOs to fully engage with them in the implementation of CDBP projects.

Partly in response to the static situation, UNDP has drawn up a five-year programme of capacity building on disaster risk management for the GoN aimed at addressing both policy and operational aspects. The EC Delegation in Delhi, which has overall responsibility for both Nepal and Sri Lanka, indicated that there are no plans for supporting DP activities in either country. In August 2002 the UK government's Department for International Development

office in Nepal undertook a review of its own strategy regarding disaster management and has indicated that it intends to provide financing in the region of €3.5 million over the next two years through a number of channels including the UNDP programme and the Nepalese Red Cross Society.

SRI LANKA

Although perhaps the least disaster prone country in the region, Sri Lanka does suffer from a range of natural events, including flash-flooding and landslides. In fact, at present there is a severe and prolonged drought in the south-east of the country. Since the diagnostic study report of 1999, there has been considerable progress on the part of the GoSL to address issues such as DP. The GoSL has always had a strong reputation in terms of response and relief, but in 1999 it established a new national centre for disaster management specifically tasked with improving risk reduction and disaster preparedness. At present it is not entirely clear where the responsibility for disaster management will lie within GoSL hierarchy (disaster response has been under the Ministry of Social Services and Welfare). There has been a new initiative to create a fully-fledged Ministry of Disaster Management, which has just been finalised with the appointment a new minister. It has been reported that the GoSL intends to increase the amount of funding available for DP as oppose to response; however, all of these new developments must be seen in the context of the evolving peace negotiations which will dominate both government and donor interests for the foreseeable future.

In Sri Lanka DP is still a relatively new concept and there are few agencies working in this field, with the notable exception of the Red Cross and ITDG. Apart from the DIPECHO funding via the SRC, ITDG has received funding from the UK for a four-year regional pilot disaster risk reduction programme. As with Nepal, the EC Delegation in Delhi indicated that no specific funding for DP is planned for Sri Lanka. The EC Delegation in Colombo, supported this position, and intimated that there are no other member states currently actively funding dedicated DP projects in the country. However, it was reported that there are a number of integrated programmes funded by member states which include some small elements of DP and disaster mitigation as part of much broader initiatives.

BANGLADESH

Bangladesh is well known as being highly prone to natural disasters, particularly from river flooding in the north and central zones of the country and cyclones along the coastal areas. There is a long experience in disaster management, especially amongst national NGOs, whilst the government has traditionally focused on relief and response activities. Since the diagnostic study carried out in 1999, there has been a significant new initiative to further strengthen the GoB Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief, entitled the Comprehensive Disaster Management Plan (CDMP). A new framework document has been drawn up and approved by the government after a long period of consultation, followed by a programme support document, laying out a five-year operational plan for disaster management. The CDMP aims at institutional reform and capacity building of government, but the planning also calls for a significant programme of community level interventions to be carried out by NGOs, and to be facilitated by UNOPS. According to UNDP this plan will be operationalised in early 2003, however, following discussions with other stakeholders it is not entirely clear whether this will be a feasible start date.

This reform was originally donor driven, but as with other countries in the region UNDP has taken a lead co-ordinating role. The UK, Netherlands and Denmark were all involved in the planning process, and the UK has also committed to financing approximately half of the ten discrete projects in the first phase of the plan, which has a value of over US\$14 million. The European Commission has been an active participant in the planning process for the CDMP, through the ECHO office in Dhaka, providing technical inputs to the drafting of the plan.

However, since the departure of the Dhaka based ECHO correspondent in August 2002, there has been little ECHO involvement.

In the past the EC Delegation in Bangladesh has supported a number of long-term mitigation projects under the water resource and flood action planning; the only project still on-going is for coastal embankment rehabilitation. However, under the new National Indicative Programme for the period 2003 – 2005 (yet to be finally approved), the EC has included DP as one of the components. To date no budget line amount has been established for DP; however, indications are that it is likely to be a modest sum at least initially. It is clear from the draft country strategy paper for the same period, that the EC is supportive of the CDMP and will consider the possibility of financing at some point in the future. Such support will only be forthcoming following the actual roll-out of the plan and when details of discrete projects are clarified. Apart from the UK, which has been a long-standing and major donor for DM/DP, few other member states have been active in the field: Sweden has been promoting DP and risk reduction as part of their long-term integrated area development programme in the greater Faridpur area and Denmark has given long-standing support to improving flood warning systems through the GoB's meteorological office .

IFRC REGIONAL PROGRAMME

Over the last two years the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) has been developing a regional strategy for DM and DP based on a series of consultations and planning meetings with National Societies from the six countries in South Asia. The South Asia Secretaries General formally adopted the regional DP strategy document at a meeting in Islamabad in late August 2002. Working inline with the IFRC's ten-year global strategy, this regional approach is based on promoting DP and DM as mainstream activities for all National Societies. The strategy recognises the importance of DP in providing an effective link between emergency response, rehabilitation and development. To achieve this the IFRC is planning to assist the National Societies in human resource development, strengthen management and organisational capacities and provide technical assistance in DP. The IFRC is also keen to see improved linkages between the various National Societies and their respective government counterpart agencies dealing with disaster management.

Annex V: Map of Areas Covered by First DIPECHO Plan for South Asia

Annex VI: List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

GENERAL AND REGIONAL

ADPC	Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre, Bangkok, Thailand
APS	Associazione per la Partecipazione allo Sviluppo
AZEECON	Asian Zone Environment and Emergency Co-operation Network; a network of the DCA group
CBDP	Community Based Disaster Preparedness
CBO	Community Based Organisation
DCA	Dan Church Aid
DFID	Department for International Development, UK government
DIPECHO	Disaster Preparedness programme of ECHO
DM	Disaster Management
DMC	Disaster Management Committee
DP	Disaster Preparedness
<i>Duryog Nivaran</i>	A South Asia regional network of NGOs and other agencies, this is Sanskrit name meaning disaster mitigation
EC	European Commission
ECHO	European Commission Humanitarian aid Office
GIS	Geographic Information System
HQ	Headquarters
IFRC	International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
INGO	International Non Governmental Organisation
IO	International Organisation
ITDG	Intermediate Technology Development Group
NGO	Non Governmental Organisation
ORS	Oral Rehydration Salt
PLA	Participatory Learning Appraisal
PO	Project Officer
PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal
RBP	River Basin Programme, a regional programme of Oxfam, UK
SPHERE	Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response Project
TA	Technical Assistance
ToT	Training of Trainers
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
WFP	World Food Programme

INDIA

AP	Andhra Pradesh, a state in India
CARE	Co-operative Assistance for Relief Everywhere
CoE	Centre of Excellence, a body created under the CARE, India project
DMCN	Disaster Mitigation and Co-ordination Network, a body created under the CARE, India project
DMRI	Disaster Management Resource Institute, a body created under the CARE, India project
GoI	Government of India
GP	Gram Panchyat, the lowest level of elected government in India
LWS	Lutheran World Service, an implementing partner of DCA
MPDL	Movimiento por la Paz, el Desarme y la Libertad
OSDMA	Orissa State Disaster Mitigation Authority
UP	Uttar Pradesh, a state in India

BANGLADESH

BDPC	Bangladesh Disaster Preparedness Centre, an implementing partner of APS
CDMP	Comprehensive Disaster Management Plan
<i>Chars</i>	Sand bank islands along the Brahmaputra and Dharla rivers of Bangladesh that are formed and re-formed by major flooding events. Some 230,000 individuals inhabit these islands.
GoB	Government of Bangladesh
RDRS	Rangpur Dinajpur Rural Service, an implementing partner of DCA
SKS	Samaj Kallyan Sangstha, a local implementing partner of Oxfam
Union	Administrative unit below Upazilla level and comprising of many communities
<i>Upazilla</i>	Administrative Unit below District level and comprising of several Unions

NEPAL

BRC	Belgian Red Cross Society
DISVI	Disarmo e Sviluppo, an implementing partner of APS
DPNET	Disaster Preparedness Network
ENPHO	Environmental and Public Health Organisation, an implementing partner of APS
GoN	Government of Nepal
LWF	Lutheran World Federation, an implementing partner of DCA
NRCS	Nepalese red Cross Society, an implementing partner of the BRC
<i>terai</i>	A low-lying and flat area of southern Nepal bordering India, which is subject to repeated and severe flooding
VDC	Village Development Committee, the lowest level of government administration in Nepal

SRI LANKA

SLRCS	Sri Lanka Red Cross Society, the implementing partner of the SRC
SRC	Spanish Red Cross Society