

**REPORT FOR THE EVALUATION
OF THE DIPECHO ACTION PLANS
IN SOUTH EAST ASIA
1998 to 2006**

FINAL REPORT

15 JUNE 2007

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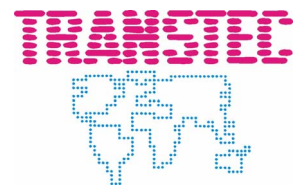
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Executive Summary

Introduction

An evaluation of four ECHO disaster preparedness (DIPECHO) Action Plans 1998 to 2005/2006 for Southeast Asia, was undertaken from December 2006 to May 2007. This report presents the main findings, conclusions and recommendations about the approaches of DIPECHO to disaster risk reduction (DRR), particularly community-based disaster preparedness, and to comment upon the involvement of other European Commission services in DRR during this period.

Purpose and methodology

The objective of the evaluation was to: “*review and assess the progress made in enhancing resilience and reducing vulnerability to natural disasters of the most at-risk population of SEA and the public institutions that seek to protect them*”.

The evaluation team visited three countries, Viet Nam, Cambodia and Indonesia and appraised the action of ten in-country project partners and two regional bodies. Following discussions with ECHO Evaluations and geographic desk offices, it was agreed that the evaluation would be primarily concerned with the overall strategic approach taken by DIPECHO through the four Action Plans rather than an evaluation of individual projects.

An analytical framework was used:

- at the *strategic level in the region and nationally*: the scope and relevance of the Action Plans was reviewed, in particular how DIPECHO has complemented and supported institutional reform and improved disaster management capacities across the region. Attention was paid to efforts of other EC Directorates and bi-lateral support to DRR provided by Member States;
- at the *operational level*: the outcomes of the different types of partner approaches to programming, operational modalities and country contexts were examined;
- at the *level of strategic and programmatic impact*: the relevance of programme design was assessed. Programme impact on vulnerability reduction and institutional capacity building was considered. In addition, an assessment was undertaken of how lessons derived from local level implementing partners were translated up-stream to contribute to policy debates regarding risk reduction at national level as well as linkages between lesson learning based on DIPECHO projects and other relevant EC initiatives in disaster management. Cross-cutting issues and lesson learning, documentation and dissemination were also examined.

Conclusions from this analysis were used to inform recommendations to ECHO regarding the operational methodologies for future Action Plans for Southeast Asia. Methodologies included literature review, discussions with partners, project site visits, meetings with other DRR stakeholders (including UN, INGOs, government disaster management coordination bodies, local government and people in the project areas). Project partner reviews, country summaries and three *Aide Mémoires* were drafted. Following field visits, two feedback sessions were held, one in Bangkok and the other in Brussels (*See section 2.3*).

Main conclusions

The main conclusions and the corresponding *strategic and operational* recommendations of the review are as follows (*see section 6 for further details*):

Relevance and appropriateness (*see sections 3.3 and 6.1*)

Ca. DIPECHO funding of DP and DRR was instrumental in **promoting the practice of DRR** at a time when there were few other donors were active. Despite limited finance, the geographical spread over a wide region over an eight year period, this investment contributed to a major proportion of lessons and experience of DP/DRR in the region.

Cb. Projects undertaken supported DIPECHO **priorities** (as described in the Action Plans) which were relevant to the national situation. The relevance of subsequent actions was enhanced by National Consultative Meetings which made the Action Plans more appropriate to the country. The Action Plans, however, are influenced by project partners rather than being driven by more strategic considerations. The lack of an overall, long term **DRR strategy** is a major flaw in DIPECHO's programme.

Effectiveness (*see sections 4.5 and 6.2*)

Cc. There has been a positive change in the **selection of partners** over the course of four Action Plans, from a mainly humanitarian focus to those with dual mandates of humanitarian response and development. A number of local organisations have good potential to contribute to disaster reduction although lack a European counterpart and are therefore currently not considered. The selection of **Red Cross/Red Crescent societies** as local implementing partners was advantageous due to their government mandated roles in disaster management and their widespread presence. Partner selection is, however, constrained by the limited availability and expertise of INGOs and their local implementing partners.

Efficiency (*see sections 4.6 and 6.3*)

Cd. Many partners received financing from a series of Action Plans, although this funding was not optimised and partners undertook planning on an annual basis following DIPECHO cycles. Project implementation was challenged by the short term nature of DIPECHO funding, which limited some partners from linking DRR with longer term development activities.

Ce. An **expatriate presence** helped to ensure accountability, transparency and provide technical support, however, the costs accounted for around one third of the total funds disbursed, which is considered to be too high and reduced the finance available for communities to undertake DRR activities. Local staff used by partners and supported with a small percentage of a manager's time for project implementation, were more cost effective, helped develop national staff capacity and ultimately allowed more money to reach vulnerable communities.

Coordination, complementarities, coherence and synergy (*see sections 3.4, 3.5 and 6.4*)

Cf. DIPECHO-supported **regional initiatives** for capacity building, information sharing and networking were well received by partners, although efforts at **"mainstreaming DRR"** were too broad and generic. Whether such mainstreaming initiatives can be best accomplished through a regional rather than a country programme generic approaches is questionable. Regional initiatives require a long term perspective and strategy as objectives are not achievable within a single funding cycle.

Cg. In general other **EC funding instruments** in the region give limited consideration to DRR. In addition, ECHO and EU Member State agency staff had only a partial understanding of the nature of DRR and of DIPECHO's projects. A dedicated **focal person** within the EC/ECHO delegations is a pragmatic way to undertake advocacy (within the EC and to EU Members States) and increase the likelihood of linkages to other EC instruments with project partners.

Impact (*see sections 5.1 to 5.5 and 6.5*)

Ch. The DIPECHO programme generated numerous replicable DRR strategies and excellent **community based** projects, including methodologies, tools and processes that enabled communities to better prepare for and mitigate natural disasters. The added-value developed by DIPECHO through these APs has been recognised by other key institutional players involved in DRR (i.e. the World Bank). In all programme areas **awareness of DRR** has increased progressively, community DP plans were developed and response teams established (although their quality varied).

Ci. Small-scale, low cost **mitigation projects** were widely implemented and successfully demonstrated the appropriateness and effectiveness of this strategy. Considerable counterpart community labour was generated by mitigation works which provided substantial direct socio-economic benefits to entire communities.

Cj. While significant direct impact in terms of **reduced vulnerabilities and increased capacities** is evident in project areas, benefiting several hundreds of thousands of people over the course of the four APs, these were found to be primarily at commune and village levels as area coverage has been limited in addition to being widely dispersed.

Ck. DIPECHO's goal will always be constrained by its mandate, which is limited to promotion, demonstration and initiation of disaster reduction pilot activities; the longer term impacts of the programme will not be achieved unless **scaling-up** and **replication** of successful demonstration and pilots is undertaken.

Cl Documentation and dissemination of DRR lessons learnt by DIPECHO and its partners have not yet been adequate. Leverage by partners themselves is insufficient to influence the major stakeholders to include DRR in their policy, strategy, legislation and long term development plans (e.g., local and national governments, international donors etc.).

Sustainability (*see sections 3.5 and 6.6*)

Cm. In the context of the decentralized governance systems in most SE Asian countries, opportunities exist for the institutionalization of programme initiatives into formal, **local government structures and processes**. Significant in-roads have already been made in Indonesia and Viet Nam, particularly in leveraging DIPECHO projects to access local government development funds but more effort is required.

Linking Relief, Rehabilitation and Development (*see sections 3.6 and 6.7*)

Cn There were no obvious indications amongst partners who had undertaken relief activities that they received **guidance** from ECHO or DIPECHO regarding either the integration of relief with development activities, or the integration of DRR approaches into their operations. Some partners make **conscious efforts** to link emergency response to disaster recovery and rehabilitation. Development organisations have generally made better progress in taking up the LRRD approach and there has been a natural progression from relief response to long term support to communities. However, this transition of approach to LRRD may be considered as

almost a conceptual construct. Humanitarian organisations recognise the value of LRRD and DIPECHO has created a growing awareness of the importance of this approach, although more needs to be done to put it into practice, both by DIPECHO and other EC funding instruments, viz. RELEX and AIDCO.

Cross-cutting Issues (*see sections 5.6 and 6.8*)

Co. Specifically targeting **primary school children** raised awareness of DRR and brought about behavioural change, whilst interventions implemented within **environmental** programmes effectively and efficiently addressed multiple natural hazards. DIPECHO programme design in the region is now starting to recognise **climate change adaptation** as a critical entry point for DRR interventions. **Gender relations and the promotion of gender equality** were addressed, although this varied in different contexts. However, generally, in the projects reviewed, there was little incorporation of **cross cutting issues**. This was due to a number of factors including the restricted time and uncertainty of continued future funding, organisational mandates, and the lack of partner expertise.

Implementation strategy for future DIPECHO activities in Southeast Asia (*see section 6.9*)

Cp. The direct impact of the DIPECHO initiative, in terms of reduction of vulnerabilities, depends essentially on the adoption and replication of DRR activities initiated under the Action Plans, however, this is challenging within a relatively short timeframe and there is therefore a need to develop a comprehensive and long-term **DRR strategy**.

Cq The Hyogo Framework for Action was developed after the inception of the DIPECHO programme and organisations involved with “DP” have undergone a **paradigm shift** in thinking towards the vocabulary and actions of “DRR”. However, whilst the 4th and 5th APs describe DRR, DIPECHO is understood as only undertaking DP, leading to some confusion. In addition, there are a number of relatively recent and better financed actors supporting DRR activity of governments, INGOs, UN agencies, etc. in the region (e.g., The World Bank, ADB, etc.),

Advocacy (*see sections 3.7 and 6.10*)

Cr DIPECHO has had an impact on other EC Directorates, bi-lateral and multi-lateral financing institutions in terms of increased awareness of the wider integration of DP/DRR into their policy, planning and programme activities. However, the priority and importance given to DP/DRR activities in the region and their integration with these institutions remains weak. With the exception of Indonesia, The Philippines and Viet Nam, there is no mention of DRR in the current CSP, NIP and PRSP strategic planning mechanisms.

Recommendations

Relevance and appropriateness (*see sections 3.3 and 6.1*)

Ra. The identity of DIPECHO as the lead provider of funding and expertise to a range of DRR stakeholders involved with **small-scale community-based DRR activities** should continue to be developed until other longer term EC development funding instruments (i.e., AIDCO, DG RELEX, DG DEV, etc.) incorporate DRR into their programming. [Strategic]

Rb. A comprehensive **DRR strategy** should be developed to form the foundation for DIPECHO’s programme and influence the process of design and development of future Action Plans. The **Hyogo Framework for Action** should be used as the basis for this

overarching strategic approach and too facilitate the adoption of complementary programmes between other regional and national DRR stakeholders. [Strategic]

Effectiveness (*see sections 4.5 and 6.2*)

Rc. Clearer **selection criteria** for project partners needs to be established and a more proactive search initiated for both new partners and local implementers. This is particularly the case for organisations which have long term DRR policies and **integrated approaches**, wherein DRR could be financed by DIPECHO is a component of larger, developmental, environmental or natural resource management programmes. Support for national **Red Cross/Red Crescent societies** through both PNS and INGOs should continue as these have international networks to draw upon. [Strategic]

Efficiency (*see sections 4.6 and 6.3*)

Rd. A **programmatic approach** to DRR needs to be developed over more than one action planning cycle, wherein brief concept papers would be developed prior to a substantive proposal and consideration given to approval of partners' annual workplans and budgets over several Action Plans. The bi-annual calls for proposals would continue to draw in fresh partners. [Strategic]

Re. Measures of **cost-effectiveness** should be pre-defined and agreed between DIPECHO and partners and a reassessment undertaken of the percentage of expatriate staff time; possibilities for greater use of local consultants, or expatriates who could oversee a number of projects need consideration. [Operational]

Coordination, complementarities, coherence and synergy (*see sections 3.4, 3.5 and 6.4*)

Rf. Support for **regional and country interventions** to “mainstream DRR”, in conjunction with the efforts of local DRR networks and with the initiatives of other stakeholders is essential (e.g., UNDP, UNISDR, ADPC, World Bank, ADB, etc.). Prioritisation of both regional and national projects with direct linkage to local and community level initiatives is required. [Strategic]

Rg. Dialogue with other **EC funding instruments** (e.g. DG RELEX, DG DEV, AIDCO) and EU Member States should be increased, particularly those supportive of DRR, potentially to enable DIPECHO partners to access longer term DRR funding. More dedicated **focal persons** within EC/ECHO delegations should be supported to improve coordination, advocacy and complementarity. [Operational]

Impact (*see sections 5.1 to 5.5 and 6.5*)

Rh. The **innovative nature** of the DIPECHO programme should continue and be enhanced by providing partners with the flexibility to pursue a multi-faceted approach to **community based DRR**. With additional support, partners and their local implementers can further improve the quality of community DP plans and focus on building community resilience to disasters. [Strategic]

Ri. Support for **mitigation activities** should continue, but the focus be broadened to explore non-structural measures, for example, certain **livelihood-related** endeavours as means of militating against future disasters. [Strategic]

Rj. Support for a more **contiguous choice of project areas** is required to attain an even greater impact. [Strategic]

Rk. Pilot DRR activities need to be **scaled up and replicated** to achieve widespread and more significant impact at national and regional levels and to ensure a return on the investment in piloting; facilitating access to **long-term funding** is required to ensure that the benefits of such pilot initiatives are replicated in more vulnerable communities and thus increase the impact of the DRR measures. Improved linkages between pilot activities and **local government planning** processes are another promising avenue for scaling up. [Operational]

Rl. A strategy directed by DIPECHO (Bangkok and Brussels) for **knowledge management** and **dissemination** should be developed to ensure that learning and case studies are captured and disseminated more widely through **information products**. Brussels should “anchor” such knowledge management efforts and use material to advocate amongst EU member states, with other donors and governments for the adoption and institutionalisation of a community based approach and to mainstreaming DRR into their agenda. [Strategic]

Sustainability (*see sections 3.5 and 6.6*)

Rm Greater engagement of partners with **local government** at all levels needs to be encouraged and projects prioritized that aim for convergence of national and local level initiatives, particularly the integration of DRR into local government planning processes. Better technical assistance to partners on local governance, local development planning and budgeting is required. [Operational]

Linking Relief, Rehabilitation and Development (LRRD) (*see sections 3.6 and 6.7*)

Rn Good practice in LRRD needs to be shared and disseminated amongst partners and also to other appropriate EC DGs, e.g. RELEX and AIDCO. A more explicit reference to LRRD needs to be included in the next APs. Further guidance on the inclusion of LRRD in the calls for proposals is required and this made a criterion for selection. [Operational]

Cross-cutting Issues (*see sections 5.6 and 6.8*)

Ro. Projects on DRR for **primary school children** and young people should receive continued support and be encouraged to engage with other stakeholders (e.g. UNICEF). Expand project components that consider the issues of **environment** and **climate change**, specifically with the aim of sharing information and predictions regarding those areas likely to be most affected, and using the issue of climate change adaptation as an advocacy tool to support the promotion of DRR. The further promotion of **gender relations and equality** (e.g., by disseminating the EC gender relations policy, etc.) is necessary. The ECHO Single Form, if fully used, ensures that all actions take into account critical **cross-cutting issues** but could be further improved (e.g., by learning from the AIDCO application format) and indicators to measure the success and impact of projects included. [Operational]

Implementation strategy for future DIPECHO activities in Southeast Asia (*see section 6.9*)

Rp. The following scenarios for a suggested, future DIPECHO **implementation strategy** could be considered:

- the *status quo* could be maintained, with DIPECHO remaining within ECHO, purely as a DRR unit (focusing upon innovative pilot, community-based DRR) but with a mechanism to significantly replicate and scale up the successes achieved (under the DIPECHO APs) by other EC funding instruments, (e.g., AIDCO);

- disaster risk reduction should be **integrated** into the development programmes of the other EC funding instruments, and DIPECHO gradually phased out; or
- a **new DRR funding mechanism** could be created over the next 5 to 10 years, with considerably greater financial and human resources (e.g., with up to 10% of EC funding utilised for DRR – adopting a similar approach to DFID).

Rq The **comparative advantage** of DIPECHO’s approach needs to be determined in today’s milieu of other DRR stakeholders (including those with considerably more finance). By utilising the Hyogo Framework, as the overarching strategy, DIPECHO’s exact roles and responsibilities should be distinguished more clearly, as part of efforts to towards achieving the five priorities for action, both at a regional and country level. Tailored approaches are required to better suit the different environments within each country and to ensure alignment and synergy with other stakeholders.

Advocacy (*see sections 3.7 and 6.10*)

Rr. Further advocacy for the integration of DRR within other EU external assistance services, a strengthening of inter-service cooperation in DRR and a **division of responsibilities** among different services is needed. DIPECHO should continue to concentrate on small-scale community based DRR activities, whilst other EC services concerned with development (i.e. DG AIDCO, RELEX or DEV) focus on larger scale mitigation activities. A more strategic approach should be adopted to advocate for the inclusion of DRR issues in CSPs and NIPs. [Strategic]

Main findings and lessons learned

This evaluation draws some similar lessons to previous evaluations for other regions, including Central Asia, South Asia, Central America, The Andean Region and the Caribbean. The overarching findings from the South East Asia region point to the following lessons:

- DIPECHO continues to be an excellent mechanism for the piloting of innovative and effective community-based initiatives at local level, which can lead to positive impacts for direct beneficiaries;
- Innovation and adaptation of approaches continues to occur in positive ways, for example in adopting multi-hazard approaches, including ‘non-conventional’ hazards, such as forest fires, and previously neglected at risk populations (i.e. urban poor) and these should be encouraged;
- There is increasing trend towards working in a more integrated manner with developmental programmes, thereby anchoring disaster preparedness and mitigation actions in long-term, sustainable frameworks;
- DIPECHO support is helping to develop the capacity of local partners and local government agencies, as well as to maintain the profile of DRR through concrete examples of good practice.

In spite of these considerable positive lessons, the DIPECHO programme in South East Asia continues to face a number of serious constraints:

- By their very nature, DIPECHO projects are limited in scale and true impact will only be achieved with successful efforts in scaling up and replication. Without mechanisms

being put into place to improve linkages with the interventions of other institutions in DRR, DIPECHO runs the risk of continuing to work well, but to work in isolation;

- One key element in scaling up is the capacity to document good practice and disseminate this across both EC and member state institutions and more widely – to date these efforts have not been sufficiently effective;
- A second element in maximising DIPECHO’s impact is the clear articulation of its role and function within the context of the broader EC architecture and the Hyogo Framework for Action at regional and country level. The lack of such a clear strategy is a major constraint for DIPECHO, especially at a time when increasing numbers of other donors are entering into the field of DRR.
- Linking DIPECHO activities with local government planning and budgetary processes offers perhaps the best potential for impact at scale through external channels, but to date this has not been fully taken advantage of;
- Linkages with other EC Directorates and the take up of DRR remain weak. Without significant progress and strengthened advocacy work for DRR to be integrated into the development and external aid programmes of the Commission, such internal scaling up will not be possible (i.e. without the meaningful “mainstreaming” DRR within other Directorates of the Commission)
- As well as the institutional constraints outlined above, the lessons from South East Asia also highlight the need for greater consideration of environmental management and climate change adaptation in DIPECHO programme design, both for informing communities, as well as providing leverage for the up-stream promotion of DRR.

1. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

1.1 Disaster management context in Southeast Asia

Regional Context

1. Southeast Asia is a highly disaster-prone region. Four countries in the region have been classified as being among the most disaster prone in the world (Viet Nam, Philippines, Indonesia and Cambodia)¹. Cambodia, Lao PDR and Viet Nam are affected by flooding from the Mekong River and its tributaries during the monsoon season. Typhoons are an annual occurrence and severely affect The Philippines and, to a lesser extent, Viet Nam. The El Niño phenomenon induces drought in all the countries and in Indonesia this often leads to widespread forest fires. Indonesia and The Philippines are located in the Pacific Ring of Fire and therefore suffer from earthquakes and volcanic eruptions. Food security is a chronic problem in Timor-Leste, while Myanmar's political isolation shows little sign of abating, providing a complex backdrop for humanitarian activity.

1.2 National disaster management context

Indonesia

2. Since the tsunami event of 2004, disaster reduction has been given more attention and the subsequent series of disaster events² has served to give this even more momentum. In the Government Work Plan for 2007, disaster mitigation and management has been explicitly identified as one of the country's nine national development priorities. The national DM agencies BAPPENAS and BAKORNAS PB have also recently launched a National Action Plan for Disaster Reduction³ aimed at integrating DRR into the national development agenda. A Disaster Management Bill has recently been passed the formulation and subsequent advocacy and lobbying efforts for which were fully supported by a range of INGOs, including DIPECHO partners (i.e., CARE-NL, DRC and ACF).

3. These developments are complemented by UNDP's launching of a major DRR initiative: "*Mainstreaming Disaster Risk Reduction into Development in Indonesia*" – a long-term programme that seeks to develop capacities of national and local stakeholders – and a potential UN ISDR programme for establishing a national DRR platform, as envisioned by the Hyogo Framework for Action, (the HFA). Indonesia is also a major recipient of AusAID funding that, at the time of this evaluation mission, was conducting a review of their DRR initiatives in the region.

Cambodia

4. In Cambodia, DRR is not a priority of national legislators due, in part, to the need to address substantial unmet development needs. The National Committee for Disaster Management (NCDM) is a weak organisation, requiring more personnel and further capacity development in DRM, and lacking sufficient funding. None of the major development institutions and donors (e.g., UNDP, EU member states, etc.) is providing any significant level of support for comprehensive national DM policies, strategies or programmes.

¹ Overall Evaluation of ECHO's Strategic Orientation to Disaster Reduction, December 2003. See http://ec.europa.eu/echo/pdf_files/evaluation/2003/disaster_report.pdf

² includes the Yogyakarta earthquake, Java tsunami and landslides in 2006 and recent flooding in Jakarta that displaced some 600,000 residents

³ National Action Plan for Disaster Reduction 2006-2010, Office of Minister of State for National Development Planning / National Development Planning Agency and National Coordinating Agency for Disaster Management, June 2006

Currently, the only major DRR initiative in the country is the development and implementation of a comprehensive National Avian and Human Influenza plan.

5. Disaster risk reduction initiatives are being undertaken by NGOs at local and community levels including attempts by a number of development-oriented NGOs to integrate DRR approaches and strategies into long-term rural development or natural resource management programmes. Without major development institutions and donors championing DRR, however, the impact of existing NGO programmes and initiatives is likely to remain limited and the possibility of DRR being mainstreamed into national development policy and planning will remain remote.

Viet Nam

6. Disaster risk management programming in Viet Nam is increasingly being addressed in a comprehensive manner because of the presence of a strong “enabling environment”. This is characterised by the full support of effective national disaster management (DM) government agencies (i.e., the Disaster Management Centre within the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development and the Central Committee for Flood and Storm Control); a highly coordinated network of DRR actors in the country (i.e., Natural Disaster Mitigation - Partnership and the Disaster Management Working Group); and strong advocacy and support from major development agencies such as UNDP and some major donors (e.g. The Netherlands, AusAID, Luxemburg, Denmark, Sweden, Japan) that can exert some degree of influence over national strategy and policy. Recently, a new national strategy for DM has been finalised and there is significant funding being allocated by the World Bank under its programme for DRM (i.e. US\$187 million over 7 years in 17 provinces) and its Global Facility for DRR.

1.3 Regional initiatives

1.3.1 Association of South East Asian Nations

7. There are a number of existing regional institutional mechanisms for DM including the ASEAN Committee for Disaster Management (ACDM), the ASEAN Regional Forum, ASEAN Senior Officials on the Environment, and the Regional Consultative Committee. In addition, there are regional cooperation bodies that address specific trans-border hazards particularly the UNESCAP/WMO Typhoon Committee, the ASEAN Regional Haze Technical Task Force and the Mekong River Commission (MRC). The DIPECHO programme established firm links with the Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre (ADPC) and UNESCAP in the design and implementation of a series of “*Partnership for Disaster Reduction - South East Asia (PDR SEA)*” projects that have successfully initiated regional information sharing and networking, as well as strengthening cooperation among the regional bodies. Under this project, the facilitation of ACDM’s ASEAN Regional Programme on Disaster Management (ARPD) was undertaken. The first versions of the ARPD strategy document 2007-2013 did not mention “disaster preparedness”, this despite ECHO’s advocacy efforts during a number of inter-service meetings and comments on its inclusion during the Inter-service process.⁴ The importance of the ACDM lies in its being an intergovernmental body whose decisions, once approved by the heads of state, become official commitments by the member countries. The EC has political dialogue with ASEAN and views the ARPD as one of the main ways to mainstream DRR at the regional level.

⁴ The draft document is now submitted for consultation with the EUMS (personal communication DIPECHO, Brussels)

8. While UNHCR now supports the ACDM, the full realisation of the goals and objectives of the ARPDPM continues to face significant challenges due to a number of constraints, primarily the lack of sufficient human and financial resources by the ASEAN Secretariat and the fact that the ACDM meets only once every two years (although more frequently at the National DM Office level).

1.3.2 The International Federation Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

9. Red Cross and Red Crescent societies in South East Asia are uniquely positioned in their respective countries, through their extensive national networks and volunteer bases, to play a vital auxiliary role to their governments in addressing humanitarian need. Since 2001, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) have been developing a regional strategy for DM based on consultations with the 11 member National Societies under the Regional Disaster Management Committee (RDMC). Efforts in assisting these National Societies in human resource development, management and organisational capacities and technical assistance are lodged with the regional disaster management unit (*de facto* the secretariat for the RDMC based in Bangkok). The IFRC is also keen on improving linkages between National Societies and their counterpart government agency.

10. National Disaster Response Teams (NDRT) have been established in Indonesia, The Philippines, Malaysia and Viet Nam and have continued to develop, while in Laos, Timor-Leste, Thailand and Cambodia systems and structures are less well established. These form the foundation for the Regional Disaster Response Teams (RDRT) which enjoys a good reputation within Southeast Asia. In 2006, the Asia Pacific DM unit in Kuala Lumpur was established as a part of a total of seven zonal DMUs (in Europe, Asia/Pacific, the Americas, Africa and the Middle East) that aim to provide a coherent and global approach to DM.

1.3.3 The European Commission

11. The European Commission (EC) agenda for relations with SE Asia is based on a 1980 Co-operation Agreement with ASEAN, the 2001 Commission's Communication "*Europe and Asia*" and the 2003 Communication on a "*New Partnership with South East Asia*" which sets out a comprehensive strategy for future European Union (EU) relations with the region. The Commission does not have an explicit policy, strategy or approach with regard to DM in the SE Asia region⁵ despite the region having one of the highest levels of vulnerability to disasters in the world. Disaster management is, however, mentioned within the framework of "cross-cutting and horizontal areas" mainly under the issues of "environment".

12. Although increased attention has been given to the issues of disasters in the new Country Strategy Papers (CSPs) (2007-2013) compared to the previous ones, DM is predominantly considered as a non-focus area (see Annex VIII). Only the Viet Nam CSP (2007-2013) has integrated 'disaster preparedness' as a standard component in the Commission's development policy in the country⁶. The strategic orientation of the Humanitarian Aid department of the European Commission (ECHO)'s DM policy in SE Asia is based upon: "*focusing on a geographically concentrated design and addressing a specific type of hazard*".

⁵ DIPECHO formulated its "*Fifth DIPECHO Action Plan for South East Asia*" based on the "*Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015*"

⁶ Viet Nam Country Strategy Paper (2007-2013)

13. Following the tsunami of 26th December 2004 and other major natural disasters of 2005, the Commission has put forward a Communication on *Reinforcing EU Disaster and Crisis Response in third countries* strengthening its response and preparedness capacity and “*Linking Relief, Rehabilitation and Development*” (LRRD)⁷.” These initiatives have only just started in SE Asia.

1.3.4 European Commission mandates on disaster prevention and preparedness

14. The Commission’s mandate on DPP is based on three legal documents: 1) Council Regulation (EC) no.1257/96 on Humanitarian Aid (June 1996); 2) the Cotonou Agreement, signed between the EU and the African, Caribbean and Pacific states (June 2000); and 3) Council Regulation (EEC) No 443/92 (adopted by the Commission in 1992) on financial and technical assistance to, and economic cooperation with, the developing countries in Asia and Latin America (the “ALA programme”).

15. The Council Regulation (EC) no.1257/96, states that in addition to its mandate on relief, rehabilitation and reconstruction work during emergencies and immediate aftermath of natural disasters, the Commission shall: “*ensure preparedness for risks of natural disasters or comparable exceptional circumstances and use a suitable rapid early-warning and intervention system*”.⁸

16. Article 30 (e) of the Cotonou Agreement, includes mention that the Commission shall support: “*regional initiatives for disaster preparedness and mitigation*” as part of its regional cooperation activities. Article 60 (g) on scope of financing includes support to: “*humanitarian and emergency assistance including assistance to refugees and displaced persons, short-term rehabilitation measures and disaster preparedness*”.⁹

17. The Council Regulation (EEC) No 443/92 for the developing countries in Asia and Latin America states that: “*part of the aid may be used for rehabilitation and reconstruction following disasters of all kinds and for disaster-prevention measures*” (Article 5). The Regulation further specifies that: “*financial and technical assistance, shall be extended to the relatively more advanced ALA developing countries, in particular in the following specific fields and cases: prevention of natural disasters and reconstruction in their wake*” (Article 6).¹⁰

18. While a concrete legal basis allows an almost world wide coverage of DP measures through Commission instruments other than ECHO, disaster prevention and preparedness (DPP) is not systematically enshrined in all EC external relations aid programmes and related legal documents¹¹. The Commission, therefore, does not have a coherent strategy for DPP which is addressed sporadically, if at all, in different aid programmes, such those of DG DEV, DG RELEX or DG AIDCO.

19. To date, there do not appear to be any common agreements on concepts and terminology used with regard to DPP among the Commission’s main services in the area of development

⁷ Annual Report 2006 on the European Community’s Development Policy and the Implementation of External Assistance in 2005, EuropeAid Co-operation Office

http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/reports/europeaid_annual_report_2006_full_version_en.pdf

⁸ CE Regulation N°1257/96 of 20 June 1996, OL L163 of 02.07.1996

⁹ full text on http://ec.europa.eu/development/body/cotonou/pdf/agr01_en.pdf#zoom=100

¹⁰ Council Regulation (EEC) No 443/92 on financial and technical assistance to, and economic cooperation with, the developing countries in Asia and Latin America: OJ L 52, 27.2.1992

¹¹ ECHO Working Paper on DPP

cooperation. Terminologies used in this report are based on the proposal made by ECHO experts¹² (see Annex IV for a glossary of terms used by ECHO/DIPECHO). Since the 4th AP increasingly the language of the HFA and of DRR has become the main terminology used by DIPECHO, although confusion amongst partners has existed as DIPECHO's mandates is for DP and whether DIPECHO is only addressing DP as part of a range of DRR activities.

20. The lack of clarity and understanding on DRR that this evaluation mission discovers and which needs to be addressed, is the one existing between DIPECHO and its partners. While the mandate and objectives of the DIPECHO programme relates specifically to preparedness and pilot initiatives in mitigation, its advocacy and use of the term "DRR" or disaster reduction in programme documents gives partners the impression that the DIPECHO programme has a DRR mandate and objectives when in fact it is limited to preparedness and (small scale pilot) mitigation.

1.4 Preparedness within ECHO's mandate

21. Compared with its main mandate on response activities, preparedness is considered as a minor part of ECHO's overall mandate with a relatively low budget¹³ although this has been increasing in the last few years. Its mandate can be categorised in the following three strategic components: the DIPECHO programme, mainstreaming and advocacy (referred to as DG ECHO's "three DRR pillars").¹⁴

The DIPECHO programme

22. Preparedness is implicitly included in Council Regulation 1257/96, which governs ECHO. Disaster Preparedness ECHO (DIPECHO) and activities are defined in Articles 1 and 2 (f)¹⁵. DIPECHO is a dedicated and specific ECHO programme for DP at community level established in 1996. It has its own budget line (B7-219), which is different from the B-7-210 budget line from which ECHO funds most of its humanitarian interventions, as DIPECHO is not always directly linked to ongoing disaster response.

23. DIPECHO's main focus has been on "preparation" rather than "mitigation" or "prevention". Mitigation activities are carried out for demonstrative purposes only. DIPECHO projects have mainly focused on the local level where short term results are possible and where ECHO partners are most effective. Some projects have also supported regional activities for coordination and information activities in order to promote the exchange of best practices. The DIPECHO programme budget, in proportion to the overall ECHO budget in response to natural hazards, is relatively low, although increasing annually.

Mainstreaming disaster preparedness measures into relief operations

24. ECHO's mandate in DP goes beyond the DIPECHO programme. ECHO's major humanitarian financing decisions, especially those in responses to recurrent disasters, ideally should include DP or prevention objectives and post-disaster emergency responses that

¹² Disaster Preparedness and Prevention (DPP): State of play and strategic orientations for EC policy Working Paper, ECHO 4

¹³ Overall Evaluation of ECHO's Strategic Orientation to Disaster Reduction (Final Report December 2003), http://ec.europa.eu/echo/pdf_files/evaluation/2003/disaster_report.pdf

¹⁴ Disaster Preparedness and Prevention (DPP): State of play and strategic orientations for EC policy Working Paper, ECHO 4

¹⁵ CE Regulation N°1257/96 of 20 June 1996, OL L163 of 02.07.1996. http://eur-lex.europa.eu/smartapi/cgi/sga_doc?smartapi!celexapi!prod!CELEXnumdoc&lg=en&numdoc=31996R1257&model=guichet

incorporate a DRR element, although in practice this often proves difficult to achieve. Since the 2004 tsunami, ECHO has in fact been putting more emphasis on mainstreaming DP in relief operations. Under the 5th AP support is to be provided to UN-ISDR for the development of strategic national action plans in several countries. Furthermore in 2006, Viet Nam ECHO supported relief operations (in response to Typhoon Xangsane) implemented by DIPECHO-partners and using techniques developed under DIPECHO; whilst in The Philippines under the 5th AP¹⁶ a project to mainstream DRR in the shelter rehabilitation sector is to be supported.

Advocacy towards mainstreaming DP into development cooperation

25. ECHO has been a strong advocate to other Commission services working in the area of development cooperation and external relations to integrate DP into their own programming and operations. ECHO has also been the main advocate for “*Linking Relief and Rehabilitation to Development*” (LRRD) [see also footnote no. ⁷]. However, despite these efforts, cooperation between ECHO and the other more developmental funding instruments of the EC (e.g., AIDCO, RELEX, etc.) in the region has been elusive. Compared to the Latin America region, for example, little support to date has been given in the area of DP by AIDCO (*see footnote ¹²*). Only three out of seventeen projects in SE Asia received funding from AIDCO in 2006 are related to DP and all are tsunami related projects. A cursory review of the CSPs for SE Asian countries shows that LRRD is mentioned sparsely, e.g., as a “*challenge*” in Myanmar or that “*DIPECHO is a primary vehicle for LRRD*” in Cambodia and Lao PDR. LRRD is not mentioned at all in the Indonesia and Viet Nam CSPs of 2007-2013, (see Annex VIII).

Support to international efforts

26. In addition to the three components outlined above, ECHO strongly supports international DRR efforts, particularly those coordinated by the United Nations. ECHO supported UN OCHA/UN ISDR in organising the 2005 World Conference for Disaster Reduction in Kobe, Japan where 24 DRR best practices and initiatives from around the world were presented.

27. The strategic logic of the 5th DIPECHO AP Plan for Southeast Asia has been formulated within the context Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: *Building the Resilience of Nations & Communities to Disasters*¹⁷. This is the first attempt to adapt a DIPECHO AP to the overarching international DRR framework and project implementation will presumably better enable DIPECHO to determine its DRR strategy within this framework.

2. INTRODUCTION TO THE EVALUATION

2.1 Evaluation aims and criteria

28. The DIPECHO programme in Southeast Asia, undertaken through four Action Plans, is one of the longest periods in which a DIPECHO strategy has been implemented anywhere globally. During this period, from 1998 to 2005 (the 1st to 4th Action Plans) over €14 million was disbursed to some 31 partner organisations. However, there has been little done in the

¹⁶ “*Support to small-scale rehabilitation of houses destroyed by the typhoon. Repairs to buildings must reflect the disaster risk reduction concept as a preparedness measure that can be mainstreamed*”

¹⁷ full text available on the UNISDR website: <http://www.unisdr.org/eng/hfa/docs/Hyogo-framework-for-action-english.pdf>

way of evaluating the impact of these investments over almost eight years of action. Hence, in 2006, ECHO decided to carry out an evaluation of the four Action Plans for Southeast Asia.

29. This evaluation was conducted by a team of two independent consultants¹⁸ who visited the region between the 15th January and 5th April 2007. The terms of reference for the evaluation team are attached (see Annex I).

30. During the briefing in Brussels, it was agreed that the evaluation would be primarily concerned with the overall strategic approach taken by DIPECHO through the four Action Plans rather than an evaluation of individual projects. It was further agreed that particular attention would be given to a representative group of partners from each country and all regional partners.

2.2 Purpose and specific objective of the evaluation

31. The purpose of the evaluation was: *“to review and assess the progress made in enhancing resilience and reducing vulnerability to natural disaster of the most at-risk populations of Southeast Asia and the public institutions that seek to protect them”*. It was undertaken with a view towards providing a sound basis for informing the evolution of existing DIPECHO disaster risk management strategies in the region, as well as to contribute substantially to deliberations on DG ECHO’s overall approach to disaster preparedness and risk management.

32. The specific objective of the evaluation was to have an independent, structured evaluation of past (and current) DIPECHO Action Plans for Southeast Asia (SE Asia) and in particular to:

- Evaluate the relevance and impact of projects within the AP, as well as the appropriateness and effectiveness of individual programme strategies;
- Assess the complementarities and synergy between DIPECHO DRR strategies and those of other actors at national and regional level more broadly;
- Provide recommendations for the future scope and design of DIPECHO strategies; and
- To comment on the role of DIPECHO/DG ECHO in advocating for the wider integration of DRR across policy, planning and programming activities of the European Commission and other multi-lateral and bi-lateral financing institutions and national governments.

2.3 Methodology

Nature, make up of the team appropriateness for the evaluation and evaluators’ biases

33. The team comprised two independent consultants who had previous experience of DIPECHO projects and DRR programmes of other agencies working in the region, including DIPECHO-funded projects for the International Federation in Viet Nam and recent evaluations of three of the DIPECHO projects (one in Indonesia and two in Cambodia). As a consequence, and to avoid bias, the team was organised so that neither team member was tasked with reviewing projects already familiar to him, thereby minimising any potential conflict of interest.

Sampling

¹⁸ the team leader for the evaluation was Dr. Ian Wilderspin, working for the lead consulting firm Aguaconsult Ltd. of the UK; Mr. Jerome Casals was the second member of the team and worked for Transtec of Belgium

34. The evaluation team visited three countries in the region: Indonesia, Cambodia, Viet Nam and the regional partners of DIPECHO. Twelve DIPECHO partners were reviewed: two in Indonesia (CARE NL and the Danish Red Cross/*Pelang Merah Indonesia*), four in Cambodia (ACF/AAH, the Danish Red Cross/Cambodian Red Cross, ZOA and Lutheran World Federation/Danish Church Aid/Church World Service) and four in Viet Nam (Save the Children Alliance, Spanish Red Cross/Viet Nam Red Cross, CARE (DEU), Development Workshop (France).

35. The regional partners reviewed included the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UN ESCAP) and the Mekong River Commission (MRC) in Vientiane/Phnom Penh, both of which were implemented by the Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre (ADPC) in Bangkok.

36. The combined funding provided to partners in these countries and to the regional projects accounted for over 80% of the total DIPECHO funds expended since 1998.

Data collection and analysis

37. The methodology utilised in data collection and analysis consisted primarily of the following:

- An initial **briefing** session at the DG ECHO headquarters in Brussels (December 2006) with the evaluation department and staff responsible for the programme. At the end of the briefing, the evaluation team submitted an *Aide Mémoire* outlining the intended planning and scope of the evaluation.
- In-depth **desk study and reviews** of all project documentation that could be gathered from the files of ECHO Brussels and DIPECHO regional office in Bangkok. These included EU/ECHO policy and strategy papers, project appraisal worksheets, external evaluations, project financial reports, regional and national consultative meeting reports, funding decisions, programme guidelines and documents provided by the partners.
- An **internet search**, principally of the EC websites but also of other relevant sites.
- **Financial analysis** of AP (see Annexes Va and Vb for an in-depth analysis per country, per project partner and for each AP)
- **Interviews** held with the DIPECHO team in Bangkok, regional and country EU delegations (i.e., Thailand, Indonesia and Viet Nam), major donor institutions and organisations, national and local government agencies and offices, and other non-DIPECHO organisations that are directly involved in disaster management. The full list of organisations and individuals visited is attached (see Annex II)
- **In country briefing/workshop** with project partners at the start of the missions which included presentations by the evaluation team and by project partners, a strengths, weakness, opportunities and threats (SWOT) analysis and discussion.
- **Field visits** of approximately two days to each project. Visits included semi-structured interviews with expatriate and local project managers and their field operations staff; with local government authorities, and group discussions and semi-structured interviews with beneficiaries and other people living in the project areas.
- A **project partner review** (PPR) was compiled for each of the DIPECHO project partners. These documents were open and transparent and involved the project partners in feedback and final comment.

- A **summary** was produced for all countries visited - these were developed in dialogue with a selection of project partner staff (see Annexes IX Indonesia, X Cambodia and XI Viet Nam). Both the PPR and country summaries utilised the same format and reported the main findings and analysis for each of the evaluation criteria.
- Two further *Aide Mémoires* were produced, including a summary of the initial stages of the mission and a final summary of the entire mission. The final *Aide Mémoire* covered the main findings, conclusions and recommendations of the mission and was transmitted to DG ECHO at the end of the field visit.
- **Debriefing** sessions in each of the countries, attended by DIPECHO partners (including those whose projects were not visited). The final *Aide Mémoire* formed the basis for a regional debriefing in Bangkok, Thailand at the end of the evaluation field visits and a final debriefing at the ECHO headquarters in Brussels.

2.4 Constraints and limitations

38. The evaluators faced several constraints and limitations, principally the following:

- Limited, or missing, project documentation, particularly regarding the 1st and 2nd APs, which may have biased findings and recommendations as these are largely based upon on the 3rd, 4th and preparation of the 5th APs; there is no closure documentation (i.e. a file which gives the final status, i.e. financial disbursement);
- Financial information was received sporadically, rather than systematically;
- Change in project formats since the 3rd AP (the introduction of the FPA);
- The absence of key informants at various levels with the institutional memory of the DIPECHO projects, i.e., project partner expatriate staff (few still remain in the region); national staff of project partners and of local implementing partners have changed, local government staff/others in the various countries have also moved on. However, attempts to track down various individuals were undertaken and several were interviewed;
- High turnover rate of DIPECHO Desk Officers and Technical Advisers;
- Closure and exit of some project partners;
- Major disaster response operations and the tsunami have impacted upon the region and upon a number of projects under review;

3. OVERALL STRATEGIC DESIGN AND APPROACH

3.1 Background to the Action Plans

39. From 1998 to 2004 the Commission provided €14.3m from the humanitarian aid budget, through a series of four APs, for disaster preparedness (DP) activity in SE Asia. The funds are channelled through the ECHO's DP programme, DIPECHO. The main recipient countries have been Viet Nam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, The Philippines and Timor-Leste. Regional initiatives were funded starting from the 2nd (2000) to the 4th (2004) AP – *for an in-depth financial analysis of these disbursements, see Annexes Va and Vb.*

40. Action Plans, particularly since the 3rd have been defined in close co-operation with implementing non governmental and international organisations, local authorities and other stakeholders, within the framework of National and Regional Consultative Meetings.

41. The Commission decisions aim: “to target the most frequent and/or damaging disasters in the most exposed provinces with the highest risk levels for natural disasters and having the lowest coping capacities, to increase the response capacity of communities at risk and help them to save their lives and livelihoods”.

42. The main trend observed is a steady increase in funding received by DIPECHO’s partners from €2,055,000 in 1998 to €5,105,707 in 2004. This trend seems to continue as for the 5th AP where an amount of €7 m has been made available.¹⁹

Figure I. DIPECHO funding to SE Asia Percentage breakdown by country

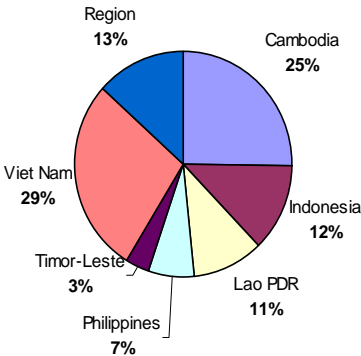
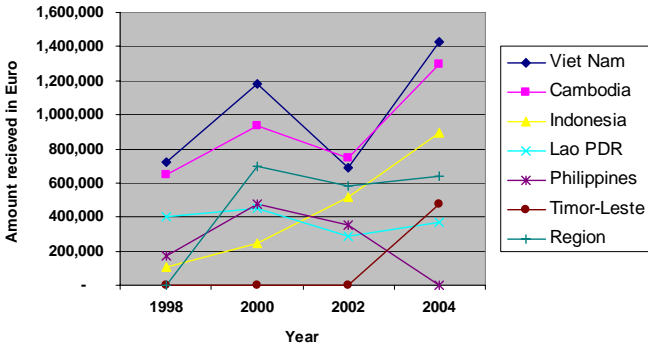


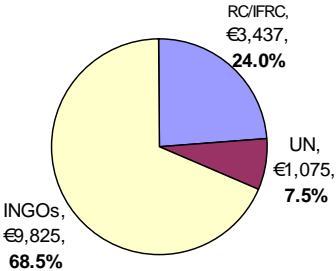
Figure II. Trends in DIPECHO funding in SE Asia – by 1998 -2004: country and year



43. Between 1998 and 2004 funding received by all countries has increased, except for The Philippines²⁰. Funding for Viet Nam and Cambodia has doubled whilst for Indonesia the funding has increased almost nine fold. DIPECHO funding for Lao PDR has decreased slightly but has been kept more or less at the same level. Regional funding, starting from the 2nd AP has been maintained at the same level.

44. Over the four APs the largest recipients support were INGOs (almost €10m); a quarter of funds were disbursed to the Red Cross Movement (€3.4m) whilst the UN agencies received €1.1m.

Figure III. Breakdown of major types of partners (1st-4th AP) by total amount received, €000



¹⁹ The “Fifth DIPECHO Action Plan for South East Asia” was adopted on 6th November 2006.

²⁰ The Philippines was not included in the 4th but is now included in the 5th AP

3.2 Strategic design and approach

45. DIPECHO APs for SE Asia at the country level, have evolved from aiming at covering a broad range of disaster management activities, trying to make impact at all levels (regional, national and local), to focusing more on interventions at a community level, with specific emphasis on community-based participatory approach to DP. Concurrent with this shift, support to national level activities became more focused on advocacy and awareness building. In addition, targeted geographical and thematic areas in respective countries have become more specific over the years. At the regional level, the APs have developed from supporting national bodies in establishing regional cooperation mechanisms to a more training and capacity building approach with focus on capacity development of personnel. Throughout all APs complementarities, coordination and cooperation with all stakeholders (government, NGOs, other EU) working in the same sectors have been emphasised as an important issue. Each AP reflects the lessons learned from implementation of the previous AP(s)²¹.

3.3 Relevance and appropriateness

46. The projects generally tend to be consistent with partners' existing mandates and strategies while also enhancing their capacities to undertake DRR interventions²². DIPECHO APs have been designed to complement national DM strategies and plans where feasible; for example, in Viet Nam it is not possible to effectively implement projects without support from the national, and at least provincial, DM agencies and local government structures. On the other hand, in some countries this is constrained by the current lack, or ambiguity, of national DM plans (for example, in Cambodia and Indonesia).

47. The APs (as with all regions) are *de facto* the DIPECHO strategy for SE Asia. Although projects were all in clear alignment with the DIPECHO country strategies during the various APs, the APs themselves were not entirely comprehensive. There were aspects that some project partners wanted to undertake and some confusion existed as to which type of activities DIPECHO could support²³. In addition, gaps exist in what APs intend to do and what can actually be done, given the number, mandate, and capacity of partners and the amount of funding available.

Role of national consultative process and consistency of approach

48. All partners engaged in the national consultative process and felt it made the subsequent AP more appropriate to the country. The design of DIPECHO APs has improved continuously since 1998, and the 4th AP contained many of the lessons learned from previous implementation of APs. There was a general sense of synergy: the process led to the identification of country priorities and gave direction to partners. However, the resulting priorities are seen as too broad in terms of the types of intervention and potential areas of coverage.

49. There is danger of a lack of consistency in approach from one country to another depending upon the partners, potential partners, and other DRR stakeholders who attended the

²¹ see Annex VII for an overview of the main components of the APs

²² However, some project partners felt that there was a lack of congruence and consideration of DIPECHO programming to the country agenda and programme of the partners.

²³ e.g. DIPECHO can support revolving funds, endowment funds and cost recovery schemes but not micro-credit nor funds managed by the grant holder after the project ends

meetings and their depth of knowledge of the situation, although partners are consulted at other times. However, the “core” of the DIPECHO AP guidelines provides a standard framework for all DIPECHO programmes.

Risks, vulnerability, and capacity assessments in project design

50. All partners conducted area-specific risk assessments as a basis for designing their projects, some more comprehensively than others. The majority of risk analyses showed a reasonably good understanding of the context, which is further supported by the assumptions identified. Partners engaged with long-term programmes, benefited from continuous information gathering, leading to improved understanding of the local context and better design of interventions. In addition to examining risks, the partners’ stakeholder analyses were of good quality and the most relevant stakeholder organisations were generally assigned as local implementing partners.

51. A “bottom-up approach” was applied to formulate activities for DP and mitigation. This provided local government authorities (particularly at the village, commune, and district levels) with a better understanding of each community’s specific needs, and in some cases enabled support through their longer term planning. High community participation rates were attributed to the use of participatory risk assessment methodologies and programmes that directly responded to community priorities.

Addressing significant hazards facing the most vulnerable populations in disaster-prone areas

52. Most disaster-prone communities within the chosen areas were systematically identified and work undertaken to address significant hazards, which included tropical storms, typhoons, flash floods, landslides, and drought. The sites were identified through discussions with local government authorities and communities on the most disaster-prone areas.

53. DIPECHO’s objective of working in the most disaster-prone areas is not always followed, with other criteria being weighted more heavily. In these cases, the partner may consider their staff capacity, the receptiveness of communities and local authorities towards implementing a project, or some political factors.

54. Currently, aside from ACF in Jakarta, no partners are working in urban areas. The evaluation team sees this as a gap in the recent DIPECHO APs²⁴.

55. Taking into account the project time frame, sufficient efforts were made to involve vulnerable people, in particular women and the poor, and to ensure that they benefited from programs to increase awareness or promote effective DRR.

3.4 Coordination

Partners and DIPECHO

²⁴ the February 2007 flooding in Jakarta that affected more than 600,000 people reinforced the need for greater pilot testing of community-based DRR approaches in an urban setting

56. All partners were in regular communication with DIPECHO Bangkok, and coordination through email, briefings, meetings, and telephone throughout the APs was generally reported to be good. Partner HQs coordinated regularly with ECHO in Brussels.

57. The ECHO Technical Assistants (TAs) were accessible, supportive, and cooperative, and partners would like further opportunities to meet; TAs, however, acknowledge challenges with being able to monitor/visit all the projects given the large number and the timeframe of the APs. However, some partners commented that monitoring should be more constructive instead of focusing on problem identification. Others suggested partners suggested that the engagement of the TA with their national staff could be increased. Dialogue during field monitoring visits about ongoing activities, changes in the operating environment, and other issues were considered open, rigorous, and robust. Thoughtful feedback was generally provided although sometimes this was reported as being a little slow.

58. New guidance in subsequent APs does not appear to have been fully internalised by partners, or explained by DIPECHO. Guidelines for the 5th AP are extremely comprehensive but it is questionable whether they are “user-friendly”, being some 40 pages in length. Recent FPA training was appreciated by project partners and DIPECHO staff who used this as a further opportunity for engagement.

59. Overall, project partners consulted with the ECHO Delegation (where they had offices - in Indonesia and Cambodia) prior to developing proposals, as well as with local and national authorities and other DRR stakeholders on the ground. DIPECHO support to partners is primarily given from Bangkok, and there were issues in the past where neither ECHO nor did the EC Delegations have extensive knowledge of DIPECHO projects. However, this significantly improved over the course of APs and Commission delegations were aware of the current projects funded by DIPECHO (e.g. Viet Nam had a full set of files for the 5th AP).

Disaster management networks

60. There is generally a lack of a coherent approach by stakeholders to working with the governmental DM structures at the different levels, but this varies from one country to another. In all countries, the conflicting strategies and operational policies of agencies working in the same areas pose challenges for coordination and complementarities. For example, agencies using a rights-based approach may tackle issues differently from other implementing partners, such as the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement which is guided by its Fundamental Principles.

61. The various national coordination fora have been instrumental in strengthening linkages between DRR organisations, especially in cases where a national agency took the lead. The greatest levels of coordination exist in Viet Nam, where all partners work closely with the CFSC, particularly at the commune level. The Disaster Management Working Group²⁵

²⁵ The DMWG was established in 2001 by the International Federation in response to the realisation that there was limited knowledge and coordination amongst DM bodies during the extensive flooding in the Mekong delta areas. The original concept was to ensure that all DM stakeholders (i.e. government, NGOs, the RC and other civil society organisations) would meet on a regular basis outside the times of disaster, with a rotating chair and an emphasis on regular informal meetings. Five years later the DMWG has a healthy and regular information exchange mechanism with almost daily communication amongst partners on the internet, recently revised ToR, regular joint disaster assessments, and several major champions (including UNDP, WHO, Save the Children Alliance, the International Federation) and active participation by the Natural Disasters Mitigation - Partnership (NDM-P) secretariat, a joint Government of Viet Nam/donor/civil society coordination mechanism

(DMWG) is now considered the country's foremost body for facilitating coordination between DM actors. All partners demonstrated a high level of coordination with other DRR stakeholders in the government at all levels, mass organisations, NGOs, and the beneficiaries themselves. In Cambodia, the formation and development of the national DRR Forum is viewed positively by both DIPECHO and non-DIPECHO partners.

62. Some partners are also members of regional or larger networks such as AZEECON²⁶ (of which LWF is a member) and the Red Cross/Red Crescent national societies whose partners benefit from their engagement and support from the International Federation's Regional Disaster Management Committee in Southeast Asia (see I Background and Context). In a few cases, engagement with academic institutions and universities is beneficial²⁷.

3.5 Complementarities with other DRR actors and national policies

Coherence at the national level

63. In Viet Nam, the national DM coordinating body (the Central Committee for Flood and Storm Control) and in Cambodia, the National Committee for Disaster Management are aware of DIPECHO programme and are participants in consultations, in workshops of DIPECHO and of its partners. Both have provided resource persons to training events conducted by DIPECHO partners. However, in Indonesia it was questionable whether the government DM bodies were aware of the work that DIPECHO supports.

64. In Cambodia, complementarities between DIPECHO funded projects, particularly the ACF, DRC/CRC and ADPC/MRC projects, under the 4th AP was less than optimal as the partners organisations could have benefited more from mutual learning and application of tools. However, in general, partners in Cambodia are coordinating activities more during the 4th AP (e.g., through engagement with the Cambodia Red Cross).

65. Other significant players in DRR are UNDP, the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank (ADB). In Viet Nam, these donors also support coordination and try to ensure that DM is addressed in a more comprehensive manner (with a multi-hazard approach). UNDP is able to access funding quickly, has dedicated staff, and plays a significant role in capacity building and in DM policy and strategy development. They also focus on knowledge management and networking through mechanisms such as the NDM-P and DMWG. This is in marked contrast to the situation in Cambodia where UNDP engagement in DM is distinctly absent. In general, greater potential exists for DIPECHO to complement the work of the major development institutions particularly the UNDP, UNISDR, the World Bank and ADB.

Coherence at the regional level

66. DIPECHO has effectively engaged with regional partners, such as the ADPC and the MRC for knowledge sharing and integration of DRR into programming. However, the regional "mainstreaming" of DRR into development planning that began in the 4th AP has been less effective largely because it requires longer-term processes which cannot be undertaken during one cycle of DIPECHO funding. Ideally, mainstreaming should be tailored to each country. Generic approaches will not work as each country has its own idiosyncrasies, and the question remains as to whether such integration initiatives can be best accomplished through a regional programme rather than a national programme.

²⁶ AZEECON, Asian Zone Emergency and Environment Cooperation Network, a network of the DCA group

²⁷ e.g. CARE Indonesia has links with *Palangraya* University and Columbia University

M which is an integral component in CARE's development of an Early Warning System for forest fires

67. A significant role has been played by ADPC in regional sharing on lessons and best practice through the DIPECHO-supported *Partnership for Disaster Reduction – Southeast Asia (PDR SEA)*. This initiative has accelerated support for the development of national networks, which are now seen as providing relevant and useful avenues for knowledge sharing. However, what appears to be missing is the translation and integration of lessons into the operational activities of the different partners.

68. Significant levels of competency of DIPECHO partners in CBDM were achieved through the regional training of trainers and the adaptation of the CBDM curriculum delivered by the ADPC. However, it was felt that current training courses offered by ADPC had lost some of their vitality and were no longer “cutting edge”.

69. DIPECHO also promotes the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA), and explicit reference to the HFA is required in proposals since the 4th AP. Subsequently, most partners are aware of, have adopted, or have expressed intentions of adopting, the HFA as the framework for undertaking their DRR programme work in their respective country of operation.

70. There are examples of funding from DIPECHO and other donors being leveraged to achieve DRR objectives, sometimes working with the same partners and with complementary approaches. In Viet Nam in 2006, the Netherlands Red Cross Society received funding from both EuropeAID (AIDCO) and DIPECHO to cover six provinces. Several major stakeholders utilise their own funding for DRR, such as Oxfam America and Oxfam GB (OGB). GTZ provides long term support to ADPC to undertake Component 4 of the MRC Flood Mitigation and Management Programme which is also supported by DIPECHO, and the World Bank supports complementary DRR initiatives in 17 provinces in Viet Nam.

Regional coherence on specific issues

71. Generally, the coordination and complementarities between programmes related to flooding, a major hazard, must be improved and higher levels of synergies created. To this end, the MRC aims to consolidate EWS information and develop standards for NGOs with whom they work to ensure a common approach.

72. Whilst the issue of support for food security causes some confusion, as finance is possible from a range of EC financial instruments, including, for example, ECHO itself and the EC Food Security budget line, on the ground, the evaluation team found no evidence of duplication in areas where funding for food security was coming from these two sources.

3.5 Sustainability and connectedness

73. Overall, sustainability of the projects benefited from high levels of awareness of DP and DRR within the local communities, as well as improved skills and application of a CBDM approach among the local government. Capacity building through acquired knowledge and skills among local leaders and the community also helped to build sustainable interventions, as did the transfer of targeted IEC/behavioural change materials to local stakeholders.

74. Challenges for sustainability of projects include the following:

- most projects under the 1st to 3rd AP were designed and implemented without sufficient consideration to sustainability and phasing out
- human resource constraints
- the level of awareness is not the same for different project sites and different groups in the community; and
- lack of opportunities, understanding, or confidence to put new DM skills and knowledge into practice beyond the project duration.

Community ownership

75. Many projects have brought about community-owned and managed DRR activities, although most are in the early stages of development. Communities were directly involved in the design and location of micro-projects, either through providing labour, raw materials, or small cash contributions. In some cases, these contributions added up to a significant proportion of overall project costs. Communities demonstrated that they are able to find solutions to some problems by using their own resources.

76. In the majority of cases, projects reflect the local perception of needs, largely because of the participatory decision-making and planning processes. Changes were generally accepted and appreciated, as witnessed by the positive feedback from district or commune leaders, mass organisations and households; which bodes well for future sustainability.

Appropriate technology

77. For most mitigation projects, operations and maintenance (O&M) committees were established to help ensure that the projects would be sustained in the long term, (e.g., in Cambodia, the Cambodian Red Cross projects are supported by a network of Red Cross volunteers, whilst for other partners, community members form such committees), where the O&M does not involve huge costs and can thus be absorbed by the provincial authorities or the provincial RC, and for minor repairs, the communities themselves.

78. Although a few partner initiatives used technology that was too complicated for a local implementing partner to continue and could not be sustained, the technologies used in most projects usually fit in with existing needs, culture, skills and knowledge of local artisans. Partners generally adopted a cautious approach towards using highly technical or complex methods and tools, a strategy that has been considered successful, sustainable and replicable. Following DIPECHO projects, households have adapted techniques and maintained the technology without further assistance or with minimal O&M costs by using their own local resources. The majority of micro-projects were built to a high technical standard on low budgets.

79. In Cambodia, the water projects were of superior quality. A survey of water facilities constructed under the 1st and 2nd APs in 16 villages showed that almost all were still functioning and being utilised. The flood EWS developed and pilot tested over a series of AP in Cambodia (by ACF/DRC/CRC) is sustainable and replicable in other provinces because of its low cost and ownership by relevant stakeholders.

Financial sustainability

80. Households contributed financially to the majority of micro-projects undertaken. Substantial counterpart community labour was valued at between 30% and 50% of project cost in some cases. Commune and district councils also contributed funds, and in some cases this even exceeded project partners' contributions. There is a distinct possibility for integrating community plans into formal government development plans and budgets at the sub-district and district level. However, the shortage of financial resources at the local level is a common constraint; village, commune, and district level budgets are often minuscule and must address a range of issues in addition to DRR.

81. Recent guidelines²⁸ provide clarification on revolving funds, etc. (see also footnote ³) and may eventually enhance local communities' ability to finance their own DRR initiatives.

Institutional sustainability

82. In all three countries, Red Cross societies acting as local implementing partners faced similar challenges in attracting new staff due to issues with leadership and low government-linked salaries that are not attractive when coupled with high work loads in implementing DIPECHO-funded projects. Encouragingly, national societies are beginning to recognise the need to take HR issues more seriously (although this has been a major issue since the 1st AP).

83. In Viet Nam, projects under the 5th AP are without exception benefiting from the institutional knowledge retained in the Viet Nam Red Cross since the 1st AP, both at the NHQ and in many of the provinces where RC staff have been trained in DP under earlier APs. This capacity building of national society staff through past APs too was apparent in Cambodia and Indonesia.

3.6 Linking relief to rehabilitation and development (LRRD)

84. Nowhere in the countries visited has there been a deliberate approach to link relief with rehabilitation and development—the so called “LRRD approach”. The concept of LRRD is relatively new (*circa* 2001) and few experiences with “tried and tested” strategies have been documented. There were no obvious indications amongst the partners that an LRRD approach had been deliberately and consciously integrated into their ECHO-supported operations. There were no strong examples of a partner that had received ECHO support following a disaster²⁹, then progressed to DIPECHO funding to tackle preparedness and mitigation, and then moved onto developmental programming support from another EC funding instrument or other donors. This maybe partly attributable to the “short-sightedness of partners” but it was considered that still LRRD is a conceptual construct and whilst some partners actually practice this they do not call it LRRD. However, LRRD is relatively new and the main bottlenecks appear to be reflected in a lack of clear and applicable strategies; few case studies and experiences were documented and shared during the four APs.

85. Some organisations did have funding from different sources for emergency response operations and later received DIPECHO support. Of these few examples, this chain of funding and action were brought about through the partner's initiative, rather than as a result of a deliberate strategic approach taken by ECHO/DIPECHO to foster LRRD.

86. Several partners' interventions started with emergency relief, and gradually those efforts moved towards rehabilitation and long-term sustainable development. Interestingly, these examples originated almost entirely from development-oriented partners such as LWF and CARE, whereas humanitarian aid-focused partners were less successful. In the tsunami-affected areas such as Aceh, a great number of approaches to LRRD exist. However, it remains to be seen how successfully partners will be able to transfer their learning to enhance the LRRD approach in other contexts.

87. Some partners do have a clear vision about relief in the context of longer-term development work. These partners have created links between relief and DRR, some more clearly than others, as illustrated in the following examples:

²⁸ Fact sheet (in the FPA, No. 9)

²⁹ e.g., this review team found that LRRD was not consciously adopted by ECHO Indonesia and Cambodia despite the presence of DIPECHO partners and their engagement ECHO funded response activity

- Development Workshop (France) demonstrated that safe building techniques could be applied to strengthen homes and public buildings, and the buildings then served as safe areas when disaster struck. The emergencies also facilitated the dissemination of DRR measures among the affected population and to the local government.
- Save the Children Alliance received ECHO funding for the “*Mekong Delta Child-focused Emergency Response Project*”, which provided children with school materials lost during the floods and enabled them to continue with their education.
- For the Red Cross, the “language of LRRD” is not so familiar and the Movement does not specifically discuss the linkages in this manner. In any case, the RC has linked response operations to preparedness interventions in DIPECHO projects, namely the establishment and strengthening of emergency response teams (“shock brigades”), developing HR capacity (particularly trained facilitators), and local level mitigation.
- In Cambodia, ZOA (as well as LWF/DCA and CWS) have provided relief while implementing development programmes. ZOA now integrates activities supported by DIPECHO into a six-year, long-term development strategy with several other INGOs, including CARE and Maltesers, with support from the EC food security budget line³⁰.
- CARE’s programme began with a series of ECHO-funded emergency relief and response operations. Its dual development and humanitarian mandates are an enabling factor in a successful application of development concepts and strategies into a DRR-based programme.

88. The partners tend to pursue their own LRRD initiatives with limited guidance from ECHO on LRRD and with a focus at the local level. The more development-orientated project partners (e.g. LWF and ZOA in Cambodia) have understood and adopted it more readily than the humanitarian organisations. This is partly due to their security of funding and partly to existing levels of understanding regarding risk and vulnerability. These organisations sought out DRR strategies and approaches after realising the serious consequences disasters were having on their long-term development programmes.

89. There is no question that the promotion of LRRD is not the sole responsibility of ECHO/DIPECHO and that they have made significant efforts (although as yet not always successfully) in advocating for LRRD (as well as DRR and DP) with other EC services. Some partners are not aware of these efforts, as the relevant advocacy they are looking for, and seek support in, tend to be more at the operational level. However partners have successfully utilized DIPECHO funding as a means to link the mainstreaming and integration of DRR with local and national government agendas, and the adoption and replication of government and donors of these pilot projects and initiatives. At their levels, they have undertaken the promotion and advocacy (with some success and promising results) of DRR but often feel they are too small to make a difference, or influence the provincial and national governments and donors to adopt specific DRR interventions. It is at this level that this evaluation team would recommend more and greater involvement of the DIPECHO programme.

90. Humanitarian organisations also recognise the value of an LRRD approach, and DIPECHO has created a growing awareness of its importance. However, it is not yet clear how ECHO and its partners are trying to apply the LRRD approach during response operations despite being high on ECHO’s agenda for several years. In part this appears to be due to a lack of knowledge and guidance of how to apply LRRD in practice.

³⁰ This is not related to a “handing over” of DIPECHO projects activities to funding from the EC instruments but rather happening in parallel

91. The DIPECHO partners' various experiences of LRRD are expected to contribute to discussions regarding the extent of future LRRD and DRR integration into ECHO's own institutional objectives and strategies³¹. One global indicator will be that DIPECHO has scaled-up access to long-term funding, preferably through another EC funding instrument, to enable the incorporation of DRR into each partner's development programme.

3.7 Advocacy

92. At the time of launch of the 1st AP there were no Commission interventions in DP in the region other than the DIPECHO programme; neither was there any financing of preparedness projects by Member states, except in Viet Nam.³² Since 2001, in order to improve the situation and trigger involvement of other Commission services in DRR, DIPECHO has made efforts in strengthening co-ordination on DP issues with DG RELEX, AIDCO and subsequently with DG DEV. It has also initiated dialogue with some of the Delegations to explore possibilities for the incorporation of natural DRM components in programmes supported under the relevant National Indicative Programmes (NIPs) and Country Strategy Papers (CSPs).³³

93. In comparison to a significant increase in Members states' and other donors' direct involvement in DRR activities in SE Asia, the Commission's interest and involvement, other than those of the DIPECHO, remained limited.³⁴ At the time of the launch of the 5th DIPECHO AP in the region the governments of France, Sweden and the UK were all actively involved in various aspects of DRR either within the international framework of the UN ISDR or within their own policy frameworks (i.e. DFID).³⁵ The governments of Finland, Germany and Denmark have also been active in supporting DRR in the region.³⁶

94. The non-ECHO/DIPECHO Commission involvement only saw slow and limited expansion in policy and activity areas. Despite DIPECHO's continuous advocacy, reference to DRR issues in CSPs and NIPs is still limited. In the 2007-2013 period CSPs, only Indonesia, Laos, The Philippines and Viet Nam mention "natural disaster" and related issues to a minimal extent. Clear policy statements in prioritizing DRR/DM are only seen in the CSPs of The Philippines and Viet Nam. Respective country Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) equally do not seem to prioritize DRR issues.

95. DG AIDCO and DEV support related activities in the region (i.e. food security in Cambodia, DP activities as part of the tsunami operation in Indonesia and poverty reduction and growth in Viet Nam), but no concrete linkages can be seen with the DIPECHO programme. In some of the EU country delegations, it seems that there is little understanding

³¹ VOICE (a network of NGOs acts as an inter locator with ECHO) provides an advocacy platform to raise the issue with ECHO. See <http://www.ngovoice.org>

³² The Netherlands government launched a preparedness programme in 1999 and implemented it in the following years. France and UN took an active part in this process and the Commission's Delegation to Viet Nam followed the Netherlands' initiative and financed a component of the UN programme under the First DIPECHO Action Plan. Source: *DIPECHO Programme for Disaster Preparedness and Prevention, Second Action Plan for South-East Asia, Financing Proposal* (July 2000).

³³ *ECHO Humanitarian Aid Decision* (Third, Fourth and Fifth DIPECHO Action Plan in South East Asia).

³⁴ *ECHO Humanitarian Aid Decision*, 23 02 02, Fifth DIPECHO Action Plan for South East Asia.

³⁵ *Reducing the Risk of Disasters – Helping to Achieve Sustainable Poverty Reduction in a Vulnerable World: A DFID policy paper*, DFID (March 2006).

³⁶ Currently the Presidency is hosted by Germany who took an initiative to get all the donors from the members states (i.e. heads of DFID, SIDA, DANIDA, etc.) - called Humanitarian Aid Committee (HAC) - to come up with a common approach and direction of the EU in external humanitarian assistance. This was presented to the Commission end of March and if the Commission takes it up it will be put forward as a regulation to the Parliament. This may influence a lot of the direction of future EU foreign aid.

among Commission staff on the mandate and roles of ECHO/DIPECHO. Nevertheless, some progress has been made especially after the World Conference on Disaster Reduction (January 2005), which apparently raised awareness among other Commission services of the need for more constructive dialogue with DG ECHO in promoting DRR. The tsunami disaster also has obliged relevant DGs to cooperate.

96. DIPECHO's competitive advantage lies in its focus on small-scale community based DRR activities but this point seems not well recognized by the others.³⁷ The reason for this limited expansion partly lies in human and financial resources constraints, as well as the relatively short timeframe of an AP cycle.³⁸

4. OPERATIONAL ASSESSMENT

4.1 Selection of partners

97. Over the course of four APs, DIPECHO provided support to 31 partners in six countries and to several operating regionally. This included various Red Cross societies (or participating national societies, PNS)³⁹. Sixteen international non-government organisations (INGOs) were partners⁴⁰. Of the United National system agencies, UN ESCAP and UNDP received support (and under the 5th AP, UN ISDR). The two regional bodies are the Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre (ADPC) and the Mekong River Commission (MRC). (*See Annex VI for full details of DIPECHO financial disbursements*).

98. The DIPECHO programme is constrained by the presence, availability and level of expertise of partners and their local implementing partners, which poses challenges for a more strategic use of finance. In the case of Indonesia, for example, it was difficult for DIPECHO to respond to the need for increased DRR initiatives because few organisations responded to the call for proposals. There are also a number of local organisations that have good potential to contribute to disaster reduction in their respective countries, but which are constrained because of the lack of European INGO partners.

99. Within each country in the region, there are a number of potential project partners who are engaged in DRR. However, some of the larger and more prominent INGOs are reluctant to access DIPECHO funding due to a perception of challenging proposal development and approval processes, especially in relation to the relatively small funding provided and the short timeframe involved for execution.

100. The selection of an increasing number of development NGOs (beginning under the 3rd and 4th AP) and those with dual mandates of humanitarian response and development as

³⁷ See Annex VIII d for each DG, their mandates and roles as well as activities in SE Asia

³⁸ Increase in ECHO's budget was recommended in the *Carlotti Report* reported at the Strasbourg Session (13-16 January 2003). The Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) supported proposals to increase the ECHO's initial budget in the next financial years to reach a total of €500-550 million. Furthermore, they insisted that disaster prevention and preparedness should be considered as priorities in promoting a 'culture of prevention', and called on the Commission to include disaster preparedness in all technical co-operation and development programmes.

³⁹ The French, Danish, Spanish and most recently the Netherlands Red Cross societies and the International Federation (or IFRC).

⁴⁰ *Action contre la Faim/Action Against Hunger*, CRED UCL, Oxfam UK/I, CARE International (DEU, NL, Fr), CESVI, *Action d'urgence*, APS (IT) AUI, CISP, CODEV, SCF (UK), Development Workshop (Fr), Concern, Dan Church Aid, ZOA, Action Aid, World Vision International (UK) - thus including organisations with different mandates, those more humanitarian, e.g. ACF/AAH to those that are more developmental, e.g. CARE, Action Aid.

DIPECHO partners is a noteworthy initiative. Partners with long-term programmes showed a tendency to be more efficient and are potentially more effective.⁴¹

101. The selection of Red Cross and Crescent Societies as local implementing partners has generally been advantageous. In all of the countries visited by the evaluation mission, the national Red Cross and Crescent Societies have formal disaster management roles mandated by their governments. They are present in most areas of the country and disaster preparedness is an integral part of their mandate. While engaging with the national Red Cross and Crescent has its own challenges, their national spread, infrastructure, human resource base, permanent presence in a country and regional/global linkages are an important factors contributing to sustainability.

102. The choice of regional partners: the Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre (ADPC), UNESCAP and the Mekong River Commission (MRC), is appropriate. The ADPC is well recognised as one of the main, if not, the primary regional institution, having technical expertise in many aspects of disaster management. Likewise, UNESCAP brings significant experience and technical skills in strategic planning and networking into its partnership with the ADPC. Initiatives involving disaster (flood) reduction along the Mekong River will inevitably involve the MRC.

103. Personnel costs, in proportion to overall expenditure of regional bodies, were much higher than those for partners operating at country level; in part this may be due to the fact that a higher proportion of staff is considered to be expatriate. The average per partner percentage personnel cost in relation to funds spent on actual DRR activities was relatively low in Viet Nam, where many experienced INGOs and Red Crosses worked repeatedly over the course of the four APs with the same local NGOs or local bodies

4.2 Financial analysis

104. Overall, DIPECHO contributed approximately €14.3m to 54 actions (49 country actions in 6 countries and 5 regional actions) during the evaluation period (1998-2004: 1st to 4th APs in SE Asia). For a full financial analysis, see Annexes Va and Vb.

105. Financial analysis reveals that over the course of the four APs €9.8m or 68.5% went to INGOs, consisting almost exclusively of humanitarian aid focused organizations but subsequently including more development oriented organizations. Another €3.4m or 24% went to the RC/IFRC, which helped to ensure that all national Red Cross societies integrated DRR components into their regular programmes. Some €1.1m or 7.5% to UN agencies. The biggest recipient in terms of total amount received among the INGOs was CARE⁴², making up 14% of the total or 21% of the total received by the INGOs. With Red Cross societies and INGOs having long-term partnerships with local organisations and intimate knowledge of the local situation, this breakdown is relevant to the DIPECHO APs and seems appropriate.

106. In terms of funding per country, 25% went to Cambodia, 12% to Indonesia and 28% to Viet Nam, the remainder going to Laos PDR, The Philippines and to Timor-Leste, (see also I, 1.3.3). 13% of funding was provided to regional organisations. It is notable that less funding went to the most disaster prone countries in the region, i.e., Indonesia and The Philippines.

⁴¹ E.g., they tended to establish long term goals, have continuous community activities, suffer less staff turnover, overcame funding gaps, have long term administrative and finance systems in place and undertook better preparation before project start up.

⁴² CARE here refers to all CARE entities: DEU, NL and AT.

About 13% of funding was provided to regional organisations that have been engaged with capacity building, information sharing and networking activities. Regional DRR mainstreaming initiatives were more recently initiated, although preliminary indications and partner feedback are not encouraging.

107. The average amount provided to each project partner has progressively increased and is in the range of €24,000 to €42,000. The number of project partners has increased, albeit not consistently: under the 1st AP, 10 partners, each received an average of €205,000; under the 2nd AP, 14 partners each received an average of €86,000; under the 3rd AP, 13 partners each received an average of €44,000; and under the 4th AP, 17 partners each received an average of €300,000 (for the 5th AP there are 22 partners receiving an average of €333,000 per project partner).

108. Over this period (1st to 4th AP) the amounts varied from country to country but the main expenditure represented in the projects of Cambodia, Indonesia, Viet Nam and the region are summarised as follows:⁴³

- Capacity building training/training material development accounted for between 13% in Cambodia, to 38% in Indonesia and 29% in Viet Nam in terms of average spending per partner.
- Personnel costs accounted for an average of 24% in Viet Nam, 38% in Indonesia and 33% in Cambodia per partner. Personnel costs on average were 44% for regional partners. High personnel costs, an average of 39% (approximately €5,000) per partner per project, including regional projects, are attributable to the mandatory use of expatriate project managers. While this translates to less money available to undertake actual RR work, it may be argued that an expatriate presence helps to ensure transparency and accountability.
- Specific activities include:
 - i. rehabilitation, medical supply, participatory review, micro projects, CBDP and mitigation activities accounting for 29% in Cambodia
 - ii. small-scale emergency funds accounting for 13% in Indonesia; and
 - iii. essential relief items and emergency rehabilitation as part of preparing to respond efforts, including watsan, emergency funds and public facility construction, infrastructure support, emergency equipment and mitigation, and housing reinforcement and risk mapping accounting for 26% in Viet Nam
- Office utilities, rent, communication, transport and travel costs accounted for only 7-14% of partners' project costs, representing an efficient use of resources
- Administration and indirect costs⁴⁴ comprised around 4-7% of expenditure by partners. Given that these are mostly for running costs and in some cases used for physical assets for the local partners to implement the projects, the value will be much more than the actual expenditure, especially in cases where projects are successfully duplicated and sustained in the long run and provides further evidence of an overall efficient use of resources by DIPECHO partners.

⁴³ Full financial reports from all partners were not available (4 missing in Cambodia and 2 missing in Viet Nam). Therefore, figures stated here are based on available financial reports of 34 out of 40 actions implemented during the 1st to 4th APs in the three countries plus the regional actions.

⁴⁴ Indirect costs in ECHO terminology is overheads and usually amounts to 7% of the direct costs.

- Visibility accounted for a consistent 1% spend (totalling around €88,000)⁴⁵ over the four APs in the three countries including the regional action
- An average of 1% was spent on audit and M&E except for Cambodia where this category made up 8% of the total expenditure.

109. There is no specific allocation of funds for: advocacy (towards donors/governments) nor for collation and dissemination of lessons learnt, best practice, case studies, etc.

4.3 Visibility

110. In recent years, the DG ECHO has emphasised the need for visibility and communication in its projects. It is part of the DG's mandate to: "*raise awareness for the principles and values of its aid*" in addition to funding DRR (and humanitarian aid). It is also a way to ensure transparency and to be accountable for the use of EU funds to European citizens. Partners are encouraged to use part of their project funds budgeted under the visibility line to implement visibility and communication activities that meet the DG's requirements. Requirements for these activities, however, only became explicit after the 5th AP in South East Asia. Whilst the guidelines for the APs during the evaluation period do not contain any sections on this issue, the budget format has a 'visibility' budget line which shows that DIPECHO expected partners to carry out visibility activities (see annex XII and ECHO Aid Strategy 2003).⁴⁶

111. Visibility activities are categorised under DIPECHO funded projects as follows: 1) basic *visibility activities*⁴⁷ and 2) *communication activities/tools*⁴⁸. These two activities are distinct from activities considered eligible under the budget line: *Advocacy and public awareness-raising*, where the specific objective is the promotion of DRR and the HFA, the production of training manuals and advocacy campaigns are not considered as "visibility" activities. Financial analysis for the 1st to 4th APs reveals that 1% of project budget was spent consistently on visibility; under the 5th AP, the visibility budget is recommended to be 5% of the project budget; whether such a significant increase in budget is feasible, or necessary, is questionable, but more importantly exactly how this will be undertaken is of greater concern.

112. This evaluation noted different types of visibility activities undertaken⁴⁹ (summarised in Annex XII) and consist primarily of displaying the DIPECHO logo on all tangible project outputs (e.g., stickers, course materials and IEC dissemination brochures, posters, signboards, T-shirts, caps, etc). As a result, the majority of people interviewed were aware of DIPECHO as the source of funding but were less aware of the European Union. A few partners went beyond these activities, such as ZOA in Cambodia, who included a special chapter in their initial CBDRM training to introduce ECHO and DIPECHO. This issue needs further examination in terms of how best to use finance for visibility in the future. This is particularly to ensure that local governments/national government are aware of the funding source, and at

⁴⁵ €30,000 in Cambodia, €1,8000 in Indonesia, €38,000 in Viet Nam and €1,900 in the regional actions.

⁴⁶ All DIPECHO partners are ECHO partners, who have signed a FPA, in which there are indications about visibility. In 2003, ECHO started developing tools to help partners, including visibility guidelines for ECHO partners. Positions of Information Officers have also been created regionally (2004 for SEA). In this sense, the DIPECHO Call for Proposals cannot be the only reference for the issue and work has been progressively undertaken to encourage proper means of visibility (Cécile Pichon, DIPECHO Technical Assistant for SE Asia, personal communication).

⁴⁷ Allow the DG ECHO to be identified as a donor (stickers, sign boards, banners on publications, buildings, etc.).

⁴⁸ Explains the mandate and roles of the partner and the EC, the principles and values of humanitarian aid (e.g. photo exhibitions, visits by journalists, advertorials, newsletter/website articles, etc.).

⁴⁹ Such information is largely ocular and anecdotal and is meant only to provide an illustration of the wide range of visibility methods employed by project partners visited in the three countries.

the very least that people in the communities where projects are undertaken are able to acknowledge that finance for the project came from people in Europe.

4.4 Coverage

113. Given limited project financing and the pilot or experimental nature of projects funded, the extent of programme coverage of vulnerable communities is minimal, as can be expected. It is only when projects are scaled-up, replicated or mainstreamed into development planning that coverage and impact can increase considerably.

114. The other challenge is that there are simply too many disaster prone areas and that there will always be too few partners to take on all the necessary work. In most cases, partners also have their own criteria for site selection, including other factors such as their own organisational dynamics, political pressure, capacities of local implementing partner, willingness of communities to shoulder part of the project costs, etc. (as discussed in section 3). Hence, the programme objective of operating within the most “vulnerable” communities will be difficult to achieve universally.

115. There is a tendency for project partners to spread too thinly in any given country. This means not working in contiguous communities or even districts, and having huge distances separate project areas, which has implications for cost effectiveness and impact. A choice of more contiguous intervention areas, based upon sub-district or district levels should result in greater efficiency (less cost), potential for scaling up, better synergy, improved chances for sustainability, the potential for scaling up, as well as better options for models to be replicated.

4.5 Effectiveness

116. For the partners reviewed, in general, the project objectives were met, the majority of activities were implemented according to plan and results achieved, although the quality of outputs, in some cases, were questionable. Projects often had overly ambitious goals and objectives. For newer partners, this was caused by unfamiliarity and inexperience with what can be done within a project timeframe set by DIPECHO but there was also a general sentiment that projects had to aim for ambitious objectives if DIPECHO funding is to be secured.

117. DIPECHO also has high expectations of what the partners should be able to achieve, which is reflected in the AP guidelines, for example the 5th AP, which are commendable for their attention for detailing a comprehensive approach to DRR.

118. The design of DIPECHO APs continuously improved and the 4th AP contains much of the lessons learned from previous implementation of APs. However, this does not appear to have been fully internalised by partners. There was some confusion with partners over what DIPECHO does and intends to do and what it can and cannot fund.

Setting indicators

119. Outcome indicators were generally SMART and authenticated but partners expressed difficulty in formulating appropriate DRR indicators and the need for support from DIPECHO to help to develop appropriate ones. The indicators used mainly focused on quantitative measures of project inputs and activities and output and less on project results and outcomes.

Building community capacities

120. Overall, awareness raising activities attained significant reach and effectiveness. This was particularly the case when partners developed and shared IEC and DP training materials (e.g. in Viet Nam). As a result of training, follow up, refresher and heightened community awareness, communities in the project areas generally showed an increase in their capacities to analyse disaster risk, to develop preparedness plans, to monitor hazards and implement micro-projects that mitigate disaster risks.

121. There was clear evidence that local people contributed their own resources (time, money). Community knowledge of DP was built upon and generally, there was an awareness of local indigenous knowledge that was often used as a starting point in HVCA.

Undertaking mitigation projects

122. Projects were seen to have had an immediate and positive impact on mitigating the effect of disasters on villagers' lives. Whilst the mitigation projects were technically sound, operations and maintenance systems were not always put in place.

Working with local governments through local implementing partners

123. As a generalisation, most partners had reasonably good working relationships with the local government. However, partners face challenges and constraints in undertaking a more profound engagement with local governments, requiring the development of new knowledge and skills. There are concerns as to whether partners' effectively involved and communicated with authorities during the preliminary stages of the project or whether this only happened as project drew to a close.

124. Undertaking this engagement within a DIPECHO project also often means an incompatibility of timeframes (e.g. DIPECHO funding cycle vs. government planning and budgeting cycles), and a high degree of uncertainty involved in advocacy and pursuing local legislative agendas. The success of interventions is determined by the quality of existing relationships between the local partners and the government authorities.

4.6 Efficiency

Project Management

125. Overall, project management was found to be good and systems sound and well organised; a strong consultative approach was apparent. Established organisational structures at all levels allowed regular project monitoring and supervision of project activities on a day to day basis by competent personnel. The capacity of the partners to supervise and implement the project was adequate and there is strong willingness to learn from experience and initiate corrective action. Capacity of local partners to analyse monitoring data is also improving. Reporting was reasonably timely and at times additional to requirement.

Utilising DIPECHO funding and finance from other donors

126. DIPECHO funding remains an essential component of support to project partner programmes in DRR but is not seen as a long term strategy. Consensus was reached that it is best to have other sources to complement DIPECHO funding. Some partners felt that ideally DIPECHO should only be tapped to support DRR within the context of a long-term,

integrated development programme (given the fact that DIPECHO funding is for 15 months and with no guarantee of renewal). This preference was based on the fact that community based DRR is not sustainable within one project cycle as there is no guarantee of continued funding and because some of the activities or components may not be eligible for DIPECHO funding.

127. While a number of partners received consecutive cycles of DIPECHO funding this has not been optimised as most of the partners have no long term DRR strategies or development plans and, hence, undertake planning on an annual basis, or a per ‘DIPECHO funding cycle’ basis. Others use long term funding sources (e.g. AusAID) or were successful in leveraging project funds to obtain local government funding.

Determining cost efficiency

128. Cost efficiency was difficult to determine because definition of beneficiaries is not always clear and consistently applied among partners (i.e., what constitutes direct and indirect beneficiaries and “catchment” population). Pre-defined and agreed upon measures of cost-effectiveness (between DIPECHO and its partners) would increase the partner’s attention to cost efficiency.

129. Generally the actual cost of managing DIPECHO projects is difficult to ascertain as certain costs are “hidden” (e.g., accurate recording of total staff time). Although required counterpart funding is set at 10-15% of costs, in reality it was often estimated at 30-40% (due, in the earlier APs, to the narrative and financial reporting requirements, or to geographic separation of project areas). It would be clearer if there is a financial reporting format where full costs of the project are shown to better determine cost efficiency.

130. The requirement of DIPECHO for the use of expatriate consultants or project managers, although most of the time justifiable, contributes significantly to high costs⁵⁰. A stronger programme bias towards improving capacities of national staff as well as those of the local implementing partner, can significantly increase cost efficiency, contribute to programme goals of increased local capacities and allow for more donor money to reach the people in greatest need.

Enhancing operational capacity

131. Partners generally have increased operational capacity to implement DRR projects following specific training and have often employed more technical or managerial staff. Some partners, however, have had a high turnover of national staff that has affected operational capacity.

Raising awareness and mitigation projects

132. Raising awareness in the villages, preparation of DM plans, mitigation project proposals and implementation were achieved within the allotted time-frames. Mitigation activities were undertaken to a high technical standard, on low budgets and are considered to be cost effective and value for money. Sizeable contributions made by communities in the implementation of mitigation projects resulted to good cost to benefit ratio (see report on

⁵⁰ Based on financial expenditure of the APs from Viet Nam, Indonesia and Cambodia this amounts to 36.5% of total project funds provided in the four APs.

mitigation projects in Cambodia)⁵¹. DIPECHO pilot projects and models, when they are successfully scaled-up and replicated, will further generate substantial benefits and impact in the future.

4.7 Management of the Action Plans

Capacity building of DIPECHO Technical Advisers, Programme Assistants and Desk Officers

133. The management of the APs over the years can be characterised as a learning experience for both DIPECHO and its project partners. One important factor affecting the effectiveness of programme management has been the high turnover of DIPECHO staff: six TAs and five Desk Officers over a period of eight years,⁵² causing a loss of continuity and of institutional memory. Changes in coverage of the TAs (both geographically and responsibility), the turnover of Desk Officers and the lack of a clear overall programme strategy, combined with the fact that DRR was a relatively new field of endeavour are all factors that have been challenging for DIPECHO management over the course of the four APs.

134. The situation has improved in the 4th AP with the recruitment of a Programme Assistant to the ECHO Regional Support Office in Bangkok and considered sensible and cost effective. This sense of “closer proximity” to partners was welcomed and helped reduce the workload for the TA and Desk Officers.

Challenges with coordination, partnership, relationships and partner perceptions

135. A number of partners did not feel their relationship with DIPECHO as a “partnership” but as something more akin to a “donor-recipient”. Some others consider that DIPECHO APs were not flexible enough for them to integrate their longer-term development programme activities. A few mentioned that there is an increasing tendency by DIPECHO to “micro-manage” project implementation (e.g. need to get DIPECHO approval prior to implementation of each specific community mitigation project)⁵³. There is a common perception among (some) partners that DIPECHO is becoming more and more “high maintenance” and that too many requirements and demands are made in proportion to the amount of financing provided. A more appropriate response would be to ensure a proper understanding of the ECHO mandate by the partners, and of what is and is not allowed by the DIPECHO programme.

136. Partners commended the DIPECHO national and regional consultative meetings. These processes helped to identify the country priorities and were effective in bringing partners/other DRR stakeholders together to discuss programme areas and main activities. However, room for improvement was suggested. The meetings were considered too short and there was a sense of a missed opportunity for more in depth discussion and the breadth of issues covered was too broad.

⁵¹ Analysis of Micro-project Impact Data for the Cambodian Red Cross CDBP Programme, 1998-2004, January 2007, by Chivariak Khus; although this study includes non-DIPECHO funded micro projects, it nevertheless provides good general indications on impact of CRC micro projects.

⁵² Currently no Job Description exists for the Desk Officer; the TAs work to a ToR.

⁵³ Clearly this is a contentious issue and some partners felt that they were considered as not having sufficient knowledge and capacity to implement a project and further that DIPECHO/Brussels did not fully understand the local context and appropriate DRR activity. Closer attention to certain partners was considered to be justified by Brussels; however, this evaluation team does not think that the proposed solution can address the perceived problem (i.e. of obtaining Brussels approval prior to undertaking a mitigation project).

137. Large gaps exist in what APs intend to do and what can actually be done in the country given the number, mandate and capacity of partners and the amount of funding available. While APs are made to complement national DM strategies and plans, in some countries (e.g. Cambodia and Indonesia), this is constrained by the lack or ambiguity of, national DM plans.

Monitoring

138. While almost all partners viewed DIPECHO monitoring visits as good opportunities for frank dialogue and interaction, the regional DIPECHO office is constrained from undertaking more frequent monitoring visits because of the large number of projects funded by the programme⁵⁴.

139. DIPECHO monitoring activities have been, and continue to be, insufficient compared with monitoring activities undertaken for ECHO disaster response and relief projects that involve significantly greater amounts of money but do not require as extensive and complex monitoring activities. An attempt to increase DIPECHO staff (previously constrained by an apparent lack of appreciation on the nature and complexity of DIPECHO projects by some within ECHO) is, under the 5th AP, changing with the engagement of several focal persons within the EC country delegations and other ECHO offices, who have a watching brief over DIPECHO projects in their respective countries. The feasibility of designating such staff is thus currently being explored and initially appears viable. This not only would provide some relief for monitoring activities of the DIPECHO team but also offers good potential and opportunity for more effective dissemination of DRR experience and the overall understanding of DRR concepts and principles within the EU country delegations.

140. Most partners do not have sufficient monitoring systems and procedures in place due, in part, to the need to focus limited time on the operational aspects of the projects being implemented. Current monitoring systems do not go beyond reporting the project activities undertaken. The uncertainty of future funding also makes partners hesitant to invest in installing more elaborate monitoring systems that may not be used or sustained in the long term. Overall it was felt that that DIPECHO monitoring visits can be made more constructive by focusing discussions on solutions and creative approaches to issues and challenges faced by partners instead of focusing upon problem identification.

4.8 Internal lesson-learning, documentation and dissemination by ECHO

141. Process documentation of the DIPECHO experiences in the region has been less than optimal, including dissemination of potentially replicable DRR strategies and projects. This is generally something the partners are assumed or expected to do, but many do not have sufficient leverage to influence the major DRR stakeholders (e.g., national government, international donors and development institutions) in integrating DRR into their planning and programming activities.

142. Whilst there are regional efforts for information sharing and best practice dissemination, these are not seen as being responsive and applicable to specific local needs (i.e., a gap exists between the regional and country based programmes). A more “joined up approach” is required whereby learning from innovative, village level experiences - almost

⁵⁴ In the current 5th AP, the TA and PA will have to monitor no less than 22 projects in six countries.

unique to DIPECHO and its partners - are better documented and this information then filtered up to the national, regional and global levels by DIPECHO and its regional partners. This would ensure that the positive lessons that are being achieved are being recognised and shared more widely.

143. The dissemination of project experiences and replicable community based DRR models are more often geared towards DRR practitioners and organisations and less towards other relevant development institutions, including government ministries and agencies. This needs to be more focused and designed with the target entity in mind to maximise adoption and replication.

5. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

5.1 Overall impact

144. The greatest significance and impact of the four APs has undoubtedly been DIPECHO's funding of community based DRR projects in the three countries (these are detailed in the Country Summaries in Annexes IX to XI and in detailed Project Partner Reviews). These have drawn much attention by other organisations and donors and place DIPECHO in a relatively unique position in terms of learning and good practice in community based DRR. This particular comparative advantage is well recognised by other major donors supporting DRR, such as DFID, The World Bank and ADB.

145. The evaluation team was not able to undertake any quantitative measurements or consolidation, (on a project to project basis or a documented basis) to assess overall impact. There are a number of constraints involved, for example, almost all partners have more than one cycle of funding and it is extremely difficult to know if these are repeat communities and beneficiaries or new ones with the same participants attending training events or different ones. Equally this information is not easy to obtain from final or evaluation reports. The team therefore faced some difficulty and if this information is to be captured in the future the format of project documents and reporting should be modified (at the very least in terms of the number of beneficiaries reached), including a more concrete and specific definition and reporting of 'beneficiary' (particularly direct and indirect, individuals and organizations, government and non-government, etc.).

146. There has been steady and good progress towards the attainment of the overall objectives, which is directly attributable to the actions financed. As a broad generalisation, the outcomes of the majority of projects undertaken by partners in the four AP have been successfully achieved, including increased disaster preparedness, reduced vulnerability for several hundred thousand people, who are estimated to have benefited from the actions undertaken by partners reviewed over the course of the four APs. In addition, there has been a demonstrated increase in the capacity of local institutions, mandated with protecting vulnerable populations (including commune and district councils, DM committees at different levels in project areas and implementing partners themselves, most specifically the Red Cross/Red Crescent national societies).

147. All stakeholders, including local people, local government, artisans, school children, and teachers, expressed appreciation of the different approaches adopted by the DIPECHO projects. Internal evaluation and monitoring reports (as well as meetings held with numerous people during the course of this evaluation) clearly indicated a high level of satisfaction;

people were happy with what has been provided and said that it was appropriate to their needs.

148. Almost all of the available external evaluations conducted have concluded that there has been a direct impact (albeit in varying degrees) in terms of reduced vulnerabilities, increased awareness of DRR, and increased capacities was evident in most of the villages and communes where partners have implemented their projects:

149. These impacts were evident to a lesser extent at district, provincial, and national levels, partly because projects are too dispersed. Awareness raising of DRR has been exceptional in Viet Nam where this has reached a critical mass and has already influenced and penetrated government thinking at national level.

5.2 Disaster risk reduction capacities at the local level

Reduction in community vulnerability through increased preparedness, capacities, and resilience

150. In terms of boosting the resilience of local people to the most frequent hazards, there is generally a greater level of preparedness by communities in the target areas. According to various project reviews/evaluations undertaken and as perceived by this evaluation team, a large number of villages and communes in all project areas have developed some basic DP plans over the course of the APs, although this varied according to the quality of risk assessments undertaken. Although the quality of these plans has not been thoroughly assessed, this is significant evidence of an increased level of preparedness and enhancement of people's capacity to prepare for and to respond to disasters. In the case of recent disasters, there is evidence that the projects did in fact improve response by local people; most of the projects that involved the mobilization and organization of community disaster response teams (e.g., CARE and DRC/PMI in Indonesia, IFRC/SRC/VNRC in Viet Nam), the ability of these teams in responding to actual disaster events have been documented⁵⁵.

151. Commonly reported findings and observations in reports included comments on the positive benefits of the widespread use of HVCA/PRA as tools in community planning. It was reported that people's awareness on DRR was heightened and in some cases, that a spirit of volunteerism had been revived and village disaster coordinating councils were created or reactivated. People's attitudes also changed from being reactive to becoming more proactive, and evidence shows that indigenous coping mechanisms were enhanced by mitigation measures and the formation of local level disaster response teams. There was little evidence of sustainable livelihood support for vulnerable segments of the communities, which would be an expected means of a non-structural approach to addressing vulnerabilities. Whether this was due to a lack of clarity on what support was feasible under DIPECHO was unclear.

152. An overall assessment of the impact of projects in terms of actual reduction of mortality, damage, and other indicators in times of disaster cannot be made without conducting a comprehensive assessment in each case. However, there are examples where direct impact has been recorded:

⁵⁵ E.g., in Kalimantan the CARE (NL) project developed capacities of local fire brigades who were active in responding to forest fires; Red Cross response teams in all three countries visited in many project sites had responded to flooding, storms and other hazards during the course of the four APs.

- In at least one province where Save the Children Alliance is undertaking their project in Viet Nam, a decrease in the number of children injured from accidents is attributed, at least from the perception of local officials, to people being more “child aware” and taking greater care to minimise the risks that children face;
- In areas of drought (e.g. in Cambodia) there has been an impact on reducing the risk of water shortage for beneficiary households, through awareness raising and subsequent planning for and completion of small-scale mitigation projects;
- In the flood prone province of Kampong Cham, in Cambodia, a cost-effective EWS has been developed and remains in use in target villages;
- In Viet Nam, an estimated half a million 4th and 5th grade schoolchildren and over 15,000 primary school teachers are aware of DP, and this will significantly increase as the school-based DP sessions continue in the future. The use of child-friendly methodologies and materials and initiation of creative approaches has made the dissemination of DP knowledge to children more effective. Overall, children were able to recall the contents of the teaching and act upon them.

Strengthening local institutions and governmental structures

153. On a large number of occasions during the implementation of the four APs, community based disaster teams, supported by DIPECHO project partners effectively demonstrated their capacity in responding to disasters. This included a broad spectrum of disasters from small fires in villages to widespread flooding events in urban centres (e.g. in Jakarta in early 2007). There are good examples of local government entities in all three countries including such teams within their formal emergency response structures.

154. The enhanced level of preparedness comes as a result of community DP awareness raising and training of significant numbers of local implementing partner staff, local governments, and people in the villages and has often resulted in the formulation of DP action plans at the village, commune, or district levels, along with a reduction in vulnerability through various mitigation or livelihood-related projects.

155. Overall, the local government entities in the project areas have increased awareness of DRR and better capacity to manage their own DRR programmes. Whilst long-term in nature, there have been gradual improvements in knowledge, attitude, and practices of such stakeholders, and there has been evidence of application of methodologies and tools (e.g., maps are used for community development planning in project sites and high risk areas and safe havens marked).

156. Such awareness of DRR by local government officials from provincial to village levels forms the foundation for comprehensive DRR interventions. Projects involving direct participation of local governments have good potential for integration and eventual mainstreaming of DRR within development plans, as partners, by themselves, do not have sufficient clout to influence national or even provincial governments.

5.3 Disaster risk reduction capacities at the country level

157. Greater impact beyond the commune and village level is yet to be achieved and will happen only when pilot initiatives undertaken by project partners are replicated elsewhere; for example, in Indonesia, CARE NL worked with 14% of villages in one district in Central Kalimantan, but there is no chance for scaling up under the DIPECHO programme (unless it

applied for further funds). Coverage depends rather on the partner's capacity and strategy; DIPECHO is not supposed to cover a large area but rather promote replication and integration.

5.4 Disaster risk reduction capacities at the regional level

158. The regional programme⁵⁶ for the integration or mainstreaming of DRR into development planning has been less effective than action at the local level, as it mainly involves longer-term processes which cannot be undertaken during one cycle of DIPECHO funding, and which ideally should be specifically suited to each country.

Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre (ADPC)

159. All partners have participated to some degree in the PDR-SEA programme implemented by ADPC and reported having benefited from the activities and information shared. To some extent, PDR SEA supported the further development of the national networks established by DIPECHO partners. These national networks are now seen as providing relevant and useful avenues for experience and best practice sharing.

160. By the 4th AP, however, a number of partners expressed that there was no longer a clear link between their activities and the PDR SEA programme, and that the programme was not providing added-value to their work. Currently, some partners are uncertain of ADPC's role and stated that they thought ADPC had ceased to be an agent of regional support to the DIPECHO partners and has become: "*just another project operator*".

161. Significant levels of competency of DIPECHO partners in CBDM were achieved through the regional training of trainers and the adaptation of the CBDM curriculum delivered by ADPC. However, it was felt that current training courses offered by ADPC had lost some of their vitality and were no longer "cutting edge", having become too generic and trying to cater for far too many widely differing needs.

Mekong River Commission (MRC)

162. DIPECHO funding to the Mekong River Commission (MRC) within the framework of the Flood Management and Mitigation Programme (FMMP) has given DIPECHO a useful entry point to the dialogue that determines the strategy of this important sub-regional inter-governmental body specialising in water management.

163. The workshops and training courses conducted by the (MRC) have been effective in improving the knowledge and skills of officials serving in highly flood prone provinces of the Lower Mekong Basin (LMB). The course curriculum was comprehensive and found to be useful and applicable in the respective country context. The training material, translated into three national languages, and given to the participants, has facilitated further dissemination of the knowledge acquired by the beneficiaries. Nevertheless, location specific issues on flood preparedness need to be addressed, as well as improving the management of training events.

164. The issue of sustained impact, however, remains questionable due to limited capacity at national, and in particular, provincial and district levels, to understand, interpret, and effectively use newly acquired tools and knowledge. The relatively short timeframe of the DIPECHO project is also a constraint to fully realising the impact of the project.

⁵⁶ this refers to the UN ESCAP/ADPC project. The UNDP/ADPC mainstreaming project was recently approved under the 5th AP so is not covered under the evaluation

165. The selection of participants to training events has often been inappropriate (e.g. senior public officials of provinces who are likely to retire). The project impact could be maximised if the training events were continued to cover a larger group of participants, including more entry- and mid-level staff, as well as members of the communities in flood-prone provinces and districts of the LMB.

166. Project impact at the community level, however, is limited and it is questionable if the use of funds is really justifiable given the relative high maintenance and administrative cost incurred both by DIPECHO and MRC compared to the impact. The structural uncertainty of the organisation also poses a risk to effective and efficient operation of projects.

5.5 Broadening impact through knowledge management and replication of best practices

167. DIPECHO funding of DP and DRR in the region during the period 1998-2004 has been instrumental in promoting DRR and supporting local level experiences during a period when few donors were engaged in this emerging area. Although a relatively small amount has been invested (€14.3m), DIPECHO has contributed to a large number of projects (5 regional actions and 49 national actions in 6 countries) spread over a wide geographical area, which have been supported continuously over eight years. As a result, many NGOs and government agencies gained a large part of their experiences in DP and DRR through DIPECHO programmes. Significant progress is obvious in the following areas⁵⁷:

- **strategies and models:** including replicable community-based flood EWS, models for CBDRM, DRM strategies and legislation;
- **methodologies, tools and processes:** PRA/HVCA tools for risk assessment, IEC materials and targeting methodologies;
- **awareness raising and advocacy:** strong awareness of DRR amongst local people, local implementing partners, local governments, and regional bodies;
- **programme integration:** DRR being integrated into environmental protection, rural development and natural resource management programmes; and
- **small-scale mitigation projects:** hundreds of projects undertaken by partners working with local implementing partners and governments.

Documentation and sharing of DRR experiences

168. Documentation by partners of their experiences, lessons learned, approaches and methodologies is undertaken to various degrees and levels of proficiency. Such material needs to be better developed and would benefit from agreed upon standards and styles that are suitable for different target audiences, including the media. Such efforts require further (financial) support for partners to better facilitate these activities.

169. Most partners have good engagement with other projects and with other DRR stakeholders. However, this was best illustrated in Viet Nam (e.g., the DMWG; DWF has developed a bilingual website⁵⁸ for information exchange), present and improving in Cambodia (the DRR Forum)⁵⁹, and in need of further development in Indonesia. There has

⁵⁷ See Annexes X to XI for a more detailed analysis on a country by country basis.

⁵⁸ Established in co-operation with the universities of Hue (Viet Nam), Kyoto (Japan) and the East West Centre (Hawaii).

⁵⁹ DIPECHO supported the CRC/DRC to initiate the Cambodia DRR Forum that has, according to partners, resulted in better and more substantive sharing of experiences and lessons learned. In time this better coordination may improve impact through joint planning and programming. The Forum still requires an improved structure and organisation (e.g., a ToR, minutes taken etc.). Sharing/rotating chairing has taken place, meetings held in different offices as too has field cross-visits to project target areas.

been considerable cross-learning⁶⁰. However, the majority of projects have still to better disseminate and replicate their best practices within country.⁶¹

170. Once an approach and lessons learned are identified for application in new locations or contexts, the impact of DIPECHO's investment in DRR multiplies. What appears to be missing in terms of lessons learned and best practice sharing, however, is its translation and integration into the operational activities of different partners.

Advocacy, awareness, and integration of disaster risk reduction

171. Advocacy and dissemination of DRR interventions and models, for the most part takes place by and among partners and DRR practitioners themselves. The regional ADPC PDR-SEA and the annual DIPECHO national and regional consultative meetings support these processes. Whilst, there has been advocacy and engagement, particularly with the major development institutions and other donors, including relevant government ministries, more can and should be undertaken. The challenge remains to find people who are aware of the importance of the issue and who are receptive to change.

172. Partners, by themselves, do not have sufficient leverage to influence governments to integrate DRR into the policy, strategy and national development planning processes. The same is true of the national DM offices, in the case of Cambodia (preliminary) and Indonesia (beginning to take shape). These national DM offices are still weak and lack sufficient human and financial resources. This is less true in Viet Nam, where the NDM-P Secretariat and the Disaster Management Centre of the Ministry of Agricultural and Rural Development (MARD) have much greater power and full time, competent staff.

173. Awareness of DRR and integration into the development planning process is variable across the region: strong in Viet Nam, at an initial stage in Indonesia, and still in its infancy in Cambodia. These processes are effective when supported by the major development institutions and donors. Viet Nam has DRR champions in the EU Member States, notably The Netherlands, Denmark, Luxemburg; and too from UNDP. In Indonesia, UNDP and the government DM Coordinating body, BAPENNAS, are leading the way. In Cambodia, however, there is currently little interest from the UN and the international financing institutions; hence there is little progress. Willingness and engagement of national governments is an obvious, but important factor.

5.6 Impact on cross-cutting issues

174. Generally there were limited attempts to incorporate cross-cutting issues by partners, with the exception of consideration to gender relations. Given the limited time and uncertainty of continued future funding, partners (understandably) give more importance to operational activities. Engagement with relevant cross-cutting issues also depends on organisational mandates, the presence of expertise, and how the community defines the most vulnerable segments of the population. However, partners' regular engagement with households and local governments helped to ensure that relevant cross-cutting issues are given

⁶⁰ E.g. in Cambodia, CWS, LWF and ACF/AAH have at various stages all utilised CRC CDBP training capacity.

⁶¹ E.g. in Cambodia, the AmCross/CRC EWS project took on many of the lessons learnt/characteristics of the AAH/ACF EWS project.

consideration⁶². Some partners, e.g., Save Children Alliance are developing indicators for cross-cutting issues, for example, child's rights.⁶³

175. All projects have made conscious efforts to address gender relations in their approaches. Awareness raising, particularly addressing DP for primary school children and their teachers is beginning to be integrated into disaster management planning (e.g. SCF in Viet Nam). Good governance is implied in most partners' projects, which is an indication of its importance. Some partners, notably CARE in Indonesia and LWF and ZOA in Cambodia, are addressing DRR in their environmental programmes. The issue of climate change is now also being considered; for example, under the 5th AP DIPECHO is funding the Netherlands RC/VNRC to integrate climate change awareness into a DRR project in the central district of Viet Nam.

Gender relations

176. Gender relations receive the most attention, and conscious efforts for increased gender participation are evident in almost all projects. Projects in general place an emphasis on gender relations and work with a substantial proportion of women, whose role and position is promoted. These attempts are generally limited to desegregation of monitoring data, inclusion of women in project activities, and pro-active policies towards hiring of women as part of field operations staff.

177. Although there is variation, the concept and theory of gender equality was generally "understood" at the national and perhaps provincial levels, but at district and community level stakeholders were less sure when it was discussed. Efforts to ensure the participation of both sexes were evident in all projects. However, in the socio-cultural context of Indonesia, this was later acknowledged to be more difficult to achieve than originally anticipated. CARE (NL) was able to address gender concerns by adopting innovative approaches through the integration of a health component into its programme.

178. Several partners have well developed policies on gender equity and diversity and gender equality policies exist for the RC, SCA and CARE. However, in some cases these exist as policy documents, but have yet to be translated into more concrete operational plans and activities and do not appear in the partner's reporting. The DRC supports the PMI in the development of its institutional gender policy. LWF uses a "*Gender Awareness Empowerment*" checklist to measure participation and empowerment of women; this policy is actively implemented down to village level where a minimum of 40% of the Village Development Committee members are women. In Viet Nam, partnership with the Women's Union, with its nation-wide activities in the promotion of gender equality and an involvement in DRR, gave far greater access to women and better addressed their needs.

Environmental impact

179. Disaster reduction interventions in some partners' programmes are implemented within the context of environmental or water resource management. For example, ZOA in Cambodia found that ploughing land, providing water, hand tractors and awareness raising has had a significant positive environmental impact by reducing deforestation from slash and

⁶² In Cambodia, the CRC governing board have asked that cross-cutting issues are addressed in all programmes and are included in planning are gender relations, children (specifically school dropouts), the elderly, the sick and disabled. The DRC is helping to mainstream DRR into other CRC programmes.

⁶³ E.g. "women took part in community meetings to discuss what to do to prepare for floods, with concerns about women, children and the elderly being addressed."

burn cultivation. In Indonesia, sustainable environment management is integral to the approach of CARE's PEAT and SIAP⁶⁴ projects.

Engagement of vulnerable groups

180. The majority of projects aimed to ensure that the most vulnerable people in communities are supported, based upon locally-agreed selection criteria. These focus on poor households, single mothers, women, women-headed households, elderly men, and other vulnerable groups. Where feasible, women and poor people were involved in the implementation of mitigation works undertaken by partners and often provided their labour instead of money. Some mitigation activities were specifically targeted to vulnerable people; for example, water filters were provided specifically to poor people and woman-headed households. However, ethnic minorities were largely absent from projects as a specific target group, despite the fact that in many cases they constitute vulnerable segments of society.

181. The widespread implementation of small-scale, low cost mitigation projects, such as reinforcement of houses, evacuation roads and bridges, and public facilities, has demonstrated the appropriateness and effectiveness of this strategy. Mitigation works generated considerable community labour opportunities and provided substantial direct social and economic benefits to the entire community in the areas visited including for vulnerable groups.

182. Vulnerable members of the community participated in village meetings and ideas were collected from both adults and young persons. In some projects (for example, ZOA and LWF/CWS) there were significant numbers of women and disabled people serving on local DMCs as these groups formed a larger percentage of the local population.

Children

183. The issue of children's needs in DRR has gone beyond creating awareness of the issue and has now moved into the actual implementation of projects. Local officials and community representatives have expressed the need for mainstreaming child rights into DRR planning, and partners with a child focus will need to think of even more innovative strategies. While Save the Children Alliance's project has been successful in raising awareness, follow up activities should be monitored closely to see if awareness will translate into concrete and sustained action (that is, whether local officials and community representatives incorporate knowledge into ongoing activities and that children participate in community CBDRM planning).

184. Some projects have specific activities focused upon development for children directly through working with primary school children and their teachers. For example, SCA and DWF work specifically with children to improve their knowledge about disasters and how to cope and prepare for them. The focus on children as a specific vulnerable group has been highlighted during the 5th AP as this is a new thematic issue for DIPECHO.

⁶⁴ "Preparedness for Environmental Emergencies Activities for Tropical Peat-Lands" (PEAT) and "Strengthening of Initiatives in Peat Areas to Increase Preparedness for Disasters" (SIAP).

6. MAIN CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This section of the report summarizes the main conclusions of the evaluation and provides corresponding recommendations for each conclusion. These are presented according to the main evaluation criteria and are listed in order of priority.

6.1 Relevance and appropriateness

C.1 DIPECHO funding has been instrumental in the **promotion and good practice of DP and DRR** during a period when there were few other active donors. Although DIPECHO's contribution has been limited, spread over a wide geographical area and a long time period, these investments contributed to a major proportion of lessons and experience of DP/DRR in the region.

C.2 Projects were consistent with DIPECHO priorities as elaborated in the Action Plans (APs) which were also relevant to the national situation. National consultative meetings enhanced the relevance of subsequent actions and made the AP more appropriate to each country context. However, the APs are strongly influenced by project partners rather than being driven by more strategic considerations. The lack of an overarching **DRR strategy** is a major flaw in DIPECHO programming.

C.3 Sufficient efforts were made to involve **vulnerable people** in project activities and to ensure that they benefited. **Community participation** was strong and determined mitigation activities generally followed clear planning processes. However, some **mitigation projects** did not correspond to the prioritised community needs, due to inexperience undertaking HVCA/PRA, limited budgets, or projects not being allowable under DIPECHO guidelines, or strong top-down management.

C.4 There are gaps in addressing **relevant hazards**, reflected by limited action in **urban areas**, which have received less attention relative to their importance in terms of vulnerability.

Recommendations

R.1. Continue to develop the identity of DIPECHO as the lead provider of funding and expertise to a broad range of DRR stakeholders involved with **small-scale community-based DRR activities** until such a time that the EC development funding instruments (i.e., AIDCO, DG RELEX, DG DEV, etc.) have formally incorporated DRR into their programming. [Strategic]

R.2 Formulate a comprehensive **DRR strategy** for DIPECHO programming in SE Asia that will form shape the design and development of future APs. The use of the **Hyogo Framework for Action**, as the basis for this overarching strategic approach for engagement with partners, can facilitate the adoption of complementary programmes between the major regional and national DRR stakeholders. [Strategic]

R.3 Encourage continued **participation and community ownership** of DRR initiatives. Provide clearer guidance to partners to improve the use of a comprehensive **HVCA/PRA** approach by better training and use of skilled facilitators to ensure prioritization of community needs. Allow allocation of funds for DRR activities that are decided locally and are relevant and appropriate to the prioritised needs of the communities. [Operational]

R.4 Encourage a greater focus on interventions to support the **urban poor**, particularly in Jakarta and the major coastal cities of Viet Nam; support partners to undertake public

awareness raising and to test the relevance of a community-based DRR approach in such settings. [Operational]

6.2 Effectiveness

C.5 The selection of **partners** by DIPECHO is constrained by the availability and expertise of INGOs and their local implementing partners. There has been a positive change in the selection of partners over the four APs, from a predominantly humanitarian focus to those with dual mandates of humanitarian response and development. There are also a number of local organizations that have good potential to contribute to disaster reduction but due to the lack of a European partner they are not considered. The selection of **Red Cross societies** as local implementing partners has been advantageous because of their formal mandates and national capacities.

C.6 Some partners set **overly ambitious goals** and project objectives involving too many activities in relation to the time available, leading to questionable quality. There was a general sentiment that projects had to contain many activities and aim for ambitious objectives if DIPECHO funding is to be secured. There is still some confusion amongst partners, for example, on what DIPECHO can and cannot fund.

C.7 Indicators used were generally SMART and verifiable but partners found the identification of **impact indicators** for DRR challenging to develop. Most partners are weak in impact monitoring due to the absence of baseline information and to the short-term nature of funding.

C.8 The management of the APs over the years can be characterized as a learning experience for both **DIPECHO project management** and partners. Whilst considered to be sound overall, project management had, in the past, been challenged by a high-turnover of Technical Assistants and Desk Officers causing a loss of continuity in the learning process.

Recommendations

R.5 Set **clearer selection criteria** for project partners⁶⁵ and initiate a more **proactive search** for both INGOs and local implementing partners, particularly organisations who have a **long term DRR policy and strategy** and an **integrated approach** wherein DRR financed by DIPECHO is a component of a larger, developmental, environmental or natural resource management programme. Continue support for national **Red Cross societies** through both PNS and INGOs. [Strategic]

R.6 Enhance relationships with partners by undertaking more comprehensive partner **dialogue**, focusing on: (1) providing greater clarity on DIPECHO objectives, strategies and funding guidelines; (2) finding the strategic fit of DIPECHO programme interventions with the long term organisational and development agenda of the partner; (3) making monitoring visits more solution-oriented rather than compliance to programme terms and conditions; and (4) encouraging partners to develop their own DRR policy, long term strategies and programmes in their areas of operation. [Operational]

R.7 Develop a realistic set of **impact indicators** for various DRR interventions⁶⁶ and support partners through training in the areas on monitoring. [Operational]

⁶⁵ such as those by AIDCO EU Food Security or the ACP-EU Water Facility

⁶⁶ impact indicators for DRR were developed in 2006/07 by John Twigg for BOND/DFID DRR group of agencies and there are others available from UN ISDR, UNDP, etc.

R.8 Ensure longer term contracts for key **DIPECHO project management** staff (Technical Assistants and Desk Officers) and improve process documentation to reduce the loss of institutional memory. [Operational]

6.3 Efficiency

C. 9 Many partners were recipients of funding from a series of APs, although such financing has not been optimised as partners are constrained to undertake planning on a year-to-year basis following DIPECHO cycles. The **short term nature of DIPECHO funding** presented challenges for project implementation, e.g. in terms of impact monitoring and in maintaining good working relationships with local government authorities. This also limited some partners from linking DRR with longer term development activities.

C.10 The presence of **expatriates** helped to ensure accountability, transparency and provide technical support. But the costs of expatriates account for about a third of total project funds disbursed (36.5%). This is considered to be too high and reduces the amount of money that reaches communities. Partners using local staff to implement projects, with a small percentage of a manager's time, are more cost effective, can develop national staff capacity and ultimately allow more donor money to reach the people in greatest need.

C.11 Project management was good, with sound well organised structures; a strong consultative approach was apparent. Partners have increased **operational capacity** following training and have often employed more technical and managerial staff to implement DRR projects. A **high turnover** of national staff has, however, affected operational capacity.

Recommendations

R.9 Develop a **programmatic approach**⁶⁷ to DRR over more than one AP cycle, whereby partners would develop brief concept papers, prior to a substantive proposal and consider approving partners' annual workplans and budgets over a series of APs. Continue bi-annual calls for proposals to draw in fresh partners. [Strategic]

R.10 Pre-define and agree **measures of cost-effectiveness** (between DIPECHO and partners) and reassess the need for a high percentage of expatriate staff time; explore possibilities for greater use of **local consultants** who could oversee a number of projects. [Operational]

R.11 Encourage partners to provide further incentives to local implementing partner staff such as increased **personal development** opportunities and by making remuneration packages more competitive with other international organisations. [Strategic]

6.4 Coordination, complementarities, coherence and synergy

C.12 Regional initiatives supported by DIPECHO in capacity building, information sharing and networking have been well received by partners. However, regionalized generic approaches will not always work as each country has its own idiosyncrasies and therefore it is questioned whether such mainstreaming initiatives can be best accomplished through a regional rather than a country programme. In addition, regional initiatives lack a long term perspective and strategy as their stated objectives cannot be achieved within a single DIPECHO funding cycle.

C.13 There is limited consideration of DRR by **other EC funding instruments**, and ECHO and EU Member State agency staff in the region have only partial understanding of the nature

⁶⁷ as used by other EC funding instruments, DFID, and AusAID

of DRR and of DIPECHO's projects. The strategy of a **focal person** within the EC delegations appears to be a pragmatic way to improve monitoring of projects, advocacy (within the EC and to EU Members States) and to increase likelihood of linkages to other EC instruments by project partners.

C.14 There are good examples of **synergy and complementarities** amongst DIPECHO partners, partnerships with UN agencies and collaboration with other stakeholders, although **differing approaches** need to be recognised and can create challenges for coordination, especially as other **major donors** have recently moved to provide significant funding for DRR.

Recommendations

R.12 Support **regional and country interventions**, particularly in terms of “mainstreaming DRR”, in conjunction with the efforts of local DRR stakeholder networks and with the initiatives of other larger DRR actors (e.g., UNDP, UNISDR, ADPC, World Bank, ADB, etc.). Prioritise regional and national projects that have direct linkages with local and community level initiatives. [Strategic]

R.14 Increase dialogue with other **EC funding instruments** (e.g. DG RELEX, DG DEV, AIDCO) and EU Member States, particularly those supportive of DRR⁶⁸ to support DIPECHO partners in accessing longer term funding for DRR. Provide further support for the initiative of dedicated **focal persons** within EC/ECHO delegations. [Operational]

R.15 Promote **partnerships and synergies**, including DRR in-country coordination mechanisms; encourage tripartite relationships (e.g., UN, INGOs and national societies) if synergy is likely. Increase **dialogue with UN ISDR, UNDP, the World Bank and ADB** to ensure DIPECHO's distinctive competencies and comparative advantage, complement those of other stakeholders where feasible. [Operational]

6.5 Impact

C.15 DIPECHO has resulted in significant direct impacts in terms of **reduced vulnerabilities and increased capacities** in project areas, benefiting several hundreds of thousands of people over the course of the four APs, but these impacts are evident primarily at commune and village levels as area coverage has been limited in addition to being widely dispersed.

C.16 Widespread implementation of small-scale, low cost **mitigation projects** has successfully demonstrated the appropriateness and effectiveness of this strategy. Mitigation works generated considerable counterpart community labour and provided substantial direct socio-economic benefits to entire communities.

C.17 The DIPECHO programme has generated a number of replicable DRR strategies and community-based projects, including innovative methodologies, tools and processes that enable communities to better prepare for and mitigate natural disasters. **Awareness of DRR** has increased progressively in all programme areas where community DP plans were developed, and response teams have been established although the quality varies.

C.18 The full achievement of DIPECHO's goal will always be constrained as its mandate is limited to promotion, demonstration and initiation of disaster reduction pilot activities. The longer term impacts of the programme will not be achieved unless **scaling-up** and **replication** of successful demonstration and pilots can take place.

⁶⁸ such as the Dutch, Swedish and British

C.19 DIPECHO and its partners have not made adequate efforts in **documentation and dissemination DRR lessons learned**. This is crucial, as partners, by themselves, do not have sufficient leverage to influence the major stakeholders (e.g., local and national governments, international donors etc.) to include DRR in their policy, strategy, legislation and long term development plans.

Recommendations

R.15 Support a more **contiguous choice of project areas** and deliberately aim for eventual sub-district or district wide replication to attain an even greater impact. [Strategic]

R.16 Continue support for **mitigation activities** but broaden focus to explore non-structural measures, e.g., consider **livelihood-related endeavours** as means of militating against future disasters. [Strategic]

R.17 Continue and enhance the **innovative nature** of the DIPECHO programme by providing partners with the flexibility to pursue a multi-faceted approach to **community based DRR**. Further support partners and their local implementers to improve the quality of community DRR plans and to focus on building **community resilience to disasters**. [Strategic]

R.18 Promote the **scaling up and replication** of pilot DRR activities to achieve widespread and more significant impact at national and regional levels to ensure a return on the investment in piloting. This can be achieved by **facilitating access to long-term funding** and improved linkages with **local government planning** processes. [Operational]

R.19 Involve DIPECHO (Bangkok and Brussels) more directly in the development of a strategy for **knowledge management and dissemination**; produce and disseminate **information products** more widely to capture learning and case studies. Brussels should “anchor” such knowledge management efforts and use material to advocate amongst EU member states, with other donors and governments for the adoption and institutionalisation of a community-based approach and mainstreaming DRR into their agenda. [Strategic]

6.6 Sustainability

C.20 Opportunities exist for the institutionalisation of programme initiatives into formal, **local government structures and processes**, especially in the context of the decentralised governance systems in most SE Asian countries. Significant in-roads have already been made in Indonesia and Viet Nam particularly in leveraging DIPECHO projects to access local government development funds, but more effort is required.

C.21 National Red Cross societies were chosen as local implementing partners by several INGOs, the IFRC and PNS project partners due to their wide coverage and human resources. In addition, as DM is one of the core programmes of the RCRC Movement, DRR activities have more chance of being continued, replicated and sustained long after the completion of funding by DIPECHO.

Recommendations

R.20 Encourage **greater engagement of partners with local government** at all levels and prioritise projects that aim for convergence of national and local level initiatives, particularly the integration of DRR into local government planning processes. Provide technical assistance to partners on local governance, local development planning and budgeting. [Operational]

R.21 Continue to support national **Red Cross/Red Crescent societies** through both PNS and INGOs, as these are important partners for DIPECHO, and despite the inherent challenges, efforts should continue and be better tailored to meet their varying needs given their significant role in DM within their respective countries. [Operational]

6.7 Linking Relief, Rehabilitation and Development (LRRD)

C.22 There were no obvious indications amongst partners who had undertaken relief activities that they received **guidance** from ECHO or DIPECHO regarding neither the integration of relief with development activities nor the integration of DRR approaches into their operations. Development organisations have made better progress in taking up LRRD approaches and there has been a natural progression from relief response to long term support to communities. However, this transition of approach to LRRD may be considered as almost a conceptual construct. Humanitarian organisations recognise the value of LRRD and DIPECHO has created a growing awareness of the importance of this approach, although more needs to be done to put it into practice.

Recommendations

R.22 Facilitate and support dissemination of **best practices in LRRD** amongst partners (e.g., workshops, case studies, etc.) and include more explicit reference to LRRD in the next APs; provide guidance on the inclusion of LRRD in the calls for proposals and make it a criterion for selection; provide training in LRRD for project partners. In addition, ECHO should continue its advocacy and on-going dialogue with other EC funding instruments (i.e. DG RELEX and AIDCO). [Operational]

6.8 Cross-cutting Issues

C.23 In general, there was limited incorporation of **cross cutting issues** in the projects reviewed. This was due to a number of factors including the restricted time and uncertainty of continued funding, organisational mandates, and the lack of partner expertise and on whom the community identifies as the most vulnerable. Specifically targeting **primary school children** raised awareness of DRR and brought about behavioural change. Interventions implemented within **environmental** programmes can effectively and efficiently address multiple hazards. DIPECHO programme design in the region is now starting to recognise **climate change adaptation** as a critical entry point for DRR interventions. **Gender relations and the promotion of gender equality** were addressed, although the concept varied in different contexts.

Recommendations

R.23 Improve use of the ECHO Single Form (e.g., by learning from the AIDCO application format) to ensure that all actions take into account critical **cross-cutting issues** from the beginning and include indicators to measure the success and impact of projects. Continue to support DRR projects for **primary school children** and young people and engage with other stakeholders (e.g. UNICEF). Expand projects directed at the **environment** and **climate change**, specifically with the aim of informing communities likely to be affected, and using the issue of climate change adaptation as an advocacy tool to support the promotion of DRR. Continue to promote **gender relations and equality** (e.g., by disseminating the EC gender relations policy, etc.). [Operational]

6.9 Implementation strategy for future DIPECHO activities in Southeast Asia

C.24 Under the DIPECHO programme, the direct impact, in terms of reduction of vulnerabilities essentially depends on the adoption and replication of DRR activities initiated under the APs. However, this is challenging within a relatively short timeframe and there is therefore a need to develop a **comprehensive and long-term strategy** for DRR.

C.25 Since the inception of the DIPECHO programme, the HFA was established and organisations involved with “DP” have undergone a **paradigm shift** in thinking towards the vocabulary and actions of “DRR”, however, whilst the 4th and 5th APs describe DRR, DIPECHO is understood as only undertaking DP, leading to some confusion. In addition, there are a number of relatively **recent and better financed players** supporting DRR activity of governments, INGOs, UN agencies, etc. in the region (e.g., The World Bank, ADB, etc.),

Recommendations

R.24 Consider the following scenarios in preparation for a future DIPECHO **implementation strategy**:

- maintain the *status quo*, with DIPECHO remaining within ECHO, purely as a DRR unit (focusing upon innovative pilot, community-based DRR) but with a mechanism to significantly replicate and scale up the successes achieved under the DIPECHO APs by working with other EC funding instruments, (e.g., AIDCO);
- **integrate DRR** into the development programmes of the EC funding instruments, and gradually phase out DIPECHO; or
- create a **new DRR funding mechanism**, over the next 5 to 10 years, with considerably greater financial and human resources (e.g., with up to 10% of EC funding utilised for DRR – adopting a similar approach to DFID).

R.25 Determine DIPECHO’s **comparative advantage** in today’s milieu of other DRR stakeholders, including those with considerably more finance, by distinguishing DIPECHO’s exact roles and responsibilities within DRR (utilising the Hyogo Framework as the overarching reference) towards the achievement of the five priorities for action, both at a regional and country level. Tailor approaches to suit the different environments within each country to ensure alignment and synergy with other stakeholders.

6.10 Advocacy

C.26 DIPECHO has advocated for, and made efforts to, strengthen linkages with EC bi-lateral and multi-lateral financing institutions for the **wider integration of DP/DRR** into their policy, planning and programme activities. While progress has been made in terms of an increase of awareness, the priority given to DRR activities in the region and their integration with these respective institutions remains weak. There is **no mention of DRR in CSPs, NIPs or PRSPs** in the region (with the exception of Indonesia, The Philippines and Viet Nam); as a result, DIPECHO tends to work in “isolation” from other EC external assistance programmes.

C.27 Being impartial and neutral, DIPECHO is in a unique advocacy position to lobby for DRR. At the same time, DIPECHO’s strength lies in its experiences in support of **small-scale, community-based DP/DRR activities**. However, compared to large scale disaster response or prevention activities these are relatively **low in visibility** and it takes time until impacts are evident; the actions are not appealing enough to encourage significant aid from EU Member States. DIPECHO lacks sufficient leverage because its budget and HR capacity is too small.

Recommendations

R.26⁶⁹ Advocate further for the integration of DRR within other EU external assistance services and strengthen inter-service cooperation around DRR and for greater clarity in the **division of responsibilities** among different services. DIPECHO should concentrate on small-scale community based DRR activities, whilst other Commission services concerned with development (i.e. DG AIDCO, RELEX or DEV) focus on larger scale mitigation activities. Adopt a more strategic approach in advocating for the **inclusion of DRR issues in CSPs and NIPs**. [Strategic]

R.27 Utilise DIPECHO's unique advocacy position to lobby with other **EC funding instruments** and EU Member States, particularly those supportive of DRR⁷⁰ for long-term development finance. Publicise the unique role of DIPECHO community based DP and DRR to other major stakeholders (e.g. IFIs, UN ISDR and UNDP) and to the general public, to improve understanding and cooperation, (use successful experiences of cooperation models elsewhere). Increase the budget (also recommended in the *Carlotti Report*) and human resources of DIPECHO both in the Bangkok and in Brussels. [Strategic]

⁶⁹ Note: some recommendations made here are common to previous ECHO evaluation reports and the Working Paper, e.g., the Overall Evaluation of ECHO's Strategic Orientation to Disaster Reduction (2003) and DPP: State of play and strategic orientation for EC policy (Working Paper).

⁷⁰ such as the Dutch, Swedish and British