



## **Humanitarian Aid Decision**

23 02 02

Title: **Fifth DIPECHO Action Plan for the Caribbean.**

Location of operation: Caribbean region

Amount of decision: EUR 3.500.000

Decision identification number: **ECHO/DIP/BUD/2005/02000**

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### **Explanatory Memorandum**

#### **1 – Rationale, needs and population targeted:**

##### **1.1. Rationale:**

The Caribbean Region is highly prone to disasters, mainly to hurricanes and recurrent floods. On some islands, volcanic activity is also a hazard. Additionally, socio-economic factors are: high population density, high annual demographic growth, high levels of poverty and socio-economic inequality. All these factors combined result in extremely vulnerable groups of the population with little coping or resilience capacities in the event of a disaster.

The 2004 hurricane season has tragically demonstrated the Caribbean region's exposure to disaster. The hurricanes and tropical storms which devastated Grenada and parts of Cuba, Jamaica, Haiti, Dominican Republic and the Bahamas claimed more than 3,000 lives. In addition, some 2,000 people perished in floods in South Eastern Haiti which occurred even before the start of the hurricane season. In Guyana, the most severe floods recorded in more than 100 years devastated the costal areas in January 2005, taking off guard communities that were not prepared to face such a disaster.

In response to the risks the vulnerable populations are encountering, ECHO, already back in 1998, selected the Caribbean for inclusion in its DIPECHO programme. Since then, four Disaster Preparedness Action Plans have been implemented with the help of NGOs, UN agencies and other regional partners. Whilst over the years thematic and geographic considerations have slightly changed, the Caribbean DIPECHO programme remained focused on extreme natural events of hydro-meteorological or origin. In total, some EUR 8.5 million have been spent on disaster preparedness projects implemented through the DIPECHO programme for the Caribbean.

In 2004 an external evaluation<sup>1</sup> was carried out to analyze the strategy used so far and the relevance of the programme. The evaluation found that though institutional commitment and reinforcement at regional and national level was increasing, it was still far from adequately responding to the concrete needs of communities, populations and civil society. In general there are some indications of improvement in institutional capacities, but scope for communities' resilience and capability to cope with disaster is still low.

The evaluation report strongly recommended the continuation of DIPECHO in the Caribbean, however giving priority to partners having incorporated the concept of disaster preparedness in their institutional strategy. Of the key recommendations of this evaluation ECHO wants to take up the following for the fifth action plan:

- Partnership between ECHO and its partners should be based on complementarities between the DIPECHO concept and the strategic orientation of the implementing organization
- Activities that are complementary to partners' strategies and specific plans for disasters preparedness should have priority
- Strict balance between technology and local capacities for utilization and maintenance should be observed.

Furthermore, DIPECHO funded projects should focus on local communities and leave more ambitious efforts of institutional strengthening at national level to development donors. The impact of the top-bottom approach, mainly based on institutional strengthening will take a long time to affect community needs and also faces unpredictable political risks. Therefore, programmes that directly support communities and their basic organizations, i.e. bottom-up approach, have proven to be the better way for immediate reinforcement of coping and resilience capacities.

## 1.2. Identified needs

ECHO assessment of needs in terms of preparedness has been an ongoing process in the Caribbean region. By monitoring the implementation of four successive DIPECHO Action Plans, ECHO has developed a good understanding of the state of disaster preparedness and the needs to improve it. In addition, the pertinence of DIPECHO action, in general, and that of the DIPECHO programme for the Caribbean, in particular, was recently confirmed by external evaluations.

DIPECHO's capacity to respond directly at the grassroots level is important for communities where expectations of governmental commitment with community preparedness are still very low. This is particularly the case for Haiti where extreme poverty combined with the effects of an extended socio-political crisis provide very little prospect of a rapid increase in government capacity in disaster management. ECHO's engagement through DIPECHO should not become an incentive for lower institutional commitment, but should be regarded as a special attention to those population groups with limited coping capacity.

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<sup>1</sup> The full report can be found under [http://europa.eu.int/comm/echo/evaluation/thematic\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu.int/comm/echo/evaluation/thematic_en.htm)

More concretely, at a local level there are needs for the following actions:

- organization of Community Disaster Response Committees;
- creation of functional teams responsible for the preparation and the implementation of immediate responsive action in case of disaster, i.e. evacuation, shelter management, transport, nutrition, education etc;
- training of community members and staff of public institutions (such as civil defence, municipality, water authority and meteorological office);
- elaboration of vulnerability and capacity maps;
- elaboration of community emergency plans and in some cases household emergency plans;
- in some cases installation of early warning systems and organization of community based groups able to maintain these systems.

Experience has shown that putting into place the above-mentioned elements is amongst the most effective action to guarantee an effective reduction of loss of lives. Projects covering these elements meet essential needs, and provided they are implemented using methodology and techniques which are consistent with local organization and culture they are highly accepted among the target population.

In this context micro-projects such as drainage, reforestation and small protection works serve as a medium to support preparedness activities. They raise acceptance of disaster risk reduction within the population and thus facilitate the sensibilization and mobilization of the communities. Through the micro-project people learn that effective mitigation can be achieved with limited resources thus reducing their vulnerability.

### 1.3. Target population and regions concerned:

The DIPECHO programme will focus on local communities. Priority will be given to those who are most vulnerable, who are most exposed to natural disaster and who lack adequate support from other institutions.

From a thematic point of view projects focusing on improving preparedness towards floods and hurricanes will be prioritized. In addition, for Haiti projects addressing vulnerability to disasters which has been exacerbated by rapid urban growth will receive particular attention.

The following countries will be targeted: Haiti, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Jamaica, Guyana, Suriname, Belize, Cayman Islands and Eastern Caribbean islands.

### 1.4. Risk assessment and possible constraints

In case of natural disaster occurring in the region, the DIPECHO projects implemented in the affected area could be suspended during an emergency, as implementing agencies may need to provide humanitarian assistance for the victims. Similarly, further deterioration of the

security situation in Haiti could negatively impact on the implementation of DIPECHO programmes.

In addition to this, disaster preparedness projects are dependent on the link that NGOs establish with local communities and authorities. These two entities have to be involved in the project from its inception to ensure increased success during the implementation of activities. These activities quite often imply a political decision or commitment. In order to build the project on a strong basis, ECHO requires that NGOs interested in submitting a project have previous experience in disaster preparedness and are already present and active in the targeted country/region; i.e. they already have developed relations with local communities and authorities on the ground. Otherwise, any obstacle that arises at this level could impede the successful implementation of projects and cause delays.

## **2 - Objectives and components of the humanitarian intervention proposed<sup>2</sup>:**

### **2.1. - Principal Objective**

To increase the capability of vulnerable populations living in areas most affected by recurrent natural hazards to cope with the effects of natural disasters.

### **2.2 - Specific Objective**

To support strategies that enable local communities and institutions to better prepare for and mitigate natural disasters by enhancing their capacities to cope, thereby increasing resilience and decreasing vulnerability.

### **2.3. - Components**

In pursuance of the above objective DIPECHO projects will be funded which include one or several of the following components:

#### **Strengthening of capacity/training:**

Strengthening of capacity/training in the field of disaster preparedness at the local level, with the direct participation of beneficiary communities (for example aid for the equipping, organisation and training of local emergency committees, simulations and workshops at the community level aimed at the elaboration of an emergency plan, training of community facilitators, training and equipping of community emergency brigades).

#### **Early warning systems**

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<sup>2</sup> Grants for the implementation of humanitarian aid within the meaning of Council Regulation (EC) No.1257/96 of 20 June 1996 concerning humanitarian aid are awarded in accordance with the Financial Regulation, in particular Article 110 thereof, and its Implementing Rules in particular Article 168 thereof (Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1605/2002 of 25 June 2002, OJ L248 of 16 September 2002 and No 2342/2002 of 23 December 2002, OJ L 357 of 31 December 2002).  
Rate of financing: In accordance with Article 169 of the Financial Regulation, grants for the implementation of this Decision may finance 100% of the costs of an action.  
Humanitarian aid operations funded by the Commission are implemented by NGOs and the Red Cross organisations on the basis of Framework Partnership Agreements (FPA) (in conformity with Article 163 of the Implementing Rules of the Financial Regulation) and by United Nations agencies based on the Financial and Administrative Framework Agreement (FAFA). The standards and criteria established in Echo's standard Framework Partnership Agreement to which NGO's and International organisations have to adhere and the procedures and criteria needed to become a partner may be found at [http://europa.eu.int/comm/echo/partners/index\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu.int/comm/echo/partners/index_en.htm)

All the activities and equipment related to the set-up of an early warning system (for example technical studies undertaken specifically to establish an early warning system – such as a hydrological study, installation of radios and training of recipients on their use, installation of pluviometers and water-level gauges and training of recipients on their use...).

#### **Small scale mitigation works**

Small scale infrastructure works aimed to reduce the beneficiaries' physical vulnerability. Sometimes, beneficiaries are trained during the implementation of these alleviation measures in order to be in a position to replicate them in the future (protection walls along riverbanks, drainage works, reforestation, construction works on existing public buildings to increase their resistance to disasters...)

#### **Map-making and computerisation of data**

Map-making and computerisation of the data connected with the study of risks, of vulnerabilities and the development of emergency plans (for example the collection of data for mapping risks – scientific maps – and training on their use, printing of risk maps and emergency plans).

#### **Research and dissemination**

Technical studies, workshops and surveys undertaken in order to increase knowledge on risk reduction issues and the diffusion of these results (for example the organisation of workshops/seminars aimed at the dissemination of project outcomes).

### **3 - Duration foreseen for actions within the framework of the proposed decision:**

Considering that most of the DP projects last for 15 months and that all selected projects will not be ready to start at the same time, the duration for the implementation of this decision will be **18** months. Disaster Preparedness projects have to be implemented within this period.

Expenditure under this Decision shall be eligible from **01 September 2005**.

Start Date: **01 September 2005**

If the implementation of the actions envisaged in this decision is suspended due to *force majeure* or any comparable circumstance, the period of suspension will not be taken into account for the calculation of the duration of the decision.

Depending on the evolution of the situation in the field, the Commission reserves the right to terminate the agreements signed with the implementing humanitarian organisations where the suspension of activities is for a period of more than one third of the total planned duration of the action. In this respect, the procedures established in the general conditions of the specific agreement will be applied.

### **4 - Previous interventions/decisions of the Commission within the context of the crisis concerned herewith**

ECHO/TPS/219/1998/01000: First DIPECHO Action Plans for Central America, Southeast Asia and the Caribbean;

ECHO/TPS/219/1999/03000: Second DIPECHO Action Plan for the Caribbean;

ECHO/TPS/219/2001/02000: Third DIPECHO Action Plan for the Caribbean  
ECHO/TPS/219/2003/02000: Fourth DIPECHO Action plan for the Caribbean  
All the funds have been allocated and contracted.

**5 – Other donors and donor co-ordination mechanisms** (where applicable):

5.1. - With the other Commission departments:

Since September 2001, a dialogue on the coordination of disaster preparedness activities for the Caribbean has been pursued with the Commission's Directorates General for Development and Europe Aid Coordination Office with a view to achieving a greater involvement of these services in that field. ECHO has always recalled the importance of including disaster risk reduction as a cross-cutting issue in all the country/regional strategy papers. In the region, DG DEV is planning the implementation of a regional disaster preparedness programme with CDERA within the Regional Indicative Programme under the 9<sup>th</sup> EDF. Furthermore, DG DEV is funding a meteorological radar project which will cover the whole Caribbean region. During the fifth DIPECHO Action Plan ECHO will ensure a good coordination with other disaster preparedness initiatives that are currently being prepared for the Dominican Republic and Haiti using funds from the B - Envelope of the 9<sup>th</sup> EDF, thus contributing to the LRRD process.

ECHO financed NGOs in the region will be kept abreast of those programmes so that they can institute appropriate coordination.

## 6 –Amount of decision and distribution by specific objectives:

6.1. - Total amount of the decision: EUR 3,500,000

6.2. - Budget breakdown by specific objectives

<b>Principal objective:</b> <i>To increase the capability of vulnerable populations living in areas most affected by recurrent natural hazards to cope with the effects of natural disasters</i>				
<b>Specific objectives</b>	<b>Allocated amount by specific objective (EUR)</b>	<b>Possible geographical area of operation</b>	<b>Activities</b>	<b>Potential partners<sup>3</sup></b>
<u>Specific objective:</u> To support strategies that enable local communities and institutions to better prepare for and mitigate natural disasters by enhancing their capacities to cope, thereby increasing resilience and decreasing vulnerability	3,500,000	Haiti, Cuba, Dominican Republic,, Guyana, Belize, Cayman Islands and Eastern Caribbean islands	Capacity building/training, early warning systems, small scale mitigation works, map-making and computerization of the data, research and dissemination, strengthening of infrastructures, advocacy and public awareness-raising, education, facilitation of coordination, institutional reinforcement	- ACSUR - MADRID - CONCERN WORLDWIDE - CROIX-ROUGE - ESP - CROIX-ROUGE - FICR-IFCR-CH - CROIX-ROUGE - FRA - CROIX-ROUGE - NLD - INTERMON - MPDL - OIKOS - OXFAM - BEL - OXFAM - UK - UN - UNDP - BEL
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3,500,000</b>			

<sup>3</sup> Asociación para la Cooperación con el Sur “LAS SEGOVIAS”, CONCERN WORLDWIDE, (IRL), CROIX-ROUGE FRANCAISE, CRUZ ROJA ESPAÑOLA, (E), FEDERATION INTERNATIONALE DES SOCIETES DE LA CROIX-ROUGE ET DU CROISSANT ROUGE, HET NEDERLANDSE RODE KRUIS (NLD), INTERMON OXFAM, (E), MOVIMIENTO POR LA PAZ, EL DESARME Y LA LIBERTAD, (E), OIKOS - COOPERAÇÃO E DESENVOLVIMENTO, OXFAM (GB), OXFAM-Solidarite(it), (BEL), UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

## 7 –Evaluation

Under article 18 of Council Regulation (EC) No.1257/96 of 20 June 1996 concerning humanitarian aid the Commission is required to "regularly assess humanitarian aid operations financed by the Community in order to establish whether they have achieved their objectives and to produce guidelines for improving the effectiveness of subsequent operations." These evaluations are structured and organized in overarching and cross cutting issues forming part of ECHO's Annual Strategy such as child-related issues, the security of relief workers, respect for human rights, gender. Each year, an indicative Evaluation Program is established after a consultative process. This program is flexible and can be adapted to include evaluations not foreseen in the initial program, in response to particular events or changing circumstances. More information can be obtained at:

[http://europa.eu.int/comm/echo/evaluation/index\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu.int/comm/echo/evaluation/index_en.htm).

## 8 –Budget Impact article 23 02 02

	CE (in EUR)
Initial Available Appropriations for 2005	12.500.000
Supplementary Budgets	
Transfers Commission	3.500.000
<b>Total Available appropriations</b>	<b>16.000.000</b>
Total executed to date (as at 14/06/2005)	3.500.000
Available remaining	12.500.000
<b>Total amount of the Decision</b>	<b>3.500.000</b>

## COMMISSION DECISION

of .....

**on the financing of humanitarian operations from the budget of the European Communities in the Caribbean region (DIPECHO)**

**THE COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES,**

Having regard to the Treaty establishing the European Communities,

Having regard to Council Regulation (EC) No 1257/96 of 20 June 1996 concerning humanitarian aid<sup>5</sup> and in particular Article 15(2) thereof,

Whereas:

- (1) The Caribbean is exposed to a wide range of natural disasters such as floods, hurricanes, earthquakes, volcanoes.
- (2) Local communities are very vulnerable to all these disasters.
- (3) The Caribbean countries' capacity to cope with disasters is insufficient and support from the international community is needed to promote preparedness activities and small mitigation projects.
- (4) Past experiences from the previous Action Plans implemented in the region as well as from external evaluations carried out lead to the conclusion that disaster preparedness projects should be financed by the Commission for a period of 18 months.
- (5) It is estimated that an amount of EUR 3,500,000 from budget line 23 02 02 of the 2005 general budget of the European Union is necessary to finance disaster preparedness activities for the vulnerable population of the Caribbean, taking into account the available budget, other donors' interventions and other factors.
- (6) In accordance with Article 17 (3) of Regulation (EC) No.1257/96 the Humanitarian Aid Committee gave a favourable opinion on 14 July 2005.

**HAS DECIDED AS FOLLOWS:**

### *Article 1*

1. In accordance with the objectives and general principles of humanitarian aid, the Commission hereby approves a total amount of EUR 3,500,000 for humanitarian aid operations undertaken in the framework of the Fifth DIPECHO Action Plan for the Caribbean by using line 23 02 02 of the 2005 general budget of the European Union.

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<sup>5</sup> OJ L 163, 2.7.1996, p. 1-6

2. In accordance with Article 2(f) of Regulation (EC) No.1257/96, the humanitarian operations shall be implemented in the pursuance of the following specific objective:
  - To support strategies that enable local communities and institutions to better prepare for and mitigate natural disasters by enhancing their capacities to cope, thereby increasing resilience and decreasing vulnerability.

The total amount of this decision is allocated to this objective.

### *Article 2*

1. The duration for the implementation of this decision shall be for a maximum period of 18 months, starting on 01 September 2005.
2. Expenditure under this Decision shall be eligible from 01 September 2005.
3. If the operations envisaged in this Decision are suspended owing to *force majeure* or comparable circumstances, the period of suspension shall not be taken into account for the calculation of the duration of the implementation of this Decision

### *Article 3*

This Decision shall take effect on the date of its adoption.

Done at Brussels,

*For the Commission*

*Member of the Commission*