

**COMMISSION DECISION**  
**of**  
**on the financing of humanitarian operations from the general budget of the European Communities in South Asia (DIPECHO)<sup>1</sup>**

**THE COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES,**

Having regard to the Treaty establishing the European Community,  
Having regard to Council Regulation (EC) No.1257/96 of 20 June 1996 concerning humanitarian aid<sup>2</sup>, and in particular Article 15(2) thereof:

Whereas:

- (1) The South Asia region is one of the most disaster-prone regions in the world, exposed to a variety of natural disasters such as floods, hurricanes, droughts, landslides, earthquakes and cyclones/tidal waves/tsunamis;
- (2) The local communities are highly vulnerable to these disasters, and the losses they cause are significant both in social and economic terms;
- (3) The coping capacities of the countries concerned by the Decision are insufficient considering the impact of the disaster event on the population and international interventions are needed to support preparation and small-scale mitigation activities;
- (4) The lessons learned from the previous Action Plans and the recent evaluations carried out by DG ECHO indicate that the types of activities financed by DIPECHO are the most effective and therefore disaster preparedness operations should be financed by the Community for a period of 18 months;
- (5) It is estimated that an amount of EUR 7,500,000 from budget line 23 02 03 of the general budget of the European Communities is necessary to finance disaster preparedness activities for the vulnerable populations of South Asia, taking into account the available budget, other donors' contributions and other factors.
- (6) The present decision constitutes a financing decision in the sense of Article 75 of the Financial Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1605/2002<sup>3</sup>, Article 90 of the detailed rules for the implementation of the Financial Regulation determined by Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 2342/2002<sup>4</sup> and Article 15 of the Internal Rules of the Implementation of the general budget of the European Communities<sup>5</sup>.
- (7) In accordance with Article 17 (3) of Regulation (EC) No.1257/96, the Humanitarian Aid Committee gave a favourable opinion on 12/06/2007.

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<sup>1</sup> "Disaster Preparedness ECHO", the European Commission's disaster preparedness programme in the framework of humanitarian aid, implemented by the Directorate-General for Humanitarian Aid- ECHO

<sup>2</sup> OJ L 163 2.7 1996 p 1.6.

<sup>3</sup> OJ L 248, 16.9.2002, p.1

<sup>4</sup> OJ L 357, 31.12.2002, p.1. Regulation as last amended by Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No. 1995/2006, OJ L 390, 30.12.2006, p.1

<sup>5</sup> Commission Decision of 21.2.2007, C/2007/513

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 7,500,000 for humanitarian aid operations undertaken in the framework of the Fourth DIPECHO Action Plan for South Asia by using line 23 02 03 of the 2007 general budget of the European Communities.

2. In accordance with article 2(f) of Council Regulation 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 capacity to cope, thereby increasing resilience and decreasing vulnerability and by strengthening the level of coordination, information sharing and advocacy at national and regional level .

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 1 September 2007.

2. Expenditure under this Decision shall be eligible from 1 September 2007.

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*

1. The Commission shall implement the budget by direct centralised management.

2. The actions supported by this decision will be implemented by humanitarian aid organisations that are signatories to the Framework Partnership Agreements (FPA) or the European Commission /United Nations Financial Administrative Framework Agreement (FAFA).

3. Taking account the specificities of humanitarian aid, the nature of the activities to be undertaken, the specific location constraints and the level of urgency, the activities covered by this decision may be financed in full in accordance with Article 253 of the Implementing Rules of the Financial Regulation. This means that in case of co-financing, the possible rate of co-financing can go up to 99% if needed.

*Article 4*

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

Done at Brussels,

For the Commission

Member of the Commission



## Humanitarian Aid Decision

23 02 03

Title: Fourth DIPECHO Action Plan for South Asia

Location of operation: South Asia

Amount of Decision: EUR 7,500,000

Decision reference number: ECHO/DIP/BUD/2007/04000

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### Explanatory Memorandum

#### **1 – Rationale, needs and target population.**

##### 1.1. - Rationale:

According to Article 2(f) of Humanitarian Aid Regulation (EC) of 20 June 1996<sup>6</sup>, DG ECHO's activities in the field of Disaster Preparedness shall be to “*ensure preparedness for risks of natural disasters or comparable circumstances and use a suitable early-warning and intervention system*”. DIPECHO (which stands for **D**isaster **P**reparedness **E**CHO) is a programme set up by DG ECHO<sup>7</sup> in 1996 to improve the capacities of communities at risk to better prepare and protect themselves. A Diagnostic Study was carried out in several regions to identify the risks, evaluate the socio-economic vulnerability of the people and determine what local, national and regional response capability and external support was already in place. The study was followed by the adoption of DIPECHO Action Plans in different regions. South Asia is benefiting from its Fourth DIPECHO Action Plan.

South Asia, with South East Asia, is one of the most vulnerable regions in the world to natural disasters (especially floods/landslides, drought, earthquakes, tsunamis/cyclones and forest fires). It is a region where the social and political structures, demographic pressures, the structure of settlements, agricultural practices and economic development result in a population which is extremely vulnerable to natural disasters.

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<sup>6</sup> CE Regulation n°1257/96 of 20 June 1996, OL L163 of 02 July 1996

<sup>7</sup> Directorate-General for Humanitarian aid - ECHO  
ECHO/DIP/BUD/2007/04000

The recent events in the region, the most important of which were the tsunami of 26 December 2004 and the earthquake in Pakistan on 8 October 2005, have drawn further attention to the importance of having prevention measures to reduce the impact of such natural disasters on the populations, especially the most vulnerable.

More recently, DG ECHO had to intervene in response to severe floods in Bangladesh and India and to acute drought situations in Afghanistan and Nepal.

Disaster preparedness (DP) helps to save lives, fuels recovery and reduces the risk of future disasters. By simple preventive measures, many lives and properties can be saved.

By helping people to help themselves, disaster preparedness should be seen as the first response instrument.

All recent disasters should be seen as opportunities to sensitise all the relevant stakeholders to the importance of improving their Disaster Risk Reduction policies.

With a view to improving the preparedness of vulnerable populations in this region and their capacity to respond to the effects of disasters, DG ECHO has been present in South Asia with its DIPECHO programme since 2001.

A First Action Plan was launched in 2001, followed by a Second Action Plan in 2003 and a third one in 2005.

In 2002, an assessment of the First Action Plan recommended notably:

1. Strengthening the interventions at local community level with a strong participative approach;
2. Concentrating on a country-based approach except in cases where a particularly vulnerable region concerned several countries;
3. Undertaking a real co-ordination effort, including exchange of information and best practices and follow-up of projects.

The subsequent DIPECHO strategy took account of the assessment findings, as well as of the experience gained during the initial funding of proposals, in dealing with local partners, and through the increased collaboration between DG ECHO and other Commission services. In 2003, DG ECHO also launched a study on **Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR)**<sup>8</sup> which ranked South Asia at a very high level of vulnerability, confirming the need for DG ECHO to intervene in the region. Four countries in the region were classified as most vulnerable: Bangladesh, India, Nepal and Pakistan. Afghanistan was not ranked as the vulnerability data were not available.

The Second Action Plan was adversely affected because of the priority which had to be diverted to the tsunami response notably in terms of human resources. DG ECHO subsequently decided to dedicate staff to the follow-up of DIPECHO projects in the region. An increased budget in 2005 allowed a more comprehensive strategy to be developed around 21 projects funded in the four countries in South Asia classified as the most vulnerable, that is: Bangladesh, India, Nepal and Pakistan.

In parallel to DIPECHO (that was introduced for the first time in Pakistan), efforts to mainstream disaster preparedness (DP) components in the humanitarian relief interventions in the region were pursued in line with DG ECHO's overall strategy on DP.

DP activities were funded in the response to the earthquake in Pakistan through UN-ISDR (International Strategy Disaster Reduction) by providing knowledge on disaster risk

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<sup>8</sup> December 2003, Evaluation of DG ECHO's strategic orientation to disaster reduction available on DG ECHO's website : [http://ec.europa.eu/echo/evaluation/reports\\_2003\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/echo/evaluation/reports_2003_en.htm)  
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reduction standards relevant to seismic risks to the agencies and authorities engaged in humanitarian and recovery programmes.

In 2006, mainstreaming of DP in response to floods in India and Bangladesh was implemented in some of the projects bearing in mind that simple mitigation measures can decrease the impact of any future disasters in the same area. DG ECHO decided also to support two DP initiatives in Afghanistan in the framework of its 2006 and 2007 Global Plans in order to strengthen the capacity of the Red Crescent society and the national strategy for DRR.

For the first time in the region, DG ECHO organised on 18 and 19 April 2007 in Kathmandu a DIPECHO Regional Workshop in order to discuss the lessons learned and best practices in the field of Disaster preparedness.

With more than 70 participants, including the 21 DIPECHO project managers and team, the projects managers of the DP projects in Pakistan (UN-ISDR) and Afghanistan, UN-ISDR representatives, ADPC<sup>9</sup>, SAARC<sup>10</sup> and some donors' agencies, representatives from the Nepalese authorities as guest country for the event, the European Commission Delegation, the event proved to be a success in:

- gathering together a full range of practitioners from 5 different countries in the region
- exchanging information on the way to approach Disaster Risk Reduction in the countries of the region affected globally by the same risks and having a very similar level of vulnerability and coping capacity
- learning from each other's experience and identifying best practices to be replicated and up-scaled

The Workshop was also a good opportunity to demonstrate how enhanced co-ordination between the stakeholders, and notably the DIPECHO partners, have contributed to more complementarity, better efficiency in terms of advocacy and influencing the local and national authorities, a better response in case of disasters and overall, a better knowledge of each other's strengths and weaknesses that can be addressed in a cooperative manner and contribute to enhancing the capacity of each agency working in the DP area.

Support to local capacity building and recognition of indigenous knowledge were not surprisingly identified as key issues for a successful implementation of a DP/DRR strategy in the region.

The lessons learned from the repeated and recurrent disasters, whether large or small-scale, and the lessons learned from the implementation of the third DIPECHO Action Plan in South Asia have confirmed the need to put into place efficient early warning systems, enforce building codes, prepare communities to react in the first hours of a disaster, train people, organise awareness campaigns, mitigate the impact of disasters and carry out advocacy towards all relevant stakeholders.

This type of activities will be carried out in the framework of the projects financed under this Action Plan, as they are activities traditionally carried out under any DIPECHO project.

Contrary to what has been done up to now in South Asia, a specific emphasis will also be put on regional cooperation, exchange of information, capacity building and training, advocacy at national and regional level taking into account notably the recent setting-up of a Disaster Management Centre under the auspices of SAARC located in New-Delhi, India.

As in 2005, this Action Plan does not include any new support to the Early Warning System in the Indian Ocean as the funding is now ensured through development funding, notably

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<sup>9</sup> Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre

<sup>10</sup> South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation  
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with EUR 6 million being provided by AIDCO. This can be seen as a very good example of LRRD.

Afghanistan is for the first time included in the DIPECHO Action Plan in order to take stock of the already existing initiatives in the field of DRR, but the security and political unstable situation does not allow the implementation of a fully-fledged DIPECHO strategy and the interventions will have to be very modest in scale.

Once again, Sri Lanka has not been included in this Action Plan for pure DIPECHO community-based initiatives in view of the humanitarian priority needs in a very complex situation where the security of humanitarian aid workers is a cause for concern.

Nevertheless, regional initiatives could include components in the seven countries covered by SAARC and understood as being part of the South Asia region, namely: Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

This Action Plan will therefore primarily aim to:

- Target the most vulnerable communities and categories of population using bottom-up participatory methods and relevant local materials/resources that can be easily replicated ;
- Foster appropriate and sustainable preparedness activities that are co-ordinated with local and national public institutions and that can be easily replicated in other parts of the region and beyond. Small-scale mitigation and prevention activities can complement the project if they have a demonstrable rationale and a proven impact;
- Focus on the areas most exposed to frequent natural hazards and with less coping capacities. Special attention will be given to the remoteness and difficulty of access of the proposed areas of operation.
- Furthermore, in line with what has already been started in the framework of the Third DIPECHO Action Plan, more support will be given to strengthening co-ordination at national and regional levels and exchange of information, collection and dissemination of best practices, joint initiatives in terms of advocacy that have proven to be very efficient, joint initiatives in terms of capacity building bearing in mind the necessity of having expertise in DRR at the implementation level.

The Action Plan will also aim to use every opportunity to link the DIPECHO community-based approach with the larger development programmes, with a view to integrating DRR in sustainable development strategies and programming. Complementarities with other stakeholders, whether other services of the European Commission or EU Member states or any other agencies present in the region, will be sought, as DIPECHO is not to be considered as a stand-alone programme but as part of the overall efforts of the European Commission to implement the objectives of the Hyogo Framework for Action.

## 1.2. - Identified needs:

South Asia is one of the most disaster-prone areas in the world, and the disastrous effects of natural catastrophes are compounded by the fact that they tend to occur in places where there is a concentration of vulnerable populations. In particular, the recurrent appearance of small-scale disasters imposes a significant burden on the already very difficult humanitarian situation of the affected vulnerable populations.

Faced with this situation, DG ECHO has adopted a two-fold strategy with regard to natural disasters in the region. On the one hand, DG ECHO responds to those (large-scale) emergencies which exceed the national response capacity. This was the case for instance with the response to the 2004 and 2006 floods in Bangladesh, to the tsunami at the end of 2004

and to the Pakistan earthquake in October 2005. On the other hand, efforts have been made to identify the geographical areas most vulnerable to natural hazards, and with the most vulnerable populations, and subsequently, to prioritise the implementation of DP projects.

From February to March 2007, an extensive consultation process was undertaken by means of National Consultative Meetings (NCMs) in all targeted countries in order to take stock of the lessons learned from the DIPECHO projects under the Third Action Plan and to identify together with the main stakeholders the needs, regions and levels of intervention. Over 220 participants representing different institutions involved in preparedness and prevention (NGOs, UN agencies, Red Cross family, local authorities, regional organisations, academia, scientific community, donors' community, etc.) attended these meetings.

The conclusions of the above-mentioned consultative process included, *inter alia*: identification of the most vulnerable areas in each of the targeted countries; vulnerability as a crucial factor of prioritisation; the application of a multi-hazard approach to the extent possible; institutional strengthening; the close involvement of local actors and local authorities; the need for standardisation, compilation and dissemination of good practices with a view to promoting replication; the need to search for synergies to establish a link with development initiatives at local level. The conclusions and recommendations of this process were included in the “Instructions and guidelines for DG ECHO potential partners wishing to submit proposals under the Fourth DIPECHO Action plan for South Asia”, published on DG ECHO’s website on 17 April 2007.

It has been clearly established that there is a particular need to strengthen links between the various actors responsible for preparing for and preventing natural disasters (at local, national and regional levels) and to strengthen the local response capacity. The authorities are aware of this but are not “trained” in Disaster Management policies, which have an impact on the management of disasters, a task which is invariably undertaken at local level without any real intervention/co-ordination from the central government and in the absence of a good understanding of early warning systems and disaster management.

Needs therefore exist at local level, where the greatest needs is to encourage the creation of internal structures with strong community involvement, in order to respond immediately to and manage disasters and their consequences; needs also exist at central government level where disaster management (DM) and disaster preparedness (DP) policies are not yet considered a priority. It is important to encourage local efforts but also to support the existing structures in order to integrate practical training courses aimed at all management levels into disaster management policy.

With highly vulnerable populations and with a weak response capacity, further needs in terms of small structures and material supplies have been identified. Know-how is lacking in terms of small-scale mitigation activities which can be easily replicated and which would result in a reduced impact from natural disasters because fewer lives would be lost and less material damage caused. Depending on the type of disaster, certain mitigation works are noticeably absent in some particularly vulnerable areas: for example the strengthening of river banks which would reduce and/or eliminate flooding in certain areas; the strengthening of crumbly soil through mixed plantations; and the existence of watch-towers (in bamboo) with supplies of materials (megaphones) in order to provide an early warning.

### 1.3. - Target population and regions concerned :

The Fourth DIPECHO Action Plan will focus on the most vulnerable local communities and institutions involved in risk reduction in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Nepal, and Pakistan.

Furthermore, regional programming could take into account the whole of South Asia including Bhutan and Sri Lanka if it is deemed relevant for the overall coherence of the proposed project.

It is estimated that approximately 3 million people will benefit directly from this Action Plan.

The regions indicated below for each country will be targeted on a priority basis taking into account when feasible a multi-hazard approach.

The main hazards faced are also mentioned below.

Nonetheless, it should not be precluded to include another type of hazard in any intervention, if justified, in a multi-hazard approach or another region if the risk, vulnerability and coping capacity were proven to justify a DIPECHO intervention.

Furthermore, specific attention will be given to projects not only taking into account the necessity to cover the most vulnerable populations affected by natural disasters but also taking into account a certain number of population groups with specific needs such as children, women and the disabled in line with DG ECHO's strategy.

#### **Bangladesh**

- In terms of geographical areas, recurrence of multi hazards and the socio-economical background/poverty level, priority will be given to projects located in: **the Northern, North Eastern, North Western, South Western and Central districts; eleven (11) districts in the coastal belt and the major metropolitan cities with high population density** such as **Dhaka, Chittagong, Sylhet and Rangpur**.
- In these geographical areas, the main targeted primary hazards will be:
  - *Floods*: Northern, North Eastern, North Western, South Western and Central districts,
  - *Earthquake*: Northern, North Eastern and Central districts; eleven districts in the coastal belt and the major metropolitan cities with high population density such as Dhaka, Chittagong, Sylhet and Rangpur
  - *Cyclones/tidal waves/tsunamis*: eleven districts of the coastal belt

#### **India**

- In India, priority will be given to projects located in: **West Bengal, Orissa, Rajasthan, Jharkand, Chhattisgarh, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, North Eastern States, Bihar; Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Uttaranchal and Jammu and Kashmir**.
- In these geographical areas, the main targeted hazards will be:
  - *Floods*: North Eastern States, Bihar, Arunachal Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, West Bengal, and Orissa
  - *Earthquakes*: Arunachal Pradesh, Bihar, Himachal Pradesh, North Eastern States, Uttaranchal and Jammu and Kashmir
  - *Cyclones/ Tsunamis*: West Bengal, Tamil Nadu, Pondicherry, Orissa and Andaman.

- *Droughts*: Rajasthan, Jharkand, Chhattisgarh, West Bengal, Maharashtra, North Madhya Pradesh, Assam and Orissa

## **Nepal**

Nepal has an extremely high population density (25 million inhabitants) and is among the poorest countries in the world (ranking 136<sup>th</sup> out of 177 countries in the 2005 Human Development Index) and has high political and government instability. Recurring natural disasters such as annual floods, landslides, droughts and growing concerns about possible major earthquakes further aggravate the already-existing high level of vulnerability among the most affected.

- In Nepal, priority will be given to projects located in: **Central Eastern Terai Region** (Mahottari, Rautahat, Sarlahi, Siraha Dhanusa, Saptari, Chitawan, N/Parasi, Makawanpur, Kailali and Morang); **Eastern and Mid West Region** (Bara, K/Bastu; Sunsari; Bardiya, Parsa, Rupendehi, Udayapur, K/Pur, Jhapa); **Central and Eastern Hills of Nepal** and **West and Far West Hills of Nepal** (Ilam, Taplejung, Khotang, Okhaldhunga, Ramechhap, Sindhuli, Makwapur, Rasuwa, Dhading, Gorkha, Palpa, Baglung, Myagdi Dang, Syangja) and **Kathmandu valley**.

Noting that almost all of Nepal is included, it has to be mentioned that Central Eastern Terai region, Kathmandu Valley were considered as a first priority during the NCM. Further the districts of Achham, Jajarkot, Sindhupalchok, Doti and Terhathum were identified highest on the vulnerability analysis.

- In these geographical areas, the main targeted hazards will be:
  - *Floods*: Central Eastern Terai Region, Eastern, and Mid West Region
  - *Earthquakes*: all country, but more specifically Kathmandu Valley
  - *Landslides and Avalanches*: Central and Eastern Hills of Nepal and West and Far Western Hills of Nepal
  - *Droughts*: Mid and Far Western Hills and Terai district bordering with India

In addition to all other specified criteria, **security** and **access** to the abovementioned prioritised areas will be a key aspect for selection of projects in Nepal.

## **Pakistan**

Pakistan is prone to natural disasters, facing recurring droughts, floods and landslides, with a high risk of major earthquakes. The most recent earthquake that struck its capital and North Western Frontier Province (NWFP) and Jammu and Kashmir resulted in enormous loss of life and property and is further evidence of the country's vulnerability.

- In Pakistan priority will be given to projects located in: **Punjab, North Western Frontier Province (NWFP), Sindh Province, Baluchistan, Azad Jammu Kashmir (AJK), Northern Areas and major metropolitan cities of Quetta, Peshawar and Karachi.**
- In these geographical areas, the main targeted hazards will be:
  - *Floods*: Punjab, North Western Frontier Province (NWFP); Northern areas; Sindh Province; Balouchistan; Azad Jammu Kashmir (AJK)
  - *Earthquakes*: North Western Frontier Province (NWFP); Azad Jammu & Kashmir; Sindh Province; Northern Punjab; Balouchistan; Northern Areas; major metropolitan cities of Quetta, Peshawar, Islamabad and Karachi

- *Landslides*: Punjab, North Western Frontier Province (NWFP); Northern Areas; North Punjab; Balouchistan; Azad Jammu Kashmir (AJK)
- *Droughts*: Punjab, North Western Frontier Province (NWFP); Sindh Province; Balouchistan
- *Cyclones*: Coastal Belt

## **Afghanistan**

As mentioned in the introductory remarks, Afghanistan has been included in this Action Plan in view of the efforts made in this country to take on board Disaster Risk Reduction.

It has notably led to the support of some cross borders initiatives in Badkshan in the framework of the last Action Plan for Central Asia and of some ad-hoc projects funded under the Global Plans for Afghanistan.

Nevertheless, and bearing in mind the security situation in the country, DG ECHO does not envisage a fully-fledged DIPECHO intervention similar to that in other South Asian countries but is willing to implement pilot-projects in "safe areas" if an impact can be foreseen.

Furthermore, Afghanistan could be usefully included in any programme having a regional dimension.

Therefore, priority will be given to projects located in: North; North-east areas and Central Afghanistan, in particular the districts of Badkshan, Takhar, Kundus, Balkh, Jarjan, Samankand, Baghlem

In these geographical areas, the main targeted hazards will be floods, landslides, and earthquakes.

### 1.4. - Risk assessment and possible constraints:

As most of the activities proposed have a grass-root-level orientation, their successful implementation depends on the willingness of the identified communities to co-operate. In addition to this, disaster preparedness projects are dependent on the link that implementing partners establish with the relevant authorities, who need to be involved in the project from its inception to ensure that the objectives can be met and that results are sustainable.

In order to build a project on a strong basis, DG ECHO requires that NGOs interested in submitting a project have previous experience in DP programmes in South Asia and have already developed relations with local communities and authorities on the ground.

Most countries in the region are suffering from a very volatile political situation with increasing security concerns in Afghanistan, in Pakistan in the North Western province as well as other areas with the upcoming election adding additional pressure. In Nepal, the situation remains very volatile in the Terai Region and other areas even though the internal conflict has come to an end. In Bangladesh, elections were supposed to be held in the beginning of 2007 but have been postponed until further notice. In the meantime, the terrorist attacks on major cities on 30 April 2007 have added extra pressure on the authorities and the civil society.

In the case of natural disasters occurring in the region, the DIPECHO projects implemented in the affected area under the current Decision may need to be suspended during an emergency as NGOs are called upon to provide humanitarian assistance for the victims.

Bearing in mind the recent catastrophes in South Asia, it would also be advisable to identify as a risk the overstretched capacities of DG ECHO partners in the case of a major disaster, such as the tsunami or the Pakistan earthquake, should they occur during the timeframe of the present Decision.

## **2 - Objectives and components of the humanitarian intervention proposed:**

### 2.1. - Objectives:

Principal objective: To increase the awareness and the response capacity of local communities and institutions to potential and recurrent natural disasters and to reduce the effects of these disasters on the most vulnerable

Specific objectives:

To support strategies that enable local communities and institutions to better prepare for and mitigate natural disasters by enhancing their capacity to cope, thereby increasing resilience and decreasing vulnerability and by strengthening the level of coordination, information sharing and advocacy at national and regional level

### 2.2. - Components:

In pursuance of the above-mentioned objectives, DIPECHO-funded projects include one or several of the following components:

- **Infrastructure support**

This component will focus on the provision of equipment and the reinforcement of infrastructure to support disaster preparedness plans (e.g. scientific equipment, upgrading or renovation of storage facilities, rehabilitation and sign-posting of evacuation routes, access to emergency shelters, refurbishment of health posts, temporary shelters for evacuated population, etc.)

- **Advocacy and public awareness raising**

Communication activities aimed at raising awareness of disaster risk reduction issues among authorities and the general public (e.g. awareness campaigns, street theatre, theatre, songs, simulation exercises/mock drills, DP sensitisation, radio spots, radio communication in communities, media interaction - articles published in newspapers and magazines, Information Education Communication (IEC) materials: leaflets, posters, billboards, street wall papers, brochures, peer to peer awareness, conferences, seminars, symposiums, workshops; advocacy with donors and authorities; training workshops for the media, journalists; participation in the Disaster Risk Reduction day; joint strategy formulation and programming in terms of advocacy and awareness raising at regional, national or sub-national levels; etc.)

- **Small-scale mitigation works**

Small-scale infrastructure works aimed at reducing the physical vulnerability of the beneficiaries. These activities are linked with the priorities of the contingency plan and should protect life and/or basic resources. These activities have to be designed and realised with community participation. Occasionally, when they implied more technical knowledge, beneficiaries are trained during the implementation of these mitigation works in order to replicate them in the future (e.g. protection walls along river banks, drainage works,

irrigation works, reforestation/plantation, raising homesteads, raising water pumps/latrines; non structural mitigation measures; etc.).

- **Mapping and data computerization**

Mapping and data computerization linked with the study of hazards and vulnerabilities and the elaboration of emergency plans (e.g. data collection for risk mapping purposes - scientific maps, development of mapping software and training on its use, printing of risk maps, printing of emergency plans, Vulnerability Capacity Assessment (VCA), Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA), village level hazard, risk, basic services mapping, feasibility studies – baseline, research and case studies, distribution, dissemination of data/maps collected, preparation of emergency plans; dissemination of final products etc.)

- **Education**

Activities aimed at creating a “culture of prevention” within the most vulnerable categories of population pursuing a change of attitude and practice, mainly in support of the formal education sector (e.g. design and production of training materials for pupils, training of teachers, simulations conducted at school level, education of communities on basic services in emergency situations, emergency plans at school level; school safety initiatives; drawing competitions, etc.)

- **Early warning systems (EWS)**

All activities and equipment related to the setting up of an EWS and its functioning (e.g. reviving and/or strengthening traditional and existing indigenous knowledge on EWS and/or adapting or developing user-friendly, understandable and locally-appropriate systems, use of local radio stations, religious institutions (mosques, temples, churches), localisation of EWS, alarm systems (local), ensuring free information, warning dissemination from the national to community level with special attention to people with disabilities, women and children, technical studies conducted specifically to set up an EWS (e.g. hydrological study), Information Communication Technology, installation of radio networks and training beneficiaries on their use, installation of rain gauges and hydrometric scales and training of the beneficiaries on their use through simulation exercises, mock drills, dry-run rehearsals etc.

- **Research and dissemination**

Technical studies, workshops and surveys conducted in order to increase knowledge about preparedness issues and dissemination of the results (e.g. research and agreed disaster sensitive environmental practices, technical studies whose results are to be used in local planning for zoning purposes, organisation of workshops/seminars aimed at dissemination of project results; systematisation of lessons learned and good practices; ...)

- **Facilitation of co-ordination**

Support initiatives to facilitate co-ordination among institutions working on disaster risk reduction and notably preparedness and response (e.g. inter-institutional meetings, interactive products, synergy among key stakeholders, information resource centres, scientific documentation and dissemination among existing projects/partners, identification and dissemination of best practices; standardisation of materials (notably IEC) and equipment (ex. first aid kits); joint initiatives, regional or national on training on DRR

- **Institutional strengthening**

Services and equipment delivered to strengthen institutional capacity on risk reduction (e.g. training of decision-makers at different levels on DP/Disaster Reduction, training of health authorities on humanitarian supply management tools, training of firemen on rescue procedures, training of medical staff in mass casualty management; strengthening of Disaster risk management instruments/plans and strategies at local/national levels and their implementation....)

- **Local capacity building /training**

Capacity building/training on disaster preparedness conducted at local level, with the direct involvement of beneficiary communities (e.g. support in equipment supply, organisation and training of local emergency committees, simulations conducted at community level, workshops conducted at community level aimed at producing an emergency plan, training of community facilitators, linkages and co-ordination, building alliances, promoting good practices, building up coping mechanisms as defined by the communities own assessment of its capacities and vulnerabilities, community resilience improvement, training in indigenous knowledge and coping mechanisms, training in first aid and search and rescue, rescue kits and first aid emergency kits depending on the recipient...)

### **3 - Duration expected for actions in the proposed Decision:**

The duration for the implementation of this Decision shall be 18 months. This is justified by the fact that the vast majority of disaster preparedness projects last for 15 months, with operations starting in a deferred manner. The duration of 15 months for DIPECHO projects has been repeatedly recognised as more efficient in terms of impact by the evaluations carried out over the years of DIPECHO Action Plans.

Humanitarian operations funded by this Decision must be implemented within this period.

Expenditure under this Decision shall be eligible from 1 September 2007.

Start Date : 1 September 2007.

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 humanitarian aid operations.

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 procedure established in the general conditions of the specific agreement will be applied.

#### 4 - Previous interventions/Decisions of the Commission within the context of the current crisis

##### List of previous DG ECHO operations in Afghanistan/Bangladesh/India/Nepal/Pakistan

Decision Number	Decision Type	2005 EUR	2006 EUR	2007 EUR
ECHO/AFG/BUD/2006/01000	Emergency		2,500,000	
ECHO/IND/BUD/2006/01000	Non Emergency		2,000,000	
ECHO/NPL/BUD/2005/01000	Non Emergency	4,000,000		
ECHO/NPL/BUD/2005/02000	Non Emergency	2,000,000		
ECHO/NPL/BUD/2006/01000	Global Plan		5,000,000	
ECHO/NPL/BUD/2006/02000	Emergency		2,800,000	
ECHO/PAK/BUD/2005/01000	Emergency	10,000,000		
ECHO/PAK/BUD/2006/01000	Non Emergency		1,000,000	
	<b>Subtotal</b>	16,000,000	13,300,000	0
	<b>Grand Total</b>	29,300,000		

Dated : 2 May 2007

Source : HOPE

Additionally, three DIPECHO Action Plans have been implemented in South Asia, with all funds being allocated. The First Action Plan (ECHO/TPS/219/2001/01000) comprised eight projects for a total amount of EUR 3.2 million; the Second Action Plan (ECHO/TPS/219/2003/01000) consisted of ten projects for a total of EUR 2.5 million; the Third Action Plan (ECHO/DIP/BUD/2005/04000) comprised 21 projects for a total amount of EUR 6 million. The end date for implementation of the Third Action Plan is end of June 2007 with some projects continuing to end of July due to suspension.

## 5 - Overview of donors' contributions

### Donors in Afghanistan/Bangladesh/India/Nepal/Pakistan the last 12 months

1. EU Members States (*)		2. European Commission		3. Others	
	EUR		EUR		EUR
Austria		DG ECHO	35,713,596		
Belgium	784,050	Other services			
Bulgaria					
Cyprus					
Czech republic	428,129				
Denmark	3,103,218				
Estonia					
Finland	900,000				
France	450,000				
Germany	18,984,373				
Greece					
Hungary					
Ireland	4,350,000				
Italy	2,000,000				
Latvia					
Lithuania					
Luxemburg	425,000				
Malta					
Netherlands	14,074,435				
Poland					
Portugal					
Romania					
Slovakia					
Slovenie					
Spain	1,300,000				
Sweden	5,247,311				
United kingdom	1,239,410				
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>53,285,926</b>	<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>35,713,596</b>	<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>0</b>
		<b>Grand total</b>	<b>88,999,522</b>		

Dated : 2 May 2007

(\*) Source : DG ECHO 14 Points reporting for Members States. <https://hac.ec.europa.eu>  
Empty cells means either no information is available or no contribution.

## **5.1. Coordination with other Commission services**

Since September 2001, coordination on DRR and in particular on Disaster Preparedness issues has been ongoing with DG External Relations (RELEX) and DGAIDCO (EUROPAID Cooperation Office). Similar efforts have been made by DG Development (DEV).

Moreover, since the World Conference on Disaster Reduction (WCDR) in Kobe, Japan (January 2005), significant progress has been made in promoting DRR dialogue within the European Commission.

On a general level, regular contact is maintained at field level between DIPECHO and the EC Delegations in order to maximize linkages between programmes. At headquarters level, the same effort is made in terms of information sharing with a view to better linking the DIPECHO interventions with potential mainstreaming of Disaster Risk Reduction components in the sustainable development programming of DG RELEX and AIDCO policies.

DG ECHO has systematically stressed the importance of including DRR as a cross-cutting issue in South Asia country/regional strategy papers covering the period 2007-2013 and will further explore the possibilities with DG RELEX and DG AIDCO for the incorporation of natural disaster risk management components in future programmes supported under the relevant NIPs and CSPs (Country Strategy Papers).

It is encouraging to see that in the framework of the draft Commission Regional Strategy paper, the policy dialogue with SAARC will include disaster risk reduction as one of the elements of discussion. It is particularly relevant in the context of the establishment by SAARC of its new Disaster Management Centre in New-Delhi.

## **5.2 Member States**

In a note dated 30 March 2007, DG ECHO requested Humanitarian Aid Committee (HAC) members to provide information about projects in the area of disaster preparedness and prevention funded by them in the region. At the time of drafting this Decision, details have not been provided except from GTZ (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit)<sup>11</sup>, present at the National Consultative Meeting in Islamabad on 21 March 2007 on Pakistan.

Disaster prevention is not a **GTZ** focal area but just now a project on “Disaster prevention and management capacity building” started in cooperation with the NWFP Department for Home and Tribal Affairs. The priorities in Pakistan are health, education and renewable energies. Geographic priorities are in the north of Pakistan, particularly in NWFP. The project will probably focus on D.I.Khan and Batagram districts (apart from supporting the provincial strategies in Peshawar).

In 2006, GTZ was engaged in Housing Reconstruction Capacity Building with ERRA (Earthquake Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Authority) as partner. Due to different perceptions of sustainable earthquake-resistant construction which could not be realised in the given context, GTZ shifted its funds and support to setting-up long-term disaster

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<sup>11</sup> Humanitarian aid Specialised agency of a Member state (Federal Republic of Germany)  
ECHO/DIP/BUD/2007/04000

prevention and management strategies in cooperation with the NWFP government. The project now will be based on the following pillars:

- The Provincial Disaster Management Strategy will be supported, scrutinized and implemented.
- The role of voluntary support structures should be strengthened for the purpose of awareness building, disaster preparedness and management.
- Better design of roads, simple and sustainable early warning mechanisms, enhanced disaster resistance of buildings and regular trainings for disaster preparedness in schools are assumed to be of high importance.

However in view of the importance of collaborating with the Member States and before the projects start under this Action Plan, every effort will be made to facilitate coordination and complementarities of operations funded under this Decision with on-going or planned operations in DRR supported by Member States.

### **5.3. – Other Donors:**

By participating in the National Consultative Meeting organised in the different countries covered by the Action Plan , other donors agencies have been sharing with DG ECHO their plan for Disaster preparedness/Disaster Risk Reduction in the region such as USAID (American agency), CIDA (Canadian agency) and JICA (Japanese agency).

The World Bank has also been involved in the consultation process at a time where the setting up of the new Global Facility for Disaster Risk Reduction is giving a lot of attention to DRR worldwide. In the South Asia region, Nepal has been identified as one of the priority countries to be covered in the initial phase of implementation.

The information on other agencies plans in terms of DRR in the region will be essential when searching for complementarities and better networking at national and regional level between all involved stakeholders in the field of DRR.

## **6 - Amount of Decision and distribution by specific objectives:**

6.1. - Total amount of the Decision: EUR 7,500,000

## 6.2. - Budget breakdown by specific objectives

<b>Principal objective:</b> <i>To increase the awareness and the response capacity of local communities and institutions to potential and recurrent natural disasters and to reduce the effects of these disasters on the most vulnerable</i>				
Specific objectives	Allocated amount by specific objective (EUR)	Geographical area of operation	Activities	Potential partners <sup>12</sup>
Specific objective 1: to support strategies that enable local communities and institutions to better prepare for and mitigate natural disasters by enhancing their capacity to cope, thereby increasing resilience and decreasing vulnerability and by strengthening the level of coordination, exchange sharing and advocacy at national and regional level	7,500,000	South Asia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Infrastructure support</li> <li>• Advocacy and public awareness raising</li> <li>• Small-scale mitigation works</li> <li>• Mapping and data computerisation</li> <li>• Education</li> <li>• Early warning systems</li> <li>• Research and dissemination</li> <li>• Facilitation of co-ordination</li> <li>• Institutional strengthening</li> <li>• Local capacity building/training</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ACTED</li> <li>- ACTIONAID</li> <li>- ADRA DEUTSCHLAND</li> <li>- AKF(UK)</li> <li>- CARE - AUT</li> <li>- CARE - UK</li> <li>- DCV</li> <li>- CHRISTIAN AID - UK</li> <li>- CONCERN UNIVERSAL</li> <li>- CONCERN WORLDWIDE</li> <li>- CROIX-ROUGE - BEL</li> <li>- CR - DK</li> <li>- CRF</li> <li>- FKN / DCA</li> <li>- DIAKONIE</li> <li>- GERMAN AGRO ACTION</li> <li>- HI</li> <li>- HW</li> <li>- ICCO</li> <li>- IFRC-FICR</li> <li>- IR &amp; IRW</li> <li>- MALTESER HILFSDIENST</li> <li>- MERCY CORPS SCOTLAND</li> <li>- MISSION OST – DNK</li> <li>- OCHA</li> <li>- OXFAM GB</li> <li>- PRACTICAL ACTION</li> <li>- PLAN UK</li> <li>- SC (UK)</li> <li>- TEARFUND</li> <li>- TDH - CH</li> <li>- TROCAIRE</li> <li>- UNDP-PNUD</li> <li>- UNICEF</li> <li>- WVD</li> </ul>
<b>TOTAL:</b>	7,500,000			

<sup>12</sup>

ACTIONAID (GBR), AGA KHAN FOUNDATION (United Kingdom), AGENCE D'AIDE A LA COOPERATION TECHNIQUE ET AU DEVELOPPEMENT, BELGISCHE RODE KRUIS/CROIX ROUGE DE BELGIQUE, (BEL), CARE INTERNATIONAL UK, CARE ÖSTERREICH - VEREIN FÜR ENTWICKLUNGSZUSAMMENARBEIT UND HUMANITÄRE HILFE, CHRISTIAN AID (GBR), CONCERN UNIVERSAL (GBR), CONCERN WORLDWIDE, (IRL), CROIX-ROUGE FRANCAISE, DANSK RODE KORS, (DNK), DEUTSCHE WELTHUNGERHILFE / GERMAN AGRO ACTION, (DEU), DEUTSCHER CARITASVERBAND e.V, (DEU), DIAKONISCHES WERK der Evangelischen Kirche in Deutschland (DEU), FEDERATION INTERNATIONALE DES SOCIÉTÉS DE LA CROIX-ROUGE ET DU CROISSANT ROUGE, FOLKEKIRKENS NODHJÆLP, (DNK), HANDICAP INTERNATIONAL (FR), HILFswerk AUSTRIA, INTERMEDIATE TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT GROUP LTD, ISLAMIC RELIEF, Interkerkelijke Organisatie voor Ontwikkelingssamenwerking, MALTESER HILFSDIENST e.V., (DEU), MERCY CORPS SCOTLAND (GBR), MISSION OST, OXFAM (GB), PLAN INTERNATIONAL (UK), TEARFUND (GBR), TERRE DES HOMMES-CHE, THE SAVE THE CHILDREN FUND (GBR), TROCAIRE (IRL), UNICEF, UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME, UNITED NATIONS, OFFICE FOR THE COORDINATION OF HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS, WORLD VISION, (DEU)

## 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 organised in overarching and cross cutting issues forming part of DG ECHO's Annual Strategy such as child-related issues, the security of relief workers, respect for human rights, gender. Each year, an indicative Evaluation Programme is established after a consultative process. This programme is flexible and can be adapted to include evaluations not foreseen in the initial programme, in response to particular events or changing circumstances. More information can be obtained at:

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

## 8 - Budget Impact article 23 02 03

-	CE (EUR)
Initial Available Appropriations for 2007	19.500.000,00
Supplementary Budgets	
Transfers	
<b>Total Available Credits</b>	19.500.000,00
Total executed to date (by 3 may 2007)	1.500.000,00
Available remaining	18.000.000,00
<b>Total amount of the Decision</b>	7.500.000,00

### Estimated payments schedule (EUR):

2007	2008	2009	TOTAL
3,750,000	2,250,000	1,500,000	7,500,000

## 9. MANAGEMENT ISSUES

Humanitarian aid actions funded by the Commission are implemented by NGOs, Specialised Agencies of the Member States, and the Red Cross organisations on the basis of Framework Partnership Agreements (FPA) and by United Nations agencies based on the EC/UN Financial and Administrative Framework Agreement (FAFA) in conformity with Article 163 of the Implementing Rules of the Financial Regulation. These Framework agreements define the criteria for attributing grant agreements and financing agreements in accordance with Article 90 of the Implementing Rules and may be found at [http://ec.europa.eu/echo/partners/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/echo/partners/index_en.htm).

Individual grants are awarded on the basis of the criteria enumerated in Article 7.2 of the Humanitarian Aid Regulation, such as the technical and financial capacity, readiness and experience, and results of previous interventions.