

HUMANITARIAN IMPLEMENTATION PLAN (HIP)

DIPECHO Pacific

0. MAJOR CHANGES SINCE PREVIOUS VERSION OF THE HIP

The transfer of funds which remained unspent in 2012 on the DIPECHO Budget Line to the budget of 2013 has offered the possibility of a modest increase of ECHO's smallest DIPECHO programme. An amount of EUR 218,746.26 is added to the HIP for DIPECHO Pacific bringing it from initially EUR 2,800,000 to a new total of EUR 3,018,746.26. This amount is already taken into consideration in the ongoing assessment of proposals received for assessment round 1. Therefore, no further assessment round is being planned.

1. CONTEXT

The Pacific region features among the most disaster prone regions in the world in terms of recurrence, severity and scope of hazards, with high exposure to cyclones, earthquakes, tsunamis, floods, tidal surges, landslides, flash floods, drought, forest fires, volcano eruptions, as well as epidemics. This is compounded by environmental degradation and climate change. Lack of economic diversity, remoteness from major trade and commercial sectors, weak governance frameworks, strong gender inequalities and widespread gender-based violence are factors which characterize many of the Pacific island nations and exacerbate their vulnerability to disasters. Although with a total population of some 10 million spread across the vast area of the Pacific Ocean the number of mortalities and people affected by a disaster can appear rather low in the usual disaster statistics, the Pacific countries rank among the highest in the number of casualties and people affected per 100,000¹.

2. HUMANITARIAN NEEDS

(1) Affected people/potential beneficiaries

While all Pacific Island States have a similar profile in terms of exposure to natural hazard, there is a varying degree of risk and coping capacity. Those who combine highest risk with low coping capacity are Papua-New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu. Their human development index figures are also rather low on a world-wide² scale.

Although at a slightly varying degree, the majority of the region's population must be considered at risk given their exposure to a multitude of natural hazards and the low level of human development of most of the Pacific Island states. Despite a good understanding amongst governments of the link between disaster preparedness and the impact of disaster government capacity of implementing supporting Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), action is

¹ Source: EM-DAT: the OFDA/CRED International Disaster Database, www.em-dat.net - Université Catholique de Louvain - Brussels – Belgium.

² Human Development Index 2011 for Papua New Guinea is 153, Solomon Islands 142, Vanuatu 125, on a list counting 187 countries. <http://hdr.undp.org/en/statistics/>

weak. DRR efforts mostly remain at national level. Lack of resources, but also lack of knowledge leaves communities' needs unattended. The lack of participation of women and the lack of attention to their needs, priorities and coping strategies are a serious hindrance to the improvement of community resilience.

(2) Description of most acute humanitarian needs

There is a general need across the region for DRR in order to reduce the impact of disasters when they occur. The process of preparing local communities for disaster by strengthening their resilience can be significantly accelerated by investing in DRR at community level, in parallel to the investments being made at national level. Direct support to communities is relevant to increase disaster awareness, design community disaster plans, create local disaster response capacity, etc. Special measures need to be taken to ensure both women and men, youth, adults and the older persons are involved actively and have their voices heard in the community-based processes. At the same time it will be important to actively support stakeholders and activities geared to facilitate the link between civil society action directed towards communities with government action designed at national and provincial level.

3. HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE

(1) National/local response and involvement

In general, DRR is high on the political agendas of Pacific Island States' governments. As an indication of the vital importance of the issue, the Pacific countries have been among the first to adopt a Regional Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) Framework for Action and set up a Regional DRR Platform (2009), in accordance with their commitment to the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015 (HFA): "Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters

While, in principle, the relevant government agencies responsible for disaster response have pertinent plans, the capacity to implement them is very much limited, in particular as regards support at sub-national and community level. The governments' limited capacity for disaster management is generally the result of a lack of financial and human resources which, in turn, is often a reflection of the small size of the public administration sector of the Pacific states. Civil society organizations such as the National Red Cross Societies or churches routinely engage in disaster response – and to a certain extent also in disaster preparedness – but are equally short of resources.

There is recognition amongst stakeholders that more efforts have to be made in preparing communities better for disaster and strengthening their resilience, and Pacific State governments see a clear and desired role for civil society institutions (NGOs, Red Cross, churches) in reaching out to the communities and carrying out tasks for which the government do not (yet) have the capacity to perform.

(2) International Humanitarian Response

It is not very surprising that the Pacific region, given its risk profile, is also the focus of DRR activities of global organisations such as International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR), the World Bank, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), to name but a few. Their efforts are mainly directed towards governments although OCHA's activities in support of

improved regional humanitarian response planning and information management and also include non-governmental stakeholders in DRR.

The main donors in the region, i.e. Australia, New Zealand and the European Commission, are supportive of DRR and in particular of climate change adaptation. Although their instruments are very much geared towards support to the national and regional level, interest in community based action is growing, in particular on the part of The Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID).

(3) Constraints and DG ECHO response capacity

As most of the activities proposed have a grassroot level orientation, their successful implementation depends on the willingness of the identified communities to co-operate. In addition to this, disaster preparedness (DP) 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 organizations and agencies interested in submitting a project proposal have previous experience in the region, preferably from working on DP programmes and have already developed relations with local communities and authorities on the ground.

As a region with frequent natural hazards, the likelihood that disasters will occur during the implementation of DG ECHO funded disaster preparedness projects is high. While in the event of disaster ongoing DIPECHO projects may already prove their life-saving effect, delays in further implementation are likely because partners will need to respond to emergencies.

(4) Envisaged ECHO response

The DIPECHO Action Plan for the Pacific will focus on the most vulnerable local communities in neglected disaster prone areas as well as on institutions involved in disaster risk reduction. In order to have an impact within the limited resources available, and benefitting from investments made under the previous Action Plan, the new plan will focus on Vanuatu, Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinea (PNG). For the latter country an engagement would depend on the availability of implementing partners and the ability of defining an exit strategy which does not depend on a critical role of the central government as it appears unlikely that government capacity would include outreach to the communities in the foreseeable future. Instead, to build a show case, DIPECHO action in PNG should focus on one or maximum two provinces where local and/or regional authorities demonstrate an interest in DRR.

The focus on the above-mentioned three priority countries does not exclude support to regional initiatives benefitting other parts of the Pacific.

With a view to the region's hazard profile it is important that the Action Plan will have to follow a multi-hazard approach encompassing hydro-meteorological hazards such as floods, cyclones, as well as geophysical hazards, i.e. volcanic eruption, earthquakes and tsunamis.

Programme strategies which receive DG ECHO support must contribute to the Pacific DRR Framework for Action 2005-2015, the Pacific DRR Regional Platform, the Pacific Plan on Climate Change Adaptation, and respective national plans, if existent. They will also have to be implemented in conjunction with the appropriate institutions of national governments at all relevant levels, in particular the National Disaster Management structures and line ministries.

Within the actions to be supported, DG ECHO will pay particular attention to the following themes adapted to the Pacific context:

- Adaptation and dissemination of DRR and Community-Based DRR models developed in other regions and experience related to *small island or hazard specific* contexts.
- **Capacity-building of local agencies and organisations**, in particular the Red Cross National Societies and any other Disaster Management mandated actors. When capacities exist, implementation through local actors should be considered.
- **Cross-cutting issues**: methodologies should be inclusive as far as gender, children, ethnic minorities and the disabled are concerned; environment protection and climate changed adaptation can be part of integrated DRR approaches.
- **Linkage of DRR action to community development plans to generate synergies and maximise acceptance by beneficiaries.**

Expected results of humanitarian aid interventions.

Disaster preparedness activities will contribute to the aims of the Pacific DRR Framework for Action 2005-2015 through building safer, more resilient communities and by improving emergency response by strengthening partners' capacity in disaster management using highly needed Community-Based Disaster Risk Reduction (CBDRR) models, with a handover perspective to longer-term DRR instruments and development programmes. This will fill an important gap at community level clearly identified and raised as a priority by, not only Pacific Governments themselves,³ but also by donors present in the region.

The present HIP will support a limited number of actions proposing a clear entry–exit strategy focusing on community-based pilots, as well as documentation and dissemination of the experience within the Pacific region.

4. LRRD (LINKING RELIEF, REHABILITATION AND DEVELOPMENT) COORDINATION AND TRANSITION

(1) Other DG ECHO interventions

In 2012, using the Small Scale Response HIP, DG ECHO supported emergency relief in Fiji following two successive floods in Western Division of Viti Levu (EUR 200,000).

Furthermore, DIPECHO action has been complemented by capacity building support to regional institutions with a role in community based disaster preparedness with funding

³ See Communiqué, Inaugural Pacific Regional Disaster Risk Management Meeting for CEOs of Finance/Planning and Disaster Management, July 2008, “A Call for Actions, as well as outputs of the First DRR Regional Platform, May 2009, <http://www.sopac.org/tiki-index.php>

from Decision ECHO/-PA/BUD/2010/01000 (EUR 2 million). This decision will come to an end on 31/12/2012.

(2) Other services/donors availability

Within the EU the Commission is the main donor in the Pacific region. The EU's relationship to the Pacific countries has recently been re-focused and re-formulated through the adoption of a communication "Towards a renewed EU-Pacific development Partnership" which i.a. articulates the need for climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction. Through the Pacific-EU Joint Initiative on Climate Change the Commission encourages Member States, not having a presence in the region, to support common EU action on climate change adaptation and DRR.

Other than the EU, Australia and New Zealand are significant and traditional donors in the region who are equally committed to the supporting of DRR and climate change action. Recently, the United States have started to expand their involvement in the region which includes an increasing interest in supporting DRR and climate change adaptation.

(3) Other concomitant EU interventions

Through a number of programmes the EU supports DRR and climate change adaptation in the Pacific region, both in the form of direct support to governments and via regional organizations as well as the World Bank. Of most direct relevance to DRR is the recently adopted EUR 20 million programme 'Building Safety and Resilience in the Pacific' funded from the EDF's intra ACP allocation. The definition of concrete activities for this programme is ongoing and governments have been encouraged to make action at local level a priority.

(4) Exit scenarios

There is much interest amongst donors to support Pacific governments and regional organization in their DRR agendas. Further to the commitments industrial countries have taken in the context of the Copenhagen Climate Change Conference, substantial amounts of funding will be channeled towards the Pacific Island States for climate change adaptation. Governments have an expressed interest in improving the resilience of communities. It is expected that with an improved funding basis and equipped with experience from community based DRR action funded by civil society actors the governments extend their engagement in DRR down to community level.

5. OPERATIONAL AND FINANCIAL DETAILS

The provisions of the financing decision ECHO/WWD/BUD/2013/01000 and the General Conditions of the Partnership Agreement with the European Commission supersede the provisions in this document.

5.1 CONTACTS⁴

Operational Unit in charge is DG ECHO-B.5

⁴ Single Forms will be submitted to DG ECHO using APPEL (e-SingleForm).

Contact at HQ level

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5.2. FINANCIAL INFO

Indicative allocation for the Pacific region: EUR 3,018,746.26

DIPECHO: Disaster Preparedness: EUR 3,018,746.26

5.3. PROPOSAL ASSESSMENT**Assessment round 1**

- a) Interested parties are invited to submit proposals responding to the needs and sectors of intervention identified in sections 2 and 3.4 of this HIP.
- b) Indicative amount to be allocated in this round of proposals: up to EUR 3,018,746.26 from the disaster preparedness budget line.
- c) Costs will be eligible from 01/01/2013⁵. Actions will tentatively start from 01/03/2013.
- d) The expected initial duration for the Action is up to 18 months.
- e) Potential partners: All DG ECHO Partners.
- f) Information to be provided: Single Form.
- g) Indicative date for receipt of the above requested information: by 15/12/2012⁶.
- h) Commonly used principles will be applied for the assessment of proposals, such as quality of needs assessment, relevance of intervention sectors, and knowledge of the country/region. See also Operational Recommendations for DG ECHO partners wishing to submit proposals for the DIPECHO Action Plan for the Pacific available at http://ec.europa.eu/echo/funding/decisions_en.htm.

⁵ The eligibility date of the Action is not linked to the date of receipt of the Single Form. It is either the eligibility date set in the Single form or the eligibility date of the HIP, whatever occurs latest.

⁶ The Commission reserves the right to consider Single Forms transmitted after this date, especially in case certain needs/ priorities are not covered by the received Single Forms.