



**European Commission**  
**DIRECTORATE GENERAL for HUMANITARIAN AID**  
**AND CIVIL PROTECTION**  
**ECHO**

**Annex 1 to Humanitarian Implementation Plan Pacific ECHO/DIP/BUD/2013/92000**

Operational Recommendations  
for DG ECHO partners wishing to submit proposals for the

**DIPECHO ACTION PLAN FOR THE PACIFIC**

**DEADLINE FOR SUBMITTING PROPOSALS: BY 15<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2012**

# 1. OPERATIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

## 1.1. Operational imperatives

A series of programme planning and implementation priorities **must be considered by all projects** submitted under the DIPECHO Action Plan for the Pacific to be considered eligible for funding.

### Principles

1. The DIPECHO Programme contributes to the implementation of the ***Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015 (HFA)***. This is the reason why all proposed disaster preparedness actions should look at supporting the ongoing implementation measures of the HFA in the region.
2. A key element in DIPECHO is the development of ***demonstrative projects in Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) so as to identify successful models for replication*** elsewhere by other funding instruments of the European Commission, other donors or national/sub-national authorities. This approach should remain at the centre of any DIPECHO intervention.
3. The ***starting point for the intervention logic of any DIPECHO supported project must be the hazard itself***, and not a problem that is essentially structural in nature, de-linked from a disaster event. This entails a ***thorough analysis of the natural disaster context*** (at the appropriate scale) that generates the following:
  - A typology of hazards in evidence,
  - the determination of the range of negative consequences of these hazards (some of which can be termed disasters),
  - an analysis of these negative consequences and a prioritisation of those considered most important by the population(s) at risk,
  - a breakdown of the needs ensuing from these hazards and the identification (prioritisation) of those which can most appropriately be addressed by DIPECHO.
4. The ***partner must demonstrate a clearly defined overall intervention strategy at the time of proposal submission*** that will ***ultimately conclude with phase-out and handover***, either to the target community/institution, the appropriate authorities, or an appropriate longer-term funding instrument, such that ***sustainability and replicability*** of actions undertaken is maximised. In this sense, replicability and sustainability plans proposed by the stakeholders to whom the project will be handed are welcomed.
5. The strategic dialogue that results in the conception and design of DIPECHO funded DP projects will have to ***successfully merge technical knowledge with local knowledge*** in a socio-culturally appropriate manner, thereby assuring an acceptable, effective system that capitalises existing knowledge and capacities and consequently maximises ownership and sustainability.
6. As per DG ECHO's priorities, an active effort to ensure ***involvement of women, children, the elderly, ethnic minorities, vulnerable groups such as disabled*** is strongly encouraged.

### Complementarity and coordination

7. Many countries have developed ***National Disaster Management Legislation, Policies and Plans*** to which preparedness and mitigation (and prevention) strategies contribute. All proposed actions should be aligned with them and should contribute to their implementation and consolidation, in particular at the appropriate sub-national and local levels.
8. ***In the same sense***, all submitted projects must be developed with ***cognisance of*** and ideally contribute to the strategic objective of ***all ongoing and planned instruments of donor***

- cooperation* in the third country, including DG ECHO or other EU initiatives, where relevant.
9. In recognition of the complementary nature of DP programming and its contribution to protecting cumulative development gains accrued thus far, all community-based DIPECHO strategies are to be ***developed within the context of an ongoing, established development strategy*** with the target community. DIPECHO support should not be solicited for projects at the community level where a minimum development interface does not already exist – it is ***not to be seen as a start-up fund***. The only exception for considering ad hoc, focused or stand-alone disaster preparedness activities, and if properly justified, would be when applicants apply an ***innovative approach***. Even where a DIPECHO strategy is introduced as an exit vehicle for the phase-out of a DG ECHO strategy, thereby facilitating the linking of a humanitarian relief intervention with rehabilitation, recovery and development (LRRD), long term development perspectives must be considered.
  10. Applicants should provide details of the ***coordination mechanisms*** existing both ***at local, sub-national and national levels*** taking into account linkages with other ongoing initiatives funded by other donors and the proposed modalities for joining such for a
  11. Establishment of formal and regular coordination mechanisms among DIPECHO partners (ad minima) is strongly recommended, both at country and regional levels.

#### *Involvement of supranational, national and local institutions*

12. A key interface in the development of DP strategies is the ***National Disaster Management institutions***, which in many countries are responsible for the articulation of a national risk reduction policy. However, this does not preclude a ***multi-ministerial*** planning/programming dialogue.
13. The implementation of a successful DP strategy is dependent upon the sustained investment of all stakeholders at multiple levels before, during and upon completion of the project cycle. This entails as complete an involvement of communities and relevant authorities as is feasible throughout the entire project cycle, from problem/hazard/risk identification, to project conception and design. Likewise, ***relevant public entities, officials and stakeholders at the appropriate levels must be consulted and involved at all stages*** of the action (design, preparation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, follow-up and hand-over where feasible) to ensure sustainability and replicability.

#### *Miscellaneous*

14. It is imperative that strategies ***encompass low cost solutions and technical assistance designs*** that accurately reflect the degree of sustained budgetary commitment that can ***realistically*** be expected from national, sub-national and/or local budgets.
15. Applicants must systematically consider the ***capitalisation of experiences*** (key lessons/learnings, as well as documentation processes) and their dissemination in widely and appropriate manner. These activities should be explicitly envisaged under the activities and in the work plan of each proposal aiming at developing a ***common documentation methodology***.
16. To ensure that the large number of software innovative approaches is implemented within the 18 months timeframe, a ***project manager with international experience*** in DRR/DRM is required. ECHO partners need to ensure its timely recruitment and make sure he/she is in place ***as soon as the project starts***. For consortia, the timely recruitment of a coordinator (in addition to projects managers) is also strongly encouraged to ensure overall coordination and quality.

17. Small-scale mitigation works and infrastructure can be an important part of a DIPECHO project as long as it complements the soft component approach and are easily replicable at local level (up to 40% if well justified). Proposals that seek merely to address structural issues, for example, of food insecurity or inadequate delivery of basic services, **will not be considered eligible**. Actions of this type will need to demonstrate logic within the development of a DRR strategy that is both complementary and enhances sustainability.
18. **Climate change adaptation** cannot be the sole focus of a specific and ad hoc DIPECHO project. However, projects should integrate it in risk analysis when relevant and look at links between DRR and climate change (CC) initiatives, **in a natural disaster context**.
19. Partners should integrate in proposals and budgets their participation in **joint activities** with other DRR stakeholders and DIPECHO partners (e.g. Disaster Reduction Day, programming processes and consultations on the implementation of DRR agendas,; participation in and contribution to regional workshops and regional DRR/CCA fora contributing to regional DRR/CCA efforts) from the beginning of the Action Plan.
20. **Exposure visits** may be considered where there is a relevant and significant impact expected as well as reasonable expectations in terms of replicability and/or multiplier effect. All of which should be clearly demonstrated, shared among partners and reported accordingly.
21. **Baseline surveys** at the beginning and at the end of the project at community and institutional level should be carried out in order to measure the achievements of the project (e.g. KAP surveys).

## 1.2. General Recommendations

The following are non sectoral recommendations for the applicants, not conditions that have to be necessarily fulfilled.

1. Collaborative strategic formulation and planning between potential DIPECHO partners that promote **mutual complementarity** is strongly encouraged. This can take the form of joint projects (**consortia**) or **joint initiatives** implemented through several projects. Although consortia or multi country operations are encouraged, the proposals should demonstrate a clear **operational added value**. Different intervention modalities are open to partners such as national project (1 operation, 1 proposal, 1 agreement), multi-country projects (same organisation=several countries targeted=1 agreement) or regional projects (1 operation=several countries targeted=1 proposal). Regional projects go beyond the mere sum of national projects and should have an outreach component. They should be defined taking into consideration existing regional or global initiatives and involving national stakeholders in the definition and formulation of the operations.
2. Foreseeable administrative, logistic, security and operational constraints as well as the ones linked to change of authorities involved in the project or time needed for institutional agreements should be integrated in the proposal timeframe, being realistic and not over ambitious in the formulation.
3. Applicants should consider one or more of the proposed sub-sectors, based on their experience, mandates and specialisation.
4. Partners are encouraged, when applicable, to consider Sphere minimum standards, indicators and guidance notes so as to ensure the quality of the DRR actions proposed.
5. Synergy with supranational and global DRR strategies such as the UN International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR) is encouraged in particular in the case of regional projects. In this sense, proposals including activities contributing to the ISDR-promoted campaigns (eg Safe Hospitals and Schools) are welcomed.
6. Priority to institutional linkages and advocacy: the small scale and pilot actions at community level will reach a maximum effectiveness if the outputs and outcomes feed the development and implementation of DRR policies and strategies. Priority should be given to this aspect; to create

a link between the findings of community-based operations and existing development policies and strategies. Consortia of different partners or projects oriented to work on this specific aspect are welcome.

7. Recognising that many of the project results can only be achieved over the long term, DIPECHO can also consider proposals for DRR strategies that are *multi-phased in nature* (i.e. entail a series of phases financed over  $\geq 1$  Action Plan). This might entail for example the following programming phases: inception; consolidation; phase-out and evaluation. For this to be possible, the partner clearly defined overall intervention strategy has to be specially taken into consideration. However, partners need to be aware that DG ECHO cannot guarantee a priori acceptance of multi phased projects.
8. The management, dissemination and use of existing DRR material and tools developed under other DIPECHO Action Plans or other DRR programmes is prioritised. Development of new documents should be limited to the cases when there are no similar tools or when no experiences have been already systematised. Otherwise, capitalisation does not mean reporting on the successes and failures of a project, but should be focused on the lessons learnt or methodologies used that can provide new elements for replication.
9. It is recommended to start preparatory activities such as preparation of strategic alliances, agreements with institutions and partners, staff recruitment, terms of reference, etc. as soon as the partner receives the communication that the proposal has been accepted in order to gain implementation time. In this sense, the eligibility date can be fixed before the start date of implementation.
10. Integration of technical and scientific institutions as well as Universities in projects' activities is encouraged particularly when the partner does not have the technical expertise available in house.

### **1.3. Priorities in terms of geographical areas, hazards and sectors.**

#### **Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu**

##### **Geographic priorities and hazards:**

Multi-hazard approach, matching local risks and vulnerabilities

##### **Key messages:**

- Necessity to take into account already existing models developed by agencies present in the region, as well as relevant experience developed outside the region.
- Document the models and the pilots tested, in order to facilitate dissemination and wider adoption.
- Priority to pilot community-based models with links at local authorities level.
- Monitoring from DG ECHO should be possible.
- Coordinate with other agencies implementing community based DRR action for stronger advocacy and influencing the DP/DRR political process.
- Small-scale mitigation and prevention activities are encouraged and should complement the projects if they have a demonstrative purpose and a proven impact while being replicable within financial reach by local communities and authorities.
- Reinforce local response capacities by building stocks of emergency and relief items when adequate local management capacity is proven and accountability ensured.

- Consider activities aiming at piloting or promoting the protection of livelihood and economic assets in a DRR/CCA context.
- Engage NDMOs ( National Disaster Management Offices) and support sub-national level efforts in line with national policies through the local Disaster Management Offices (DMO) such as District DMOS in the perspective of fostering local response capacities, effectiveness and accountability.

## Regional level

Regional components will include networking, information management, training, communication and awareness raising as well as compilation and dissemination of lessons learned, and harmonisation of approaches.

## 2.MAIN SELECTION CRITERIA

### 1. Relevance

- 1.1 How relevant is the proposal to the **objectives** and one or more of the **priorities** of DG ECHO strategy
- 1.2 How relevant to the particular **needs and constraints** of the target populations and country/countries or region(s) is the proposal.
- 1.3 Has the proposal been **discussed** and agreed with the local authorities responsible for risk management?
- 1.4 Is this project proposal part of the applicant's **strategy** in the country and does it contribute to an ongoing **strategy** of engagement in the target area?
- 1.5 Does the project target the **most vulnerable populations** and regions?
- 1.6 Does the action fit within the established **DRR legal, policy and planning frameworks** and contribute to their implementation and consolidation, in particular at local level? Does the proposal refer to the **HFA**, its priorities and if possible its core indicators?
- 1.7 Does the project take into account: **gender, children, elderly people, environmental, cultural issues and disabilities.**
- 1.8 Does the project take into account (when relevant) the **security** and/or **access context**? What are the contingency plans?

### 2. Methodology

- 2.1. How clearly defined and strategically chosen are those involved (intermediaries, final beneficiaries, **target groups**)? Have the **needs** of the **target groups** proposed and the final beneficiaries been clearly defined and does the proposal address them appropriately? To what degree have the target beneficiaries been involved in project conception, design and development, from the moment of problem identification?  
Are the **target groups' and final beneficiaries' level of involvement and participation in the operation** satisfactory.
- 2.2. How coherent is the overall design of the operation (**logical framework**)? Are the **activities** proposed appropriate, practical, and consistent with the local constraints, the objectives and expected results? Is the **Action Plan** clear and feasible? Are the technical **human resources** allocated to the operation adequate? Is the presence of a project manager with international experience ensured in order to provide with a proper follow-up of the action?

2.3. Does the proposal contain **objectively verifiable indicators** for the outcome of the operation?

### 3. Sustainability

3.1 Are the expected results of the proposed operation **sustainable**: Financially, Institutionally, Locally and at policy level. Is the operation likely to have a tangible **impact** on its target groups. Is the proposal likely to have **multiplier effects**?

### 4. Budget and cost-effectiveness

4.1. Is the ratio between the estimated costs and the expected results satisfactory?

4.2. Is the proposed expenditure **necessary** for the implementation of the operation?

4.3. Are **material** resources and **services needed properly described**?

4.4. Are Means and Costs related to results and activities sufficiently explained?

## 3. FINANCIAL QUESTIONS

- There is no specific pre-allocation per country. Priority will be given to quality proposals and countries with highest vulnerability. However, some general orientations will be taken into consideration when approving an action in each country to ensure the achievement of DG ECHO's strategic priorities both at country and regional levels.
- As a general policy, priority will be given to co-financed projects, in order to maintain the perspective of contributing to a strategy elaborated by a partner. DG ECHO's contribution will, in principle not exceed 85% of the total eligible costs of the action. It is expected that the balance of at least 15% of the total eligible costs will be financed from the partners' own resources, or from sources other than the European Community budget. This priority will be applied in the overall appraisal of submitted proposals.
- The proposal, both in the narrative and financial documents, should reflect the full amount proposed (i.e. the co-financing and the contribution requested to DG ECHO, without separate earmarking).
- ECHO does not advise carrying out internal audits in the framework of DIPECHO projects.

## 4. CALENDAR OF THE ACTION PLAN

- 31 October 2012: publication of HIP and Operational Recommendations.
- 15 December 2012: Deadline for submitting proposals.
- 1 January 2013: Starting date of the Worldwide Financing Decision ECHO/WWD/BUD/2013/01000
- December 2012 - January 2013: Selection of proposals
- 1 January 2013: Eligibility date for of expenses.
- 1 March 2013: Indicative start date for projects.
- 31 December 2014: End date of the Worldwide Financing Decision 2013.

## 5. SUBMITTING A PROPOSAL TO DG ECHO.

To allow a swift processing of project proposals, the following recommendations should be taken into account when designing and submitting a project.

In non emergency situation and to avoid a gap between the eligibility date of the activities and the signature of the grant agreement, partners should expect a period no less than 45 days between the initial discussions and their finalization, to allow sufficient time for the field discussion and review and HQ appraisal process.

Proposals should be submitted using the **e-single form** by **15<sup>th</sup> December 2012**. To facilitate the workflow, you may also consider sending a pdf version of your proposal (option available in the e-tools system) to the relevant desk officer and ECHO Regional Field Office in Bangkok (rrc@echo-bangkok.org).

All partners are requested to read and make use of the **DG ECHO Single Form guidelines**, available at [http://ec.europa.eu/echo/about/actors/fpa\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/echo/about/actors/fpa_en.htm).

In the context of DG ECHO's mandate, the actions supported will have a short-term nature (**up to 18 months implementation period**). For this reason DG ECHO partners should design their actions in order to ensure that the proposed objective can be **achieved** and **measured** by "SMART" indicators in this timeframe.

The **logframe and the intervention logic** (section 4.3.2 of the Single Form) are of utmost importance in the appraisal of project proposals. DG ECHO partners are then requested to pay careful attention to **DG ECHO guidelines on the Single Form**, p 10 to 15.

Linked to their presentation, DG ECHO partners are strongly encouraged to define already clearly at proposal stage which **contingency measures/activities** are foreseen in case of materialisation of a pre-identified risk. DG ECHO partners should define at proposal stage the circumstances in which contingency measures would be implemented (which data would be used to launch the contingency measures); and what would be the actions planned under these circumstances (see section #8.1 of the Single Form).

The **costs** of the project submitted to DG ECHO are presented in the Single Form in:

- The description of the results
- The section 4.2.3.4 of the Single Form (table "Other costs").
- The section 11 of the Single Form (Financial Overview)

It is important to recall that:

Sufficient information has to be provided in the description of the results (description of activities and related means) so that the costs allocated to the result can be understood. All costs related to a particular result have to be included (ie. logistics, monitoring, supervision, etc..)

The table "**Other Costs**" under section 4.2.3.4 of the Single Form should only include costs that cannot be allocated to or dispatched between the results. Ex: visibility, office costs in the capital, evaluation etc...

The financial overview will comprise annex II to the grant agreement. However, its design regarding the selection of headings to the different lines of the table is left to the choice of the partners as long as:

- The same table is used throughout the project (proposal and reporting stages)
- DG ECHO can identify clearly what is being spent in terms of personnel costs and visibility.



DG ECHO partners are strongly encouraged to include the required technical expertise in each of the sectors concerned and DG ECHO will pay particular attention to this aspect regarding the feasibility of the proposed operation.

Proposals should include provisions for actions aiming at **documenting, disseminating and replicating lessons learned and good practices; as well as integrating them** in strategies beyond the project perspective, at country and regional levels.

## 6. COMMUNICATION AND VISIBILITY

The Single Form contains three sections to develop the communication and visibility plan of a DG ECHO funded project. It is recalled that under Article 6.1 of the General Conditions, “The humanitarian organization shall contribute to the visibility of the humanitarian operations financed by the European Community, provided that this does not harm the organization's mandate or the safety of its staff.”

The need for effective communication is also linked to a number of specific factors:

- ⇒ *The obligation to be transparent.* DG ECHO manages public funds and has a duty to inform EU citizens about how the money is spent. Few EU citizens are aware that the Commission is one of the world's largest humanitarian donors.
- ⇒ *“Getting closer to the citizen”.* This is a Commission commitment that entails pro-active communication efforts. Most EU Member State citizens support the idea of aiding the world's most vulnerable people through relief assistance. They should be informed that this support is carried out in the work of DG ECHO and its implementing partners.
- ⇒ *Underlining European solidarity.* People living in countries affected by crises (victims, host populations and opinion leaders) should be aware of the EU's solidarity expressed in concrete terms through humanitarian aid. Messages such as the impartiality of aid, the fact that it is needs-based, and its non-discriminatory nature are particularly significant.
- ⇒ *Highlighting a ‘badge of quality’:* Given the stringent criteria for acceding to the Framework Partnership Agreement (FPA), partner organizations can benefit from publicizing their quality relationship with DG ECHO.

**Visibility** represents the mandatory display of the visual identity of the European Commission Humanitarian Aid department, wherever the partner's own logo is being displayed, in the field or elsewhere; this includes on its website and equipment, (in cases where equipment or vehicles and major supplies have been purchased using funds provided by the Commission), publications about the project financed by the Commission, etc.). The visibility should appear, but only provided that this does not harm the organization's mandate or the safety of its staff, (Art 6.3 general conditions). The size of the visual identity will depend on the context and the space available.

It is to be noted that DG ECHO visibility items are to be budgeted within programme budgets and the DG ECHO field offices do not provide those items, unless in exceptional circumstances.

The decision to avoid visibility for security reason is to be discussed on a *case-by-case* basis with DG ECHO and requires approval by ECHO HQ. There are no automatic waivers.

Basic visibility also entails highlighting or at least, acknowledging, the European Commission as the donor in media interviews, press releases, or any other situation where the partner communicates about a funded project.

However, partners should exercise caution and ensure that **visibility actions do not undermine the project's ownership in the community**. As much as possible, the community's role in the implementation of the project should be acknowledged in the visual displays.

**Communication** represents a proactive dissemination of data and key messages to identified target audiences. Communication plans and budgets are welcome and should be discussed with DG ECHO at the proposal level, to define where ECHO can assist at best.

Since the principle of effectiveness applies as much to communication as to any other element of the project, pro-active information and communication activities are optional.

***Changes in visibility, information and communication funding***

The European Commission Humanitarian Aid department has set a limit to funding that partners can allocate to visibility, information and communication in humanitarian operational agreements. This is now pegged at 0.5% of the direct eligible costs with a maximum of EUR8,000. However, exceptions may be allowed in the following circumstances:

- the partner has communication experience and expertise, and is keen to exploit the benefits of joint actions and visibility;
- the partner wishes to propose an impact oriented communication activity that would need a larger budget.

The partners should contact the relevant Regional Information Officer when designing such activity.

**Reporting** on visibility, information and communication has also changed. Partners should now include, with the final reports supporting documents such as photos of stickers on vehicles or supplies and of signboards, photos of 'branded' visibility items (tee-shirts, caps etc.), copies of press releases and press cuttings, etc.