

HUMANITARIAN IMPLEMENTATION PLAN (HIP)

Building resilience in drought-affected communities in Central and South America

1. CONTEXT

The Latin American region is considered one of the most disaster prone regions in the world, in terms of recurrence of hazards, their severity and scope and the significant potential for major disasters. Many Latin American countries are exposed to a wide range of hazards almost every year, such as floods, landslides, earthquakes and droughts producing human and financial losses.

In the last five years, changes in weather patterns are being reported consistently in the Americas. Recurrent droughts have increased vulnerability in many countries in the region. Reduction of rainy days and lower volumes of rainfall result in increasing rain deficits, and changing weather patterns have a devastating impact on human food security particularly for populations living in areas such as the Chaco (covering parts of Argentina, Bolivia and Paraguay), and in the "dry corridor" in Central America (covering parts of El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua).

In recent years droughts have affected areas which are already very vulnerable due to pre-existing conditions such as weak management of resources including water, high food insecurity and presenting seasonal peaks of under nutrition, leading to a need for humanitarian assistance. The recurrence of these events further deteriorates and erodes people's livelihoods and coping mechanisms. Their resilience is, hence, low.

In Bolivia and Paraguay, the Chaco area is facing an abnormally harsh situation linked primarily to the consequences of cumulative droughts during recent years, manifesting itself most immediately as an acute livelihoods crisis. It is a region with high levels of dependency on rain-fed subsistence farming with a high proportion of indigenous communities, whose lives and livelihoods are further undermined by each subsequent drought. From 2007 to 2010 below average rainfall produced significant food production losses resulting in a food security crisis in 2010.

In Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador and Nicaragua, the 2009-2010 drought affected 8.5 million people, especially in the area called the "dry-corridor". This drought followed several years of below normal precipitation levels in the area and already existing high chronic malnutrition rates which reached levels of more than 50% of all children under 5 years, and more than 70% among indigenous children (in Guatemala, the LAC country with the highest rates of chronic malnutrition).

La Niña climate phenomenon weakened during the first semester of 2012 leading to a transition to ENSO¹-neutral conditions during May-July, and a subsequent likelihood of transition to El Niño at the end of 2012. Scientific institutions forecast that for 2012-2013 El Niño phenomena may trigger an aggravation of the situation and make it necessary to

¹ ENSO: El Niño Southern Oscillation

provide additional assistance². Meteorological services in Central America forecast irregular rains and deficits in some areas from June to October 2012, which could affect the development of primary crops in the region. This, combined with El Niño, could jeopardize food security during 2012-2013.

Considering the increasing predictability of drought in these areas and its impact on food security, DG ECHO decided in 2011 to fund a specific intervention aiming at building local capacities to sustainably manage droughts, to foster food and nutrition security and thereby build resilience.

In order to complete the achievements of the 2011-2012 interventions, there is a need for a second and last phase to consolidate the achievements of the first phase, foster the transition to more resilient communities, further expand the evidence-based advocacy strategy, and to achieve handover and exit strategies.

2. HUMANITARIAN NEEDS

(1) Affected people/potential beneficiaries

The areas targeted are those where several drought events have led to acute livelihoods and food and nutrition crises in previous years, where the population is highly dependent on rainfall for subsistence farming and exposed to seasonal peaks of acute food insecurity and malnutrition. The areas covered by this HIP will be the same as in the 2011 HIP, i.e. the Dry Corridor in Central America and El Chaco in Bolivia and Paraguay.

El Chaco is characterized by subsistence farming of small/medium farmers and indigenous people, dedicated mostly to the monoculture of corn (source of food and income), high levels of poverty (exceeding national and departmental averages), with high environmental degradation, and a majority of indigenous population historically marginalized. Weak management of natural resources, mainly water, soil and forests, chronic food insecurity, erosion of livelihoods, and weak local capacity of the communities and institutions to prevent and manage the climate related events are among the causes.

In Central America, the following countries are targeted: Nicaragua, Honduras, Guatemala and to a lesser extent El Salvador, in what is commonly called the "dry corridor", which extends between the eastern part of Guatemala, the southern plains of Honduras, northern and eastern boarder areas of El Salvador, and the northern departments of Nicaragua in areas recurrently affected by drought. In the whole region, the impact of drought affects mostly small subsistence farmers who are the targeted beneficiaries of this operation (half of the small basic grain producers in Central America are in the dry corridor). Every year rural households and mainly small producers and landless workers experience seasonal peaks of food insecurity and malnutrition due to the lean season. This situation can worsen when erratic weather patterns further impact households' own food production, agricultural labour and food prices, leading to unsustainable coping strategies.

This action will therefore focus on subsistence farmers and indigenous communities identified as specifically vulnerable to droughts and on institutions involved in food security programmes and disaster management, at local, national and regional level.

² Note that anomalies caused by El Niño might produce different outcomes in Central America and in South America

(2) Description of most acute humanitarian needs

The irregular pattern and the reduction of precipitation leading to droughts in 2009 and 2010 severely impacted the already weak food systems of the local populations in the targeted areas and further undermined their limited access to water. The El Niño phenomenon which is expected to develop from August-September 2012 in Latin America could also bring anomalies. This could increase the likelihood of drought in the Pacific area of Central America in and some areas of South America (such as Bolivia), according to scientific forecasts³.

It is necessary to strengthen the capacities of the local population to face droughts by reinforcing their resilience to such events. The actions should be based on the lessons learned and achievements from the 2011 actions. This implies adoption and replication of the lessons learned from the drought management and resilience strategies that have been developed in those areas, such as community based management of natural resources, and improve practices to promote food and nutrition security, information management and early warning.

At institutional level, there is still a need to reinforce the capacities and knowledge of local and national authorities to deal with droughts, reinforcing their role in increasing resilience but also in their capacity to manage information (early warning) and respond to emergencies related to drought. Consolidation of the activities will require the commitment of local and national authorities to include drought management as part of their risk reduction strategies, including specific budgetary allocations, monitoring and assessment and concrete actions need to be taken to assure this.

3. HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE

(1) National/local response and involvement

In South America, the relations already developed between DG ECHO, its partners and the national risk management institutions in Bolivia and Paraguay (VIDECI, SEN⁴) will facilitate the advocacy work and increase the possibilities of up-scaling good practices. As an example, Disaster Risk Management practices promoted in DG ECHO-funded operations in Bolivia have been declared official policy by departmental and municipal governments thus ensuring replication.

In the Chaco region of Bolivia and Paraguay, while Governments endeavour to monitor food security at provincial and district levels, they face significant constraints: administrative weaknesses, low human capital at regional, local and community levels, absence of training, knowledge and tools for disaster management; lack of good practices, tendency to focus on response rather than prevention/preparedness, and absence of budgetary allocations; cross sector coordination remains challenging. The involvement of local authorities has improved under the 2011 HIP in Bolivia and should be further pursued.

In Paraguay, the SEN does not have long experience in Civil Protection activities and it is in a restructuring phase. The national and local emergency systems are not well equipped to monitor the drought crisis status in the communities and for the decision making process.

³ <http://www.ciifen-int.org> and <http://www.recursohidricos.org/>

⁴ VIDECI: Viceministerio de Defensa Civil, Civil Defence Ministry of Bolivia;
SEN: Secretaria de Emergencias, Emergency Secretary of Paraguay

In Central America, partners have already developed relationships with the national and local authorities but there is a need to reinforce their role and capacities, as well as to improve coordination mechanisms among institutions. Ministries of Agriculture and National Systems for Disaster Response and Prevention need to be more systematically involved, with the objective that they take ownership of the process and promote replication of good practices. Operations should also take concrete action to create synergies with EU and other development programmes in order to increase advocacy and handover to development actors.

In Guatemala, areas with the highest rates of food insecurity and chronic malnutrition are targeted under the Hambre Cero programme launched in early 2012 which targets reduction of chronic malnutrition by 10% by 2015 by strengthening the monitoring of the food and nutrition security situation and giving appropriate attention in most affected areas. The programme also aims at preventing and responding to food emergencies related to Climate Change and natural disasters. The Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) initiative started in five municipalities and other government programmes started the distribution of subsidized fertilizer targeting 941,681 families. In El Salvador, Honduras and Nicaragua, similar programmes are also in place but do not specifically integrate resilience building. Actions funded under this HIP need to create synergies with those existing programmes.

Actions funded under this HIP should also be aligned with existing government programmes and policies to create ownership and multiplication of drought management and resilience strategies.

(2) International Humanitarian Response

A key objective of this action is to engage other Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) actors and donors in the improvement of drought management capacities and resilience in the target areas.

Support to coordination platforms for drought management integrating all involved actors should continue in order to disseminate good practices and lessons learned, influence policy and create synergies.

Some actors are showing interest in pursuing long-term food security strategies and resilience that could build on the experience of the drought management in areas as the Dry Corridor (GIZ), Swiss Development Cooperation (COSUDE), and EU delegations. Actions funded under this HIP need to continue to explore synergies and handover.

(3) Constraints and DG ECHO response capacity

The target areas of El Chaco are remote and isolated, which means that the operations have considerable logistical constraints. In Central America, the "dry corridor" extends over four countries, with some remote areas, which also entails some logistical constraints.

The likelihood of heavy rains, floods and other hazards in some areas could isolate some remote communities for relatively long periods of time, affecting the normal development of activities.

The probability of the El Niño phenomenon for the season 2012 – 2013 may trigger an aggravation of the situation and make it necessary to provide additional assistance in Central America and some areas of South America.

Frequent political turnover in the region can hamper the effectiveness of some actions which require the involvement of local or national authorities. Lack of involvement of authorities could undermine the continuity/sustainability of DRR actions.

Social and/or political instability in some countries could disrupt the projects and result in suspensions.

The security situation in the Central American region is still a growing concern, necessitating strict security protocols.

There are sufficient potential partners in the region with appropriate technical and operational capacity to carry out the activities foreseen and achieve the objectives of the Action Plan.

(4) Envisaged DG ECHO response and expected results of humanitarian aid interventions

In response to drought, DG ECHO has funded several initiatives at local level both from the humanitarian aid and the Disaster Preparedness (DIPECHO) budget lines. Considering the nature of the problem and the increasing predictability of drought in these areas, short-term emergency response operations need to be complemented by building local capacities for sustainable drought preparedness and management, thus increasing resilience to such recurrent events. For this reason, in 2011 DG ECHO adopted a drought management initiative for the areas more affected by drought in Latin America, aimed at strengthening the food and nutrition security of the most vulnerable as well as their resilience, thus reducing the impact of drought.

The present HIP is oriented to consolidate, systematise and disseminate the achievements of the previous 2011 HIP, in order to advocate for their integration in the strategies, plans and policies of local authorities and development institutions. The main goal will be to ensure a good phase-out and handover to development actors through the involvement and appropriation of the drought and resilience best practices and tools by institutional actors, development partners and local communities.

More concretely, at local level there is a need for the following actions:

Local Disaster Management Components:

- In Bolivia, since 2011, according to the new Constitution, all municipalities must have an organic charter, which is an opportunity to incorporate DRR into local development. Disaster management plans have started to be elaborated at community level, but need to be expanded to areas where the organic charters are established in order to complete a process of lessons learnt and identification of good practices. This process must be enhanced by the involvement of municipal authorities.
- Build local capacities and provide training on good practices and strategies based on established community systems for drought preparedness and water management.
- Consolidate existing local early warning systems, particularly regarding hazards/climate and food security and nutrition monitoring, and reinforce the communication of early warning information towards communities.
- Strengthen the link between early warning information, regional/municipal disaster management and contingency plans.
- The various activities should be complementary in order to improve and establish effective information systems. In terms of project design, strategic planning and programming should be undertaken in a fully participative manner in order to ensure synergy with other disaster risk reduction strategies and other food security programmes in the targeted area of operation.

Institutional linkages and advocacy

Increase the engagement of local authorities and EU/other development actors in improved drought preparedness through:

- Ensuring that relevant institutions take ownership of tools to manage drought and reinforce local resilient strategies by including them in local plans and budgets.
- Evidence based advocacy through the dissemination of tested tools and lessons learned to a wider humanitarian community and development stakeholders in order to inform development policies, strategies and programmes by increasing the awareness of decision makers of the need to invest adequately in drought risk reduction and resilience.
- Capacity building of state and non-state actors on the tools and strategies developed.
- Support coordination mechanisms (at national and regional levels) and promote synergies with long term programming and coordination with donors. Proposed linkages between national and relevant regional initiatives should be clearly stated in the proposals.
- In Central America, concrete actions will be taken to create synergies with the Integrated Water Resources Management, to consolidate management plans in the targeted micro-basins as well as to ensure appropriation by the population of contingency plans.

Information, Education and Communication

- Consolidation and systematisation of tested tools and lessons learnt from previous actions. Wide dissemination and adoption of outputs produced during first phase on improved knowledge on local context and drought impact on food security, water access and environmental health in the region.
- Reinforce pilot actions developed in previous actions on integration of DRR concepts in school curricula in both official and informal education.
- Standardise and better coordinate the development and use of advocacy and communication tools, Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) materials, and training systems.

Livelihood protection and recovery⁵

Support the adoption and multiplication of innovative mitigation and preparedness activities regarding the management of drought and improved resilience of livelihoods including:

- Good practices in farming production and natural resources management: the activities to be considered are the strengthening of agricultural production with agro-forestry, vegetable gardens and seed production using adapted techniques for soil and moisture conservation. It is important to make the link to integrated water resources management of the micro-basin (rain) water conservation, spring conservation, etc. (and data base of successful projects created).
- Management capacity and sustainability of water systems at community and municipal level ensured through strategic alliances and dissemination of good practices. An

⁵ DG ECHO Humanitarian Food Assistance Policy point 4.5.e

adequate management of water will/should have an impact on the availability of drinking water.

- For pilot activities, scaling up of successful activities developed in previous actions through relevant local actors, through capitalization, lessons learned, communication and capacity building.
- Capacity building in the various areas is key as well as consolidation of experiences. Priority will be given to completing the interventions in previous actions in order to consolidate the impact of earlier actions and to ensure an adequate takeover by local authorities.

Expected results of humanitarian aid interventions.

- Communities are better prepared and local, regional and national institutions are strengthened to face and manage droughts; their food and nutrition security is fostered and livelihoods strengthened and their resilience is improved, thereby reducing the vulnerability of the most affected populations.
- Awareness and advocacy regarding the benefits of adopting preventive approaches to drought management is increased.
- Preventive approaches are adopted by communities and institutions.
- Capacities for integrating resilience strategies towards droughts are consolidated.
- Tested tools and best practices are developed.
- The sustainability of the actions is ensured.
- The link is made with development actors and a broader development process triggered.
- The capacity of the population to prepare for and resist possible future humanitarian crises is reinforced.

In the proposed actions, gender and age should be adequately integrated.

4. LRRD, COORDINATION AND TRANSITION

(1) Other DG ECHO interventions

Bolivia:

- HIP– Floods: June 2012 – duration 12 months, amount EUR 580,600. Implementation area: Oruro, Cochabamba and La Paz.
- HIP–Drought: August 2011 – duration 17 months, amount EUR 2,000,000. Implementation area: Santa Cruz, Chuquisaca and Tarija.
- Emergency response– Drought: November 2010 – duration 10 months, amount EUR 1,500,000. Implementation area: Santa Cruz, Chuquisaca and Tarija.
- Supported under Small Scale Response (SSR) decision:
 - Floods: April 2012 – duration 6 months, amount EUR 200,000. Implementation area: Oruro.
 - Drought: January 2009 - duration 4 months, amount EUR 150,000. Implementation area: Chaco region.
 - Drought: October 2009 - duration 5 months, amount EUR 150,000. Implementation area: Chaco and Chuquisaca.

Paraguay:

- HIP– Floods: June 2012 – duration 12 months, amount EUR 678,303. Implementation area: Chaco region.
- HIP– Drought: July 2011 – duration 18 months, amount EUR 1,000,000. Implementation area: Chaco region.
- SSR – Drought: May 2009 – duration 5 months, amount EUR 150,000. Implementation area: Chaco region.

South America

- DIPECHO Action Plan 2011-2012, Duration 18 months, amount EUR 12,000,000.

Guatemala:

- Emergency response – Nutrition, Food Aid and Early Food Security: December 2009 – duration 12 months, amount EUR 1,325,000. Implementation area: Dry Corridor.
- Ad Hoc Decision – Food Assistance: December 2010 – duration 12 months, amount EUR 1,000,000. Implementation area: Dry Corridor and Highlands.

Nicaragua:

- SSR – Drought: November 2009 – duration 4 months, amount EUR 108,000. Implementation area: Madriz, Nueva Segovia, Esteli

Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua:

- HIP– Drought: July 2011 – duration 18 months, amount EUR 1,000,000. Implementation area: Chaco region.
- Emergency response Tropical Depression 12 E, October 2011. Duration 6 months, amount EUR 4,000,000.
- DIPECHO Action Plan 2012-2013, Duration 18 months, amount EUR 10,000,000.

(2) Other services/donors availability (such as for LRRD and transition)

DG ECHO and its partners will actively seek the involvement of development actors in order to scale up and give sustainability to DG ECHO initiatives. The main development partners interested in DRR in the region are the Spanish Agency for International Cooperation and Development (AECID), the Swiss Cooperation (COSUDE), the Japanese Cooperation (JICA), OFDA/USAID, the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB) and the World Bank, with whom DG ECHO has permanent contact.

The Chaco Platform in Bolivia is a coordination forum set up by DG ECHO which integrates all humanitarian and development actors working on drought management in the Chaco. This acts as a forum for interchange between humanitarian and development actors. Swiss Cooperation and World Bank among others are working on DRR in the country and are fundamental stakeholders to coordinate and take over the good practices promoted by DG ECHO partners. The relationships already developed between DG ECHO, its partners and the national risk management institution (VIDECI) will facilitate the advocacy work and increase the possibilities of up-scaling good practices.

For Paraguay, it is important to involve development actors and support coherence in long term funded programmes and policies. DG ECHO and its partners should actively seek the involvement of development actors in order to scale up and give sustainability to DG ECHO initiatives (e.g. Spanish Water Fund to integrate DRR ECHO good practice in their future water macro intervention in the Chaco). Some project outputs such as the Chaco water resources database are already being used by the National Service of Environmental Sanitation (SENASA) and Spanish Cooperation in order to improve the drought response capacities and include conclusions in their programmes.

In Central America, the Technical Group of Donors constituted in Nicaragua provides a forum for discussions of these issues with other interested donors at the regional level. For example, COSUDE is also interested in financing initiatives in this area and complementarities will be sought. COSUDE is specifically focusing on Honduras, Nicaragua and regional initiatives, with a particular interest in working in the dry corridor with small farmers.

Germany is currently formulating a portfolio of programmes and projects, and seeking alliances among the international community. The main areas are: Territorial Planning, Food Security and Agro-biodiversity.

(3) Other concomitant EU interventions

The EU Delegation in Bolivia joined DG ECHO in field visits in the Chaco to assess the impact of the droughts and of the 2011 project and has been involved in the elaboration of some DRR initiatives. Their supportive role will be fundamental considering that their budgetary support in Bolivia includes information management, definition of indicators and capacity building of the indigenous communities of the target area as well as in management of municipal budgets, which would clearly complement the planned advocacy activities and help to include drought management and resilience components in municipal and departmental budgets.

Synergies should also be explored to link DG ECHO initiatives with other EU budget lines (e.g. Non State Actors and Local Authorities funding line, Climate Change Programmes, Instrument for Stability, etc.).

In Central America, there is a strong interest of the EU Delegations to work together on this matter. For example, at regional level, there is a needs identification process related to food security for the dry corridor currently ongoing. A programme for food security in this area

might be implemented at the end of 2012 under the Thematic Programme for Food Security, complementing and providing sustainability to the processes initiated by this present initiative. Also, this initiative has established strong links with the PRESANCA II (Regional Program on Food Security and Nutrition) and PRESISAN (Food Security Information System); EU funded projects being implemented respectively until 2015 and 2013; and complementarities can be established with the present initiative.

In Guatemala, a Budget Support programme to the Nutritional and Food Security Secretariat is ongoing and supports actions of the Natural Resources Ministry in the dry corridor. This initiative will be strengthened by the EU funded action in the dry corridor. In Honduras and El Salvador, fewer projects have been put in place, but there is a strong interest of the Delegations to work on this matter. In El Salvador, the Ministry of Agriculture specifically requested the support of the EU Delegation on food security issues and recently presented an action plan related to their strategy. A needs identification process has been launched by the Delegation in order to be able to support the implementation of this strategy.

(4) Exit scenarios

For the exit strategy, there is a need to consolidate the actions implemented in 2011-2012, identify best practices and lessons learned to create resilience and thus prevent deterioration of the current vulnerability to droughts in the Chaco and the Dry Corridor and to protect and enhance livelihoods. Local capacities need to be sufficiently strengthened and strategies developed to face food crises related to droughts and to reduce their impact. This will be particularly important during this phase as the El Niño phenomenon is reappearing.

This would allow DG ECHO and partners to promote best practices and convince other development actors in the longer-term to support successfully tested activities and trigger a broader development process.

For Paraguay an exit strategy will depend mainly on the degree of appropriation by local and national government and its sector agencies and ministries as SEN (National Emergency Service), SENASA (National Service of Environmental Sanitation). The involvement of the new government elected in 2013 will be fundamental for this.

It is also very important to link in a more systematic way the national and regional Disaster Risk Management institutions such as CEPREDENAC's⁶ members (Central America) in the process in order to create an integral approach of this programme.

This initiative will be implemented in close coordination with the EU Delegations at regional and national levels to facilitate complementarities and a proper exit strategy of the actions. In this sense, LRRD (linking Relief, Rehabilitation and Development) will remain crucial as it permits the exit strategy to be defined and puts a time-limit.

Furthermore, coordination with the EU Delegations will allow DG ECHO to take advantage of the direct relationships established between them and Government institutions and use this platform for advocacy towards related Ministries.

Proposals submitted must include an elaborated exit strategy.

⁶ Centro de Coordinación para la Prevención de los Desastres Naturales en América Central

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 take precedence over the provisions in this document.

5.1. Contacts⁷

Operational Unit in charge:	ECHO/B5
Contact persons at HQ:	Dorothy Morrissey Dorothy.morrissey@ec.europa.eu and Anne-Francoise Moffroid Anne-Francoise.Moffroid@ec.europa.eu
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5.2. Financial info

Indicative Allocation:	EUR 4,000,000
Natural disasters:	Food Assistance: EUR 4,000,000

5.3. Proposal Assessment

Assessment round 1

- a) Description of the humanitarian aid interventions relating to this assessment round:
All interventions as described under sections 2.2 and 3.4 of this HIP.
- b) Indicative amount to be allocated in this round of proposals: up to EUR 4,000,000.
- c) Costs will be eligible from 01/01/2013⁸.
- 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: E-Single Form.

⁷ Single Forms will be submitted to DG ECHO using APPEL (e-SingleForm)

⁸ 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.

- g) Indicative date for receipt of the above requested information: by **15/02/2013**.⁹
- 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 "Main Selection Criteria" below.

Main selection criteria will be:

- Relevance, methodology and sustainability of the proposed actions.
- Partners' capacity, experience and knowledge of drought management in the intervention areas.
- A consortium of agencies can apply. In such a case, the application should be made by a lead agency which will be responsible for all operational administrative, legal and financial matters vis-à-vis the European Commission. Copy of the draft agreement/Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) concluded among the parties to the consortium should be included as annex in the single form. The signed MoU is expected by the end of the first month of implementation.

⁹ 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.