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**HUMANITARIAN IMPLEMENTATION PLAN (HIP)****SOUTH ASIA<sup>1</sup>**

AMOUNT: EUR 37 150 000

**The full implementation of this version of the HIP is subject to the adoption of the decision amending Decision C(2014)10012 final and the availability of the relevant appropriations.**

**0. MAJOR CHANGES SINCE PREVIOUS VERSION OF THE HIP****Eight modification**

Six months since the earthquakes that hit Nepal, the general humanitarian situation is still critical. Thousands of affected households still need shelter support, access to water and sanitation, access to food, access to health care, education and protection, especially in remote, difficult to access areas and displacement sites.

Heavy rains over the past month triggered numerous landslides and floods across the country, hampering access to affected communities and triggering new population displacements. Further, the strikes in the Southern parts of the country for more than a month and the blockage with India are affecting the transportation of relief materials. Due to the accumulation of disasters – floods, landslides and earthquake - and political uncertainty, the capacity of the national government to respond is limited.

Preparations for the imminent harsh winter in the region is paramount, with more than 2 million people homeless in Nepal, living in temporary shelters. Nepalese throughout the region are ill prepared for a harsh season. Hygiene conditions are growing extremely precarious. Most of the temporary shelters need to be upgraded and winterized. This is especially true in the highest areas, where many children lack proper clothing. For this reason, an additional amount of EUR 2 000 000 is made available under the present HIP.

**Seventh modification**

Due to the heavy floods and landslides end of June in the districts of Chittagong, Bandarban and Cox's Bazar in the Southeast of Bangladesh, the humanitarian response takes the needs of natural disaster affected people into consideration. For this reason, an amount of EUR 160 000 had to be shifted from man-made crisis specific objective to natural disasters specific objective.

**Sixth Modification**

Heavy floods and landslides, as a result of pre monsoon heavy rains occurred during the last week of June in the districts of Chittagong, Bandarban and Cox's Bazar in the Southeast of Bangladesh. A Joint Needs Assessment Phase II (JNA) was carried out in July, while a second period of heavy rain from 22–27 July caused new floods, landslides and further displacements. Tropical Cyclone “Komen” that crossed the same districts between 30 July and 01 August left more than 320 000 displaced in cyclone shelters in Cox's Bazar and Chittagong, while the secondary effect of “Komen” was again heavy rainfall, causing additional landslides and flooding, which extended to all the coastal regions. According to the JNA, as a result of the first two periods of heavy rain, more than 1.8 million people were affected, out of which 73% (1 325 000 people or 265 000

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<sup>1</sup> The countries covered by this HIP are: Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, the Maldives and Sri Lanka. Afghanistan and Pakistan come under a separate HIP.

households) are in need of humanitarian assistance. The JNA response plan proposes immediate assistance to 193 505 people (38 701 HHs).

Following the needs assessment, the Food Security and the WASH Clusters consider that a minimum of three months of immediate assistance is needed to avoid a prolonged lean season, leading to further increase of the acute under-nutrition status of the most vulnerable. An allocation of EUR 500 000 is required to cover the most urgent needs. Food assistance and emergency livelihood are identified as the main priority needs.

#### **Fifth modification**

Following the earthquakes that hit Nepal on 25 April and 12 May, and while the national and international attention is beginning to focus on the rehabilitation and reconstruction phase, there are still significant gaps in the coverage of humanitarian needs. These have to be urgently addressed in the early recovery phase, particular in view of the impending monsoon season when access to remote and hard to reach areas will become more difficult. The immediate recovery priority needs identified are in the sectors of Shelter and Food security/Livelihood. However, unmet needs remain also in Health and Logistics. Protection and Disaster Risk Reduction should also be mainstreamed in the response. In view of the above, a further EUR 6 000 000 is allocated under the present HIP.

#### **Fourth modification**

For Bangladesh, there is a need to increase the funding allocation to meet the humanitarian needs related to the Rohingya refugees in Cox's Bazar. For this reason, an amount of EUR 940 000 has to be moved from the natural disasters specific objective to the man-made crises specific objective. Similarly, an amount of EUR 200 000 has to be moved from the natural disasters specific objective to the DP/DRR specific objective in order to adapt to the increased needs from a resilience point of view.

#### **Third modification**

EUR 400 000 were earmarked to contribute to the funding of two UNICEF cargo planes delivering each 40 metric tons of life-saving supplies to the regions in Nepal affected by the earthquake. In the end, the total cost for this specific contribution amounted to EUR 287 130. The consequent left over, equivalent to an amount of EUR 112 870, has to be shifted from the Transport/logistics specific objective to the Natural disasters specific objective.

#### **Second modification**

Following the earthquake of 25 April 2015, casualties and assets losses continue to rise. As of the 30 April 2015, 5 500 people are reported dead and over 11 000 people injured. It is estimated that 2.8 million people are displaced and more than 3.5 million people are in need of food assistance. In addition to Kathmandu Valley, the most affected districts are Sindupalchowk, Dhading, Gorkha, Lamjung, Kavre, Nuwakot, Rasuwa, Dolakha and Ramechhap. More than 70 000 houses have been destroyed and another 530 000 partially damaged. On 29 April, the UN launched a consolidated Flash Appeal for USD 415 million of three-months duration, identifying shelter, water and sanitation, logistics, health and food as the main priority needs. In view of the scale of the needs, a further allocation of EUR 3 000 000 is required to cover the most urgent and immediate needs in Nepal.

**First modification**

On 25 April 2015, a 7.8 magnitude earthquake struck Nepal and in the following days several aftershocks up to 7.1 magnitude were recorded. The Central Regions of Nepal, including Kathmandu Valley districts have been badly affected, including mountain and hilly areas, where rural populations are dispersed, as well as some very densely populated districts and Nepal's two largest cities – greater Kathmandu and Pokhara. Thousands of people have been killed and tens of thousands injured. There is massive destruction of infrastructure, property and livelihoods. An allocation of EUR 3 000 000 is required to cover the most urgent and immediate needs.

Moreover, the strategic DP/DRR/Resilience priorities for South Asia have been covered with a slightly reduced allocation. The total allocation for DP/DRR/Resilience operations has therefore been reduced from the foreseen EUR 10 000 000 down to EUR 9 650 000.

**1. CONTEXT**

This HIP covers the response to natural and man-made disasters as well as disaster preparedness, disaster risk reduction and resilience activities in South Asia. For the response to natural and man-made disasters, this HIP focuses largely on Bangladesh, India and Nepal, with the potential for interventions to new disasters also in Sri Lanka<sup>2</sup>. These countries have been included because of their high exposure and vulnerability to natural disasters. As regards disaster preparedness, disaster risk reduction and resilience activities, the focus will be on specific actions in Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal and Sri Lanka, as well as support to regional initiatives.

South Asia is a densely populated region, with close to 1.4 billion people, i.e. approximately 1/5 of the world population. The region is prone to a variety of natural disasters (floods and droughts, landslides, GLOF<sup>3</sup>, cyclones, earthquakes, storm surges, tsunamis, fires) and is the theatre of a number of internal conflicts and political volatility, with ensuing risks of violence. South Asia experienced the greatest reported number of climate-related disasters and the highest number of deaths in the period 1970-2012. The impact of disasters is not felt uniformly. The poor are typically the worst affected as they tend to live in vulnerable areas, have less capacity to deal with loss of income and assets, and limited access to risk sharing mechanisms. Growing concerns about the impact of climate change are also of particular relevance in this part of the world. Factors such as demographic pressure, poor urban planning, settlements in high-risk areas and reduced livelihood options entail a high vulnerability to more frequent, more intense and more unpredictable disasters. Urban communities are increasingly at risk.

About 70% (32.5 million) of the world's children suffering from Global Acute Malnutrition live in South Asia, with their numbers particularly high in India and Bangladesh.

Recurrent natural disasters not only affect the food and nutrition security, health and livelihoods of communities but also expose them to protection risks such as the exclusion of extremely vulnerable individuals, with the elderly, female headed households and children being forced to fend for themselves, as men seek work in the cities; early marriage, trafficking and exposure to sexual and gender based violence are some of its negative consequences.

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<sup>2</sup> Bangladesh, India and Nepal all rank as medium vulnerability in ECHO GVCA.

<sup>3</sup> Glacial Lake Outburst Flood

## BANGLADESH

Bangladesh ranks 142th in the Human Development Index (HDI), with 0.558 points. ECHO's IAF for 2014-15 has identified high humanitarian needs. The vulnerability of the population affected by the crises referred below is assessed to be very high.

The country is one of the most **disaster**-prone in the world (cyclones, floods and water-logging, droughts, landslides, earthquakes, tsunamis). On average, every year some 6 200 lives and USD 550 million are lost due to the impact of disasters. It is the country in the world with the highest population density (1 250 persons/ square km, growing at a rate of 1.59%) and the 2<sup>nd</sup> on the Climate Change Vulnerability Index.

Bangladesh hosts one of the most intractable refugee crises in the world, classified by ECHO<sup>4</sup> as a Forgotten Crisis. The **Rohingya** are an ethnic, religious and linguistic minority that faces exclusion and severe discrimination in neighbouring Myanmar, from where many have fled since the 1970s. Since 1992, new Rohingya refugees do not benefit from refugee status; with no legal options to seek protection in Bangladesh. They are, hence, vulnerable to persecution, exploitation, and arrest. While recognising that a regional political solution is needed for this long lasting crisis, the European Commission, through ECHO has been providing basic humanitarian assistance to some 45 000 unregistered Rohingya living in very difficult conditions in two unofficial settlements. Since 1992, the European Commission – through development cooperation instruments - has also been supporting registered refugees. Providing humanitarian assistance to the unregistered Rohingya is increasingly challenging due to restrictions to humanitarian access.

The situation in the **Chittagong Hill Tracts** (CHT) is also classified by ECHO as a Forgotten Crisis. The formal conflict ended with the signing of the 1997 CHT Peace Accord. However, significant clauses of the accord have not yet been implemented. From 2005-2015, the European Union (EU) has allocated EUR 70 million to support the government in implementing the CHT Peace Accord, with the aim of reducing poverty and promoting peace. However, food insecurity remains a key concern, consequence of instability combined with demographic pressure, decreased productivity of traditional agriculture and limited international access.

## INDIA

In India, ECHO focuses on alleviating the emergency needs arising from protracted crises in Jammu and Kashmir (J&K), in the districts of central India affected by the Naxalite insurgency and in the North-eastern states. These three contexts are classified by ECHO as Forgotten Crises.

India ranks 135<sup>th</sup> in the HDI, with 0.586 points. ECHO's IAF for 2014-15 identified high humanitarian needs. The vulnerability of the population affected by the crises referred below is assessed to be very high.

**J&K:** The root of the conflict goes back to independence and partition in 1947. The presence of militants, together with the imposition of special emergency laws, compounds the humanitarian impact on civilians. Continued low-level violence prevails, leading to fatalities and injuries, consequence of militant infiltrations, arbitrary detentions and disappearances, custodial deaths and reprisals, in a climate of repeated violations of

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<sup>4</sup> European Commission's Directorate General for Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection.

IHL. With 181 fatalities registered in 2013 and more than 94 from January to August in 2014, the underlying causes of the conflict remain unchanged, with no solution in sight.

**The Naxalite crisis:** The intensity of this evolving conflict remains heaviest in the South of Chhattisgarh state. Annually, the conflict leads to between 400 (official figure) and 1000 deaths (unofficial figure) and the displacement of up to 50 000. The population faces direct attacks, living in an atmosphere of violence often without access to basic social services and reduced mobility. Tribal communities living in remote villages are most affected. The conflict involves multiple actors, including different State security services, Naxalite armed groups and vigilante/militia organizations, resulting in repeated violations of IHL and frequently reported human rights abuses.

**Conflicts in the North-eastern States:** Over 50 insurgent/separatist/rebel groups are active in these States, with heavier concentrations in Assam, Manipur and Nagaland. In 2013, a decrease in insurgency related fatalities was registered (248 as compared to 317 in 2012); however this trend was reversed in 2014 (249 fatalities by mid-2014). Thousands are affected by violence resulting from localized migration patterns altering the demographic status quo, separatist movements battling for autonomy, rebel groups and operations by security services. Movements which were originally politically driven are increasingly expanding their activities into criminality. Nearly a million people have been forced to flee their homes over the past 20 years due to inter-ethnic violence in the North-East. The mountainous terrain, coupled with poor infrastructure and frequent natural disasters, amplifies the vulnerability of these populations.

**Natural disasters:** India is prone to natural disasters (floods and drought, cyclones, landslides, GLOF, earthquakes). Flooding associated with the monsoon is an annual event in different parts of the country. While the Government of India's initial response is usually rapid and effective in terms of search-and-rescue and immediate provision of food and drinking water, gaps frequently remain unaddressed, often due to social exclusion. Past experience has shown that well-targeted humanitarian initiatives can effectively address these gaps.

**Undernutrition:** With a national Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM) rate of 20%, corresponding to a caseload of 25 million GAM children, India ranks first in the global burden of undernutrition. This situation is further exacerbated during crises, due to further depletion of livelihoods, coping capacities and diminished access to the already limited basic services.

### NEPAL

Nepal ranks 145<sup>th</sup> in the HDI, with 0.540 points. ECHO's IAF for 2014-15 identified high humanitarian needs. The vulnerability of the population affected by the crises is assessed to be very high.

The country is very prone to **natural disasters** (floods and droughts, GLOF, earthquakes, landslides). Particularly vulnerable are those living in remote mountain areas. Every year the monsoon season presents real risks of medium to major disasters happening, and a major earthquake is statistically overdue. The capacity of Nepal to prepare and respond to disasters has improved. However, as witnessed by the large earthquake in April 2015, response to a major disaster will continue to remain problematic and further strengthening of disaster response capacities continues to be needed. Nepal is one of the Flagship Countries under the EU Resilience Action Plan.

In the early 1990s, following the adoption of new citizenship laws in Bhutan, more than 108 000 (approximately 20% of Bhutan's population at the time) "Lhotsampas" fled or were moved to Eastern Nepal, where they have been living in refugee camps run by UNHCR. Following a third country resettlement programme that started in 2007, 91 800 **Bhutanese refugees** have been resettled, leaving the remaining camp population at 25 000. According to Nepalese rules and regulations, these refugees do not have the right to work or to own land in Nepal. Hence, they rely on external assistance.

#### Disaster preparedness, disaster risk reduction, resilience

Targeted disaster risk reduction activities, as well as support to regional thematic initiatives, are required to help reduce the vulnerability of populations in the region, be they rural or urban, living in areas most affected by natural disasters. Thereby, a concrete contribution to strengthening resilience will be made, in particular in the two EU Resilience Flagship countries Bangladesh and Nepal.

## 2. HUMANITARIAN NEEDS

### 1) Affected people/ potential beneficiaries:

#### BANGLADESH

**Rohingya refugees and host communities** – The estimates vary widely, but it is generally assumed that over 250 000 Rohingya live in Bangladesh, in official camps or refugee-like situations (unofficial camps) or within local communities, the majority being unrecognized refugees and thus undocumented foreigners. Approximately 45 000 of them live in appalling conditions in two unofficial settlements.

**Chittagong Hill Tracts** – The population of the three districts totalled 1 587 000 in the provisional returns of the 2011 Census, of which approximately 50% is indigenous. 30000 people are the most at risk, living in restricted remote areas of Thanchi and Sajek.

**Waterlogging:** In Khulna Division, chronic water-logging impacts the livelihoods of around 1 million people every year in the districts of Satkhira and Jessore.

#### INDIA

**J&K** – Over 700 000 directly affected people, mostly inhabitants of the Kashmir valley and border areas.

**Naxalite crisis** – Over 50 000 people directly affected in Chhattisgarh, mostly rural tribals of Bijapur, Dantewada and Narayanpur districts, plus up to 50 000 IDPs, part of whom have moved into Andhra Pradesh and Telangana states.

**North-eastern states** – Up to 100 000 displaced people currently, with highest concentrations in Assam, Tripura and Manipur.

#### NEPAL

An estimated 8 million people live in the area affected by the 7.8 million magnitude **earthquake** and aftershocks that struck Nepal in April 2015.

Around 25 000 **refugees from Bhutan** living in camps in eastern Nepal.

#### Disaster preparedness, disaster risk reduction, Resilience

Although the whole region is prone to natural disasters, not all countries have the same degree of exposure, awareness, or capacity. National authorities are in the process of building legal and institutional frameworks on DRR and have an increasing level of understanding of the link between DRR and the impact of natural disasters, and of its

implications in terms of resource allocations in development planning. However, South Asian governments' capacities to implement effective DRR programmes remain insufficient and are mostly response/relief oriented, with mechanisms still inadequate for sound preparedness and prevention. In terms of beneficiaries, ECHO focuses primarily on: the most vulnerable communities and segments of the population; rural and urban areas with high exposure to frequent or potentially devastating natural hazards and with limited coping capacities; excluded, remote communities or segments of the population, with a systematic focus on the inclusion of women, children, the elderly and people living with disabilities.

## 2) Description of the most acute humanitarian needs

**Natural disasters** impact on *livelihoods* and *food security* often entailing a deterioration of the nutritional status of the most vulnerable who have no alternative but to adopt negative coping mechanisms. In general, in South Asia *undernutrition* is endemic in disaster-prone areas and spikes follow new shocks. Disasters also affect *shelter* and access to safe *water and sanitation*, (WASH) and can lead to increased *protection* issues.

### BANGLADESH

**Rohingya refugees and host communities:** The absence of legal status is the main cause of vulnerability. It makes the Rohingya easy targets for abuse and exploitation. *Protection* is a core need and remains a major challenge, as humanitarian presence is constantly under threat. GAM rates in the official and makeshift camps, and host communities, have been above 15% since 2010. In Ukhyia and Teknaf districts, unregistered Rohingyas' *food and nutrition* insecurity is further aggravated by limited access to basic services. Access to *water and sanitation* for Rohingya and host communities in Leda, Kutupalong and surrounding areas is a major issue, and the disposal of latrine effluent poses a serious health hazard to both camp residents and surrounding community. In Leda and Kutupalong, temporary *shelters* are poorly constructed and seriously degraded; repair/rebuilding works as well as upgrading of NFI/roofing kits are urgently needed.

**Chittagong Hill Tracts:** 77% of all households are reported to have poor or borderline *food* consumption practices. *Protection* is also a major issue, as access to legal services for victims of violence remains an elusive target.

**Waterlogging:** Repetitive cycles of water-logging and degradation of livelihoods have negatively impacted *undernutrition*. Union funded actions have contributed to stabilizing the situation; however, the 2013 floods further aggravated the fragile food and nutrition security, leading to deterioration in acute malnutrition rates (13.8% GAM in January 2014). *Food security* data indicates that 60% of households in Satkhira are moderately or severely food insecure.

### INDIA

**Protection:** The boundaries between parties to conflict and civilians are not clear or respected. Villagers are therefore exposed to intimidation, arbitrary detention and ill-treatment, gender-based violence or forced displacement.

**Health:** Access to basic primary health services in remote and conflict-affected areas is poor or non-existent, yet these are the areas where people are at increased risk of being wounded, becoming disabled or having serious psychological trauma. Primary health care centers are chronically under-staffed and under-resourced, and there is an unwillingness to work in isolated and insecure areas, leading to an exodus of skilled health workers. Conflicts cause disabilities and further contribute to marginalization of

those living with disabilities, as they render more difficult, or impossible, access to health care and rehabilitation treatment, education and livelihoods. Conflict-affected populations need outreach health care that is perceived to be neutral.

***Food Assistance, Nutrition, Livelihood, Shelter and WASH:*** Large scale and frequent natural disasters erode or destroy livelihood assets and have a severe humanitarian impact on populations who may already have been food insecure before the disaster. They limit the affected communities' access to drinking water and sanitation, exacerbate the risk of water borne diseases, and lead to extensive destruction of shelters. Shocks due to conflict or natural disasters exacerbate pre-existing high levels of acute malnutrition.

### NEPAL

As a result of the **earthquake** on 25 April 2015 and the aftershocks of the following days, there are large-scale and urgent humanitarian needs in the following sectors: WASH (Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Promotion), Health (including medicines, surgical equipment, trauma kits, medical teams, psychosocial support), Shelter and Non Food Items (NFI), Food Assistance, Nutrition, Livelihoods and Protection. Support to communications, transport, logistics and coordination, is also required.

Due to the government's policy of non-integration, Bhutanese refugees have limited **livelihood** opportunities. They depend on external assistance, including notably food assistance and non-food items. The elderly, people with disability, single women and children are particularly vulnerable.

### Disaster preparedness, disaster risk reduction, resilience

A priority is the development and adoption of DP/DRR models that are compatible with local institutional environments. They should follow proven methodologies that can be integrated into local development plans with a view to further replication, scaling-up and sustainability. At the same time, sound partnership with local and national DRR stakeholders and coherence with legal and institutional frameworks is to be ensured. A concrete contribution to the implementation of the Resilience Agenda is to be pursued, notably in the EU Resilience Flagship countries.

## **3. HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE**

- 1) National / local response and involvement

### BANGLADESH

In 2014, the government presented a strategy on "**undocumented Myanmar nationals**", acknowledging the humanitarian needs of the undocumented refugees, and outlining a plan to register them. Such a registration process should be supported if it meets international standards and leads to the formalisation of legal status, including enhanced access to services.

The government has demonstrated the effectiveness of its own **disaster preparedness** (e.g. evacuation of 1 million people prior to tropical storm Mahasen in 2013). The government usually provides some form of assistance to those affected by natural disasters. However, needs frequently exceed the assistance offered. In case of displacement, sanitation is often overlooked. Furthermore, authorization for humanitarian operations is often slow, hampering the timeliness of the humanitarian response.



The impact of interventions to address **undernutrition** is hampered by restrictions on the importation of RUTF<sup>5</sup>, while there is as yet no local production of therapeutic food. Local level capacity in nutrition is limited and measures for integrating nutrition into the health system have not been implemented yet at local level.

A national task force comprising authorities and development partners has been established to develop an action plan to address the **water-logging** in the South West from 2015 onwards. Similarly, the **CHT** Development Fund's Plan is designed by the Ministry of the CHT together with Development partners (UN and donors).

### INDIA

In J&K and Chhattisgarh, the State is a party to the **conflict**, while conflicts in the North-eastern states currently include more inter-ethnic dimensions. In all cases, the blurring of lines between civilians and combatants is a constant. The State is often unable to respond since its professionals could be regarded as legitimate targets (including medical staff). The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) is responsible for developing policies, plans and guidelines for disaster management and timely and effective response to disasters. The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) aims to provide at least 100 days/year of wage employment to every rural household willing to participate. It includes provisions for drought-proofing and flood management in rural India. However, they are often not activated in **natural disasters**.

Measures to address **nutrition** in emergencies are not integrated in the national nutrition policy or within the NDMA disaster management policies and guidelines. Overall in-country capacity for nutrition is limited, and government policy is restrictive on the importation and use of RUTF. Government measures to address increased nutritional needs during crisis are limited to provision of one-off take home rations, and national nutrition programmes<sup>6</sup> have not been designed to address emergency nutritional needs.

### NEPAL

In the aftermath of the earthquake on 25 April 2015, the Government of Nepal (GoN) declared a State of Emergency, and requested international assistance. The GoN's Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) is operational. However, local capacity is overwhelmed by the scale of the disaster. Wide-scale destruction to infrastructure will continue to hamper relief efforts for some time and urgent assistance is needed to those worst affected by the effects of the earthquake.

Bhutan and Nepal refuse to accept the **refugees** as citizens, which makes most of them almost entirely dependent on international assistance to meet their basic needs. A political solution to the problem is yet to be found.

### Disaster preparedness, disaster risk reduction, resilience

Disaster preparedness, disaster risk reduction and resilience are making their way into the political agendas of South Asian governments, who are developing legal frameworks and setting up dedicated national platforms, in accordance with their commitment to the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) 2005-2015. At regional

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<sup>5</sup> Ready to Use Therapeutic Food for treatment of Severe Acute Malnutrition

<sup>6</sup> Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) and the Nutrition Rehabilitation Centres (NRC)  
ECHO/-SA/BUD/2015/91000

level, the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation's (SAARC) Disaster Management Centre was set up as a regional unit in Delhi, in 2006.

While the relevant government agencies have developed national strategies that address DP/DRR, generally the tools, funding or mechanisms to enforce and implement these are insufficient. The implementation of the national DRR frameworks is often hampered by lack of dedicated and competent human resources and an inadequate allocation of financial resources, and in some cases also by conflict or political instability. It is particularly limited at local and community level.

## 2) International Humanitarian Response

### BANGLADESH

Humanitarian coordination improved with the creation of the HCTT<sup>7</sup> and deployment of OCHA<sup>8</sup> staff in support to the Resident UN Coordinator. An informal cluster system has been active since 2012 and contributes to better humanitarian coordination and response. Nevertheless, there is still room for improvement, e.g. regarding timeliness of response, identification of gaps and action planning with improved information management systems. ECHO and DfID<sup>9</sup> are the two donors represented in the HCTT. Exchange of information and harmonization of response among the main donors follows Good Humanitarian Donorship principles.

ECHO responds to the humanitarian needs in Kutupalong, Leda and the surrounding communities, while EU development funds, United States of America, Sweden and Australia support the official Rohingya refugee camps and the host communities. IOM and the BRCS<sup>10</sup> have been designated by the government to further extend assistance to the Rohingya populations.

### INDIA

Confronted with a series of conflicts, India considers them internal law and order matters, not requiring the involvement of the international community. UN agencies, when present in the country, have a limited capacity to implement their mandate (e.g.: only UNMOGIP<sup>11</sup> is established in J&K and only UNICEF<sup>12</sup> is active in Chhattisgarh). The ICRC<sup>13</sup> is also subject to restrictions. However, there is a robust national civil society and a significant presence of INGOs<sup>14</sup>.

India rarely requests international assistance in the aftermath of natural disasters, the Gujarat Earthquake in 2001 being the last such occurrence. Therefore, there is very limited international financing for organizations providing humanitarian assistance to the victims of conflict and/or natural disasters.

### NEPAL

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<sup>7</sup> Humanitarian Country Task Team

<sup>8</sup> United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

<sup>9</sup> United Kingdom's Department for International Development

<sup>10</sup> Bangladesh Red Cross Society

<sup>11</sup> United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan

<sup>12</sup> United Nations Children's Fund

<sup>13</sup> International Committee of the Red Cross

<sup>14</sup> International non-governmental organisations

Following the **earthquake of 25 April 2015**, international assistance has been requested by the Government of Nepal. The relief efforts are being coordinated with the UN Humanitarian Country Team. A Flash Appeal will be launched. As the OCHA office in Nepal was closed at the end of 2013, surge support teams have been deployed from OCHA's Bangkok and Geneva offices, and have established a Reception and Coordination Centre at Kathmandu airport. The following Clusters have been re-activated and are co-chaired by the relevant Nepalese line ministry: Food Security, Nutrition, Health, WASH, Protection, Emergency Shelter, Non –Food Items (NFIs), Education, Camp Coordination and Camp Management, Logistics and Emergency Telecommunications.

**Bhutan Refugees:** IOM is in charge of the third country resettlement process, while UNHCR is responsible for protection and the provision of non-food items in the refugee camps. WFP has been delivering food assistance in the camps since 1992.

#### *Disaster preparedness, disaster risk reduction, resilience*

Given the high risk of natural disasters in South Asia, DRR is a focus for several donors, UN agencies and INGOs. DRR efforts are mainly directed at central and sub-national levels, developing national strategies and response capacities, generally through a top-down approach with insufficient focus on the role of communities and local stakeholders. Donor coordination is often weak, translating into limited synergies and complementarities. National mechanisms for coordination of DRR stakeholders are often insufficient. Nevertheless, in recent years a number of encouraging national initiatives have been launched, such as the CDMP<sup>15</sup> in Bangladesh and the NRRC<sup>16</sup> in Nepal, involving important international players under the leadership of government bodies.

### 3) Constraints and ECHO response capacity

#### **BANGLADESH**

Humanitarian access is usually possible after a natural disaster. However, project implementation requires the approval of the government. In the most sensitive cases (border areas, refugee locations), this approval may be confronted with important delays. Socio-political strife at times significantly hampers access to certain locations. Physical access to vulnerable locations, such as the coastal belt and CHT, can be logistically challenging due to high water levels, road damage, or weather conditions. In a few areas of CHT, access for international staff is restricted.

Humanitarian activities in Cox's Bazar are limited to life-saving activities. A significant natural disaster would likely lead to the destruction of the Kutupalong makeshift camp and Leda site, due to their dilapidated conditions. Cooperation of local authorities would also be necessary to find a sustainable solution for the provision of water in Leda. Persisting restrictions on humanitarian access to unregistered Rohingya refugees and the deteriorating humanitarian situation that this entails are of concern.

#### **INDIA**

Access is usually possible. However, humanitarian space in Chhattisgarh has been under pressure and there are periods of interruption for security reasons in all conflict

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<sup>15</sup> Comprehensive Disaster Management Programme

<sup>16</sup> National Risk Reduction Consortium

situations. Some remote areas remain off-limits (close to international borders and large areas of South Chhattisgarh). The presence of partners is limited, in part due to government restrictions. The *modus operandi* of international agencies reflects a development focus, a constraint for rapid response. The policy environment and technical capacity to address emergency levels of acute malnutrition are limited.

### NEPAL

The **earthquake of April 2015** has severely damaged infrastructure and communications in at least 30 of Nepal's 75 districts. Clearing the debris, and restoring road and bridge infrastructure, will take time. Limited access to affected areas will hamper search and rescue efforts, as well as damage and needs assessments

Regarding assistance to Bhutanese refugees, strikes and blockades often delay food transport and distribution. Security in the camps has been problematic at times but has become more stable since the beginning of the resettlement. So far, the UN agencies have been able to deliver adequate levels of humanitarian assistance, including protection against sexual and gender based violence.

### Disaster preparedness, disaster risk reduction, resilience

In general, absorption and technical capacities remain limited. The ambition of disaster preparedness, disaster risk reduction and resilience actions being to initiate and support a local process, humanitarian organisations should not substitute local government services but work through a partnership approach, along with the local civil society and government agencies. Sustainability, replication and institutionalisation remain a challenge in most settings. DRR and resilience strategies must be adapted to take into consideration the specific constraints of the targeted areas, focusing on realistic objectives in the given timeframe. Natural disasters occurring in targeted areas, or security issues, may temporarily limit implementation capacity.

- 4) Envisaged ECHO response and expected results of humanitarian aid interventions.

Partners must demonstrate that they have undertaken **coordinated** needs assessments and response analysis. ECHO may provide specific support to enhance the quality of these processes, at country or regional level. Ensuring **gender and age** mainstreaming is essential. Women, girls, boys, men and the elderly are affected by crises in different ways and the assistance needs to be adapted to their specific needs; disenfranchising of certain groups (including women) is among the causes of malnutrition. **Advocacy** efforts for inclusion and quality improvements in service delivery are a key element of ECHO's interventions; our exit strategy lies, to a large extent, on the success of these efforts in improving service delivery and coverage.

Effective coordination is essential. ECHO supports the **Inter-Agency Standing Committee's Transformative Agenda (ITA)** and encourages partners to demonstrate their engagement in implementing its objectives, to take part in coordination mechanisms (e.g. Humanitarian Country Team/Clusters) and to allocate resources to foster the ITA roll-out.

Partners will be expected to ensure full compliance with **visibility** requirements and to acknowledge the funding role of the EU/ECHO, as set out in the applicable contractual arrangements.

### BANGLADESH

ECHO will continue to support humanitarian response to recurrent **natural disasters**. A timely authorization procedure will continue to be a point of advocacy to the government. Given that national GAM rates are persistently above the international emergency threshold, ECHO requests partners to systematically strengthen the integration of nutrition in situation assessments and response analysis. Integration of nutrition sensitive actions will be pursued during emergency and post emergency response where feasible, to transit into an adequately informed LRRD strategy. ECHO supports the Joint Needs Assessment (JNA) approach developed by all stakeholders and authorities.

ECHO partners are expected to identify opportunities to reduce future risks to vulnerable people, help reduce vulnerabilities and strengthen livelihoods and local capacities. Where feasible and cost effective, response actions should contribute to, or develop, longer term strategies to build the **resilience** of the most vulnerable and to address chronic, or underlying causes of vulnerability. Resilience is a key component of ECHO's approach to emergency preparedness and disaster response. Since Bangladesh has been designated as a Flagship Country under the EU's Action Plan for Resilience, ECHO will contribute to a "resilience roadmap", with the objective of integrating risk awareness in every sector of development and in coherence with the government's 7<sup>th</sup> 5-year plan. ECHO will contribute to the design and implementation of multi-scale and multi-sector resilience actions, aimed at strengthening local capacities to adapt livelihoods and coping mechanisms, and focus in two geographical areas: the water-logged areas of Khulna division, and the food-insecure areas of CHT.

ECHO will maintain its support to **Rohingya undocumented refugees** in Leda and Kutupalong. Priority will be given to the provision of health services, prevention and treatment of acute malnutrition, WASH, psychological support and protection. ECHO will also support the people in need in the surrounding host communities of Ukhia and Teknaf, with provision of health, nutrition and WASH services; these interventions will contribute to preventing disease outbreaks, which constitutes an important benefit to the surrounding villages. Continued advocacy will be pursued to ensure that stakeholders adhere to humanitarian principles, to safeguard humanitarian space and service provision and to promote durable solutions. Access to legal aid for the most vulnerable living in local communities is also to be developed in Cox's Bazar.

**CHT:** In anticipation of a longer term governance and food security initiative, supported by development partners, ECHO will continue to provide bridging support to food security and livelihoods diversification, to improve these communities' **resilience**. Shelter rehabilitation for victims of violence can also be considered.

**Nutrition:** ECHO will promote the integration of nutrition into the MoH<sup>17</sup> system.

Bearing in mind evolving needs and the resilience agenda, EUR 9.5 million will be allocated for ECHO interventions in Bangladesh.

### INDIA

ECHO will remain engaged in **conflict** situations, whose impact on the population has serious humanitarian consequences. As in previous years, protection (including child protection and respect of IHL) and health/nutrition (focus on outreach primary health care including nutrition for displaced children, psychosocial support for trauma victims and assistance to people living with disabilities) will be among the top priorities.

ECHO will closely monitor the impact of **natural disasters** and any gaps in the local response and intervene when the situation is considered to be an emergency with significant unaddressed needs. Particular attention will be paid to excluded communities (scheduled castes, tribes, other minorities). Cash-based (in line with recent developments i.e. Aadhaar cards) and multi-sector assistance may be provided, in accordance to the needs identified, and to strengthen the communities' resilience to future disasters. A focus on integration of nutrition and DRR in emergency response to natural disasters will be maintained. Interventions shall include advocacy for and/or enhanced linkages with existing government safety nets and other programmes.

Bearing in mind evolving needs and increased absorptive capacity, EUR 3 million will be allocated for ECHO interventions in India. ECHO will remain in close contact with the EU Delegation in New Delhi and the European External Action Service (EEAS) to explore opportunities for advocacy.

### NEPAL

The **early recovery response to the earthquake** will prioritize operations focusing on the following sectors: Shelter (additional shelter support, including small construction tools, quality building materials, demolition and rubble removal, and technical guidance on how to build earthquake-resistant houses); Livelihood (appropriate seeds, tools, other agricultural inputs, livestock replacement and materials to build best crop drying/storage facilities and livestock sheds; cash transfers linked to rehabilitation of agricultural terraces, irrigation channels, etc.); Health (as many health services are operating from tents, these services may need continued support to remain accessible by the communities); Wash and Logistics (innovative ways need to be found to reach communities in the isolated and difficult-access affected areas). Protection and Disaster Risk Reduction should be mainstreamed in the response.

The emergency response to the **earthquake** will prioritize relief operations focusing on the following sectors: WASH (Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Promotion), Health (including medicines, surgical equipment, trauma kits, medical teams, psychosocial support), Shelter and Non Food Items (NFI), Food Assistance, Nutrition, Livelihoods and

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<sup>17</sup> Ministry of Health

Protection. Support to communications, transport, logistics and coordination are also included.

ECHO is planning to finance EUR 0.5 million for **food assistance** to the refugees from Bhutan through WFP. Other donors are expected to finance the remaining part of WFP's programme, but in a context of donor fatigue the European Union is a major and reliable donor. ECHO's response will contribute to maintaining the food consumption and nutritional status of the refugee population, particularly the most vulnerable groups (under-nourished children, elderly, pregnant women) while acknowledging that other factors (care practices, water, hygiene, sanitation) addressed by UNHCR also impact positively on nutritional status. ECHO will continue to advocate for a political solution for the refugees, in association with the EU Delegation and other relevant EU services.

Since Nepal has been designated as a Flagship Country under the EU's Action Plan for **Resilience**, there is close collaboration with the EU Delegation to Nepal for mainstreaming DRR in the development portfolio. Budget support will be also be provided for rehabilitation and reconstruction.

#### Disaster preparedness, disaster risk reduction, resilience

ECHO aims to consolidate the achievements of previous interventions in both rural and urban settings, keeping a focus on neglected disaster prone areas and excluded populations, while ensuring greater involvement of local and institutional stakeholders. Actions can be sector-based (e.g. early warning system) or multi-hazard approaches, as relevant to the targeted areas and partners' expertise; they must contribute to the Hyogo Framework of Action and post 2015 DRR framework, and to the respective regional and national plans, and be implemented in conjunction with the appropriate national institutions at all relevant levels, in particular the National Disaster Management structures and line ministries. ECHO will pay particular attention to:

- Efforts to support 'fit-for-purpose' standardized DRR models in rural and urban settings with a focus on linking with development processes.
- Reinforce local capacities and systems, working through local organisations and institutions, including contributing to build their capacities, provided that it will support the replication and scaling-up of the DP/DRR models promoted.
- Dissemination, promotion and replication of good practices based on evidence.
- Support and promote the implementation of the ISDR<sup>18</sup> Global DRR Campaigns on "Safe Schools and Hospitals" and "Making Cities Resilient".
- Multi-country initiatives that draw upon, seek to harmonize and consolidate expertise in the field of disaster risk reduction/management.
- Targeted actions in the EU Flagship countries to contribute to resilience building.

Partners are expected to actively coordinate at country and field level to create synergies, including through joint initiatives and joint advocacy. They are also expected to harmonise their models and methodologies. Methodologies must be inclusive (gender, children, elderly, ethnic/religious minorities, marginalised social groups, people with disabilities) and culturally appropriate.

Climate change cannot be the sole focus of the interventions. However, when and where relevant, interventions must encompass the impact of climate change on the increasing

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<sup>18</sup> International Strategy for Disaster Reduction  
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frequency, intensity and unpredictability of natural hazards. Small scale infrastructure and services, at community level (mitigation works, maintenance, non-structural mitigation activities) can be included, as well as stock-piling of emergency and relief items, to strengthen the early response capacity of local actors and institutions.

A maximum of EUR 10 million will be allocated for disaster preparedness, disaster risk reduction and resilience interventions in the countries covered by this HIP.

#### **4. LRRD, COORDINATION AND TRANSITION**

##### *1) Other ECHO interventions*

##### BANGLADESH

In addition to the ongoing crises (Rohingya, CHT, water-logging, Nutrition) and coordination, in 2014 ECHO responded to emergencies in Satkhira (continued impact of Tropical Storm Mahasen) and to further enhance the resilience capacities of the population of Hathya Island (total EUR 1 million).

##### INDIA

Since June 2013, in addition to the HIP provisions for victims of conflict (J&K, Chhattisgarh, North East) and for acutely malnourished children (Madhya Pradesh and West Bengal), ECHO has intervened in the following crises: (a) Uttarakhand flash floods 2013 – contribution to the IFRC<sup>19</sup> DREF<sup>20</sup>: EUR 130 000; (b) Cyclone Phailin – HIP 2013 top-up of EUR 3 million and contribution to the IFRC DREF of EUR 96 748; (c) Uttar Pradesh communal violence and displacement - SSR<sup>21</sup>: EUR 150 000; (d) Odisha 2014 monsoon flooding – SSR: EUR 249 000; J&K 2014 flooding – SSR: EUR 250 000.

##### NEPAL

In addition to the HIP provisions for the Bhutanese refugees, ECHO also funded emergency assistance to the victims of monsoon floods in 2014 - SSR: EUR 250 000.

##### Disaster preparedness, disaster risk reduction, resilience

Mainstreaming of disaster preparedness and disaster risk reduction (i.e. risk reduction measures integrated into humanitarian response), when addressing humanitarian consequences of natural disasters, is systematically highlighted as a priority in the region.

##### *2) Other services/donors availability*

##### BANGLADESH

ECHO and DfID are the two main humanitarian donors. ECHO and DEVCO<sup>22</sup> are developing a Joint Humanitarian-Development Framework for food security and nutrition interventions post disasters (floods), which will serve as the basis for implementing a more effective Resilience process. Under this mechanism, in case of major sudden onset disasters both services will address the impact on food security in parallel with their own funding instruments, in a complementary way. Common

<sup>19</sup> International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

<sup>20</sup> Disaster Relief Emergency Fund of the IFRC

<sup>21</sup> ECHO's Small-Scale Response instrument

<sup>22</sup> European Commission's Directorate General for Development and Cooperation - EuropeAid



assessment and analysis will also be developed for the CHT and water-logged areas, leading to complementary and joint design of programmes.

### INDIA

There are limited international development partners because India accepts only a restricted number of donors. Apart from ECHO, there are no other significant humanitarian donors with a continued presence in India. DfID is working on addressing malnutrition, considering government concerns around branded therapeutic foods and the importance of community management of severely malnourished children. DfID is also supporting the World Bank-led South Asia Food and Nutrition Security Initiative (SAFANSI) to increase the commitment of governments and development partners to more effective and integrated food and nutrition-related policies and investments. Existing UK aid commitments in India are expected to be completed in 2015, followed by a new focus on investing in private sector projects that benefit the poor, sharing technical assistance, and working with India on global development issues.

### NEPAL

In response to needs from the earthquake, the EU Member States and the Commission have jointly provided by the end of April 2015 over EUR 33 million. In addition, EU Member States have provided in-kind assistance and support teams.

Besides the EU, the main donors assisting the refugees from Bhutan are the United States of America and Canada.

### Disaster preparedness, disaster risk reduction, resilience

Apart from the EU (ECHO and DEVCO), the main donors for disaster preparedness and disaster risk reduction in the region are DFID, the United States of America, Japan, the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank. Coordination with these donors is maintained at the regional and country level.

In line with the EU resilience agenda, ECHO and DEVCO are increasing their collaboration in order to ensure efficient synergies between ECHO's portfolios and development programming within the framework of the MIPs<sup>23</sup> 2014-20. As a result, DRR mainstreaming into development is strengthened (particularly in Bangladesh and Nepal), and programming in both humanitarian action and development cooperation is more risk-informed, thus contributing to building resilience, reducing the impact of crisis and protecting development achievements.

### 3) Other concomitant EU interventions

### BANGLADESH

Under the EU MIP 2014-2020, three priorities have been identified, based on the government's national development policy: (1) Strengthening Democratic Government and human rights; (2) Food security and nutrition; (3) Education and skills development. Other programmes managed by the EU Delegation are also relevant for ECHO interventions: (a) Ujibitto Safety Net Program 2013-2019 – EUR 38 million, aligned with the government's Rural Employment and Road Maintenance National Program and implemented by the Local Government Engineering Department and the public foundation PKSF<sup>24</sup>; (b) Protection, essential services and durable solutions for refugees

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<sup>23</sup> Multi-Annual Indicative Programmes

<sup>24</sup> Palli Karma-Sahayak Foundation  
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in Bangladesh: programme in support of long-term solutions to the protracted situation in Bangladesh of the Muslim refugees from the northern Rakhine State and enhancement of social cohesion for the vulnerable population in Cox's Bazar– EUR 12.5 million 2008-2014, with an anticipated Phase IV, 2015-2017, EUR 6 million; (c) Supporting local development in the CHT with UNDP; EUR 24 million for the period 2011-2015 bringing the total support to EUR 70 million since 2005; (d) Disaster Preparedness and Management - EUR 13 million has been allocated to UNDP for the Comprehensive Disaster Management Programme 2010-2015. It focuses on poverty alleviation through reducing the impact of national disasters and other human induced hazards.

### INDIA

From 2014 onwards there is no MIP. However, ongoing programmes will continue: budget support to the education sector, runs until end 2017, and the State Partnership Programmes (Chhattisgarh and Rajasthan) will run until end 2015. This clearly limits opportunities for LRRD within EU services. However, calls for proposals under other EU cooperation instruments will continue. Of particular relevance for ECHO among these is the EUR 12.5 million programme "Improving access to information of Public Schemes in backward districts in India", running until December 2018 and targeting 60 districts in 20 states, as it has a focus on health and education services in remote areas.

### NEPAL

In relation to the 2015 earthquake, DEVCO envisages to release budget support as an immediate response to assist Nepal.

Through the Aid to Uprooted People programme, the EU provided EUR 2.95 million between 2011-2014 for addressing protection and material needs of the refugees from Bhutan. Negotiations are currently on-going to ascertain whether this support will be continued. Regular coordination is maintained on the Bhutanese refugee file between ECHO and the EU Delegation.

ECHO and the EU Delegation also cooperate closely to promote the DRR agenda and mainstream it in both humanitarian and development aid. The "National Strategy for Disaster Management in Nepal" was formulated with DIPECHO support. ECHO is an active member of the NRRC, which supports the government in developing a DRR action plan.

### Disaster preparedness, disaster risk reduction, resilience

The EU has launched an initiative to build a Global Climate Change Alliance (GCCA) between the EU and developing countries most vulnerable to climate change (LDC<sup>25</sup> and small island states), with 5 priority areas: (1) Adaptation - supporting developing countries improve their knowledge base on the effects of climate change, so as to develop and implement adaptation strategies; (2) Reduce Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation - decrease CO2 emissions from developing countries by creating incentives for forest protection, while preserving livelihoods and ecosystems depending on forests; (3) Clean technologies; (4) Promoting Disaster Risk Reduction - assist the most disaster prone countries in building their capacities to prepare for, mitigate and prevent natural disasters; (5) Mainstreaming climate change into poverty reduction development strategies - strengthen the on-going implementation of the EU Action Plan

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<sup>25</sup> Least Developed Countries  
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on Climate Change and Development (focused on mainstreaming) in the most vulnerable countries. Additionally, the EU is financing the following regional projects: Support to rural livelihoods and climate change adaptation in the Himalaya, ICIMOD<sup>26</sup>, EUR 10 million, 2012-2017, and EU - South Asia capacity-building for Disaster Risk Management”, World Bank, EUR 10 million, 2014-2020.

4) Exit scenarios.

BANGLADESH

Bangladesh is among the EU Resilience Flagship Countries, this being the main vector of ECHO's exit strategy from non-emergency situations. In implementing the resilience agenda, exit will be prioritised in two regions, i.e. waterlogged areas of Khulna Division and CHT. Both will be supported under a common framework of short and long-term actions, agreed by ECHO, DEVCO and DfID. The coastal belt, islands and Cox's Bazar are priorities for ECHO as these are among the main regions which suffer from recurrent natural disasters, are less developed and more vulnerable. Hence, ECHO, in coordination with development donors, will advocate for interventions promoting resilience of these populations.

INDIA

While acceleration of economic growth in recent years has been impressive, huge social challenges remain and inequality is widening. ECHO will continue to advocate for social equity, highlighting in particular the case of excluded communities (scheduled castes, religious minorities and tribals), which is the root cause of much internal conflict, as well as of undernutrition. It will take many years of development and social inclusion to address the complex and multiple root-causes of structural poverty, inequality and conflict. Peace in J&K is closely linked to India-Pakistan relations; reportedly, in July and August 2014 there were 23 ceasefire violations along the Line of Control.

NEPAL

The refugee caseload has been steadily decreasing since November 2007 due to the third country resettlement programme. This trend is expected to continue during 2015. UNHCR expects the caseload to drop to between 10 000 and 15 000 by 2017. This may correspond to the residual population, unwilling or unable to resettle in a third country. Sustainable solutions are in the meantime being sought for this remaining caseload, involving both the governments of Nepal and Bhutan.

Disaster preparedness, disaster risk reduction, resilience

It is expected that with an improved institutional framework and relevant regulations South Asian governments will increase their commitment to DP/DRR, in line with the Hyogo Framework of Action. The models and tools developed and consolidated through successive DIPECHO funding cycles, and often acknowledged as relevant and cost-efficient, contribute to improving the resilience of populations at risk through greater preparedness and DRR integration into the development process. External support will remain necessary to consolidate the capacity building of local stakeholders, through the integration of disaster preparedness and mitigation measures into local development. The promotion and the handover to local stakeholders and government services of the expertise and models developed through DP/DRR actions are part of the exit strategies.

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<sup>26</sup> International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development  
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