

TECHNICAL ANNEX

Central Asia, Eastern Neighbourhood and Western Balkans

FINANCIAL, ADMINISTRATIVE AND OPERATIONAL INFORMATION

The provisions of the financing decision ECHO/WWD/BUD/2016/01000 and the General Conditions of the Agreement with the European Commission shall take precedence over the provisions in this document.

The activities proposed hereafter are subject to any terms and conditions which may be included in the related Humanitarian Implementation Plan (HIP).

1. CONTACTS

Operational Unit in charge	ECHO/B4
Contact persons at HQ	Muriel DE WIT, Muriel.DE-WIT@ec.europa.eu ; Elena FRANCESCHINIS, Elena.FRANCESCHINIS@ec.europa.eu
in the field	Carlos AFONSO, Carlos.Afonso@echofield.eu

2. FINANCIAL INFO

Indicative Allocation: EUR 7 300 000

Specific Objective 1 - Man-made crises: Western Balkans	HA-FA: EUR 1 500 000
Specific Objective 2 – Natural disasters: Central Asia, South Caucasus - DRR	HA-FA: EUR 600 000
Specific Objective 4 – DIPECHO: Central Asia, South Caucasus	Dis. Prep.: EUR 5 200 000
Totals:	HA-FA: EUR 2 100 000 Dis.Prep.: EUR 5 200 000

3. PROPOSAL ASSESSMENT

3.1. Administrative info

Assessment round 1

- a) Indicative amount: up to EUR 5 800 000 (subject to the availability of payment appropriations, the amount awarded may be lower than the overall indicative amount or be spread over time. More information will be available upon adoption of the general budget of the European Union for the year 2016).
- b) This assessment round concerns the DRR funding for Central Asia and South Caucasus.
- c) Costs will be eligible from 01/01/2016¹. Actions may start from 01/01/2016.
- d) The expected initial duration for the Action is up to 18 months.
- e) Potential partners: All ECHO Partners.
- f) Information to be provided: Single Form².
- g) Indicative date for receipt of the above requested information: by 15/12/2015³.

Assessment round 2

- a) Indicative amount: up to EUR 1 500 000 (subject to the availability of payment appropriations, the amount awarded may be lower than the overall indicative amount or be spread over time. More information will be available upon adoption of the general budget of the European Union for the year 2016).
- b) This assessment round concerns the humanitarian interventions in the Western Balkans.
- c) Costs will be eligible from 01/01/2016⁴. Actions may start from 01/01/2016.
- d) The expected initial duration for the Action is up to 12 months.
- e) Potential partners: All ECHO Partners.
- f) Information to be provided: Single Form⁵
- g) Indicative date for receipt of the above requested information: by 31/05/2016⁶.

¹ 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.

² Single Forms will be submitted to ECHO using APPEL

³ 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.

⁴ 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.

⁵ Single Forms will be submitted to ECHO using APPEL.

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

3.2. Operational requirements:

3.2.1. Assessment criteria:

The assessment of proposals will look at:

- The compliance with the proposed strategy (HIP) and the operational requirements described in this section;
- Commonly used principles such as: quality of the needs assessment and of the logical framework, relevance of the intervention and coverage, feasibility, applicant's implementation capacity and knowledge of the country/region.
- In case of actions already being implemented on the ground, where ECHO is requested to fund a continuation, a visit of the ongoing action may be conducted to determine the feasibility and quality of the Action proposed

3.2.2. Operational guidelines:

3.2.2.1. General Guidelines

In the design of your operation, ECHO policies and guidelines need to be taken into account:

The EU resilience communication and Action Plan

<http://ec.europa.eu/echo/en/what/humanitarian-aid/resilience>

Food Assistance

<http://ec.europa.eu/echo/en/what/humanitarian-aid/food-assistance>

Nutrition

http://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/media/publications/tpd04_nutrition_addressing_undernutrition_in_emergencies_en.pdf

Cash and vouchers

<http://ec.europa.eu/echo/en/what/humanitarian-aid/cash-and-vouchers>

Protection

<http://ec.europa.eu/echo/en/what/humanitarian-aid/protection>

Children in Conflict

http://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/policies/sectoral/children_2008_Emergency_Crisis_Situations_en.pdf

Health

<http://ec.europa.eu/echo/en/what/humanitarian-aid/health>

Civil–military coordination

<http://ec.europa.eu/echo/en/what/humanitarian-aid/civil-military-relations>

Water sanitation and hygiene

http://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/policies/sectoral/WASH_policy_doc_en.pdf

Gender

http://ec.europa.eu/echo/what/humanitarian-aid/gender-sensitive-aid_en

Disaster Risk Reduction

http://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/policies/prevention_preparedness/DRR_thematic_policy_doc.pdf

ECHO Visibility

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

- The communication and visibility articles of the General Conditions annexed to the Framework Partnership Agreements (FPAs) concluded with non-governmental organizations or international organizations or in the General Conditions for Delegation Agreements concluded in the framework of the Financial and Administrative Framework Agreement (FAFA) with the UN.
- Specific visibility requirements agreed-upon in the Single Form, forming an integral part of individual agreements:
 - Section 9.1.A, Standard visibility in the field, including prominent display of the EU humanitarian aid visual identity on EU funded relief items and equipment; derogations are only possible where visibility activities may harm the implementation of the Action or the safety of the staff of the partner, staff of the Implementing partners, the safety of beneficiaries or the local community and provided that they have been explicitly agreed-upon in the individual agreements.
 - Section 9.1.B, Standard visibility recognizing the EU funding through activities such as media outreach, social media engagement and provision of photos stories and blogs; every partner is expected to choose at least 4 out of 7 requirements. If no requirements are selected, a project-specific derogation based on security concerns is needed.
 - Section 9.2., Above standard visibility; applicable if requested and if agreed with ECHO based on a dedicated communication plan prior to signature.

Further explanation of visibility requirements and reporting as well as best practices and examples can be consulted on the dedicated ECHO visibility site: <http://www.echo-visibility.eu/>.

Remote Management

http://dgecho-partners-helpdesk.eu/actions_implementation/remote_management/start

A set of overall principles needs to guide every operation supported by ECHO.

The humanitarian principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence, in line with the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid, and strict adherence to a "**do no harm**" approach remain paramount.

The safe and secure provision of aid: the ability to safely deliver assistance to all areas must be preserved. ECHO requests its partners to include in the project proposal details on how safety and security of staff (including the staff of implementing partners) and assets is being considered as well as an analysis of threats and plans to mitigate and limit exposure to risks. ECHO or its partners can request the suspension of ongoing actions as a result of serious threats to the safety of staff.

Accountability: partners remain accountable for their operations, in particular:

- The identification of the beneficiaries and of their needs using, for example, baseline surveys, KAP-surveys, Lot Quality Assurance Sampling (LQAS) or beneficiary profiling;
- Management and monitoring of operations, and having adequate systems in place to facilitate this;
- Reporting on activities and outcomes, and the associated capacities to collect and analyse information;
- Identification and analysis of logistic and access constraints and risks, and the steps taken to address them.

Gender-Age Mainstreaming: Ensuring gender-age mainstreaming is of paramount importance to ECHO, since it is an issue of quality programming. Gender and age matter in humanitarian aid because women, girls, boys, men and elderly women and men are affected by crises in different ways. Thus, the assistance needs to be adapted to their specific needs - otherwise it risks being off-target, failing its objectives or even doing harm to beneficiaries. It is also a matter of compliance with the EU humanitarian mandate and the humanitarian principles, in line with international conventions and commitments. All project proposals/reports must demonstrate integration of gender and age in a coherent manner throughout the Single Form, including in the needs assessment and risk analysis, the logical framework, description of activities and the gender-age marker section. The Gender-Age Marker is a tool that uses four criteria to assess how strongly ECHO funded humanitarian actions integrates gender and age consideration. For more information about the marker and how it is applied please consult the Gender-Age Marker Toolkit

http://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/policies/sectoral/gender_age_marker_toolkit.pdf

Protection: Mainstreaming of basic protection principles in traditional assistance programmes is of paramount importance to ECHO. This approach is closely linked to the principle of 'do no harm', and also extends the commitment of safe and equal access to

assistance as well as the need for special measures to ensure access for particularly vulnerable groups. All proposals MUST demonstrate integration of these principles, but also in its substantive sections, i.e. the logical framework, result and activity descriptions, etc.

Integration of protection concerns should, in particular, be reflected in any actions implemented in a displacement- hosting context (be it refugees or IDPs), in situations of conflict or in contexts where social exclusion is a known factor, where considerations on inter-communal relationships are of utmost importance for the protection of the affected population. In such contexts, proposals must present a clear analysis of how threats against as well as vulnerabilities and capacities of the affected population impact their protection, and how this is incorporated in the response.

While humanitarian assistance often focuses on community-level interventions, it is important to remember that, in order to fully address many protection issues, it is also necessary to consider the relevance and feasibility of advocacy (structural level) interventions aimed at (a) stopping the violations by perpetrators and/or (b) convincing the duty-bearers to fulfil their responsibilities.

Do no harm: Partners should ensure that the context analysis takes into account threats in addition to vulnerabilities and capacities of affected populations. The analysis should bring out both external threats to the target population as well as the coping strategies adopted to counteract the vulnerabilities. The risk equation model provides a useful tool to conduct this analysis. The model stipulates that *Risks equals Threats multiplied by Vulnerabilities divided by Capacities*, and the way to reduce risks is by reducing the threats and vulnerabilities and increasing the capacities. Depending on the type of threat faced by the population in question, reducing it can be anything from possible/straightforward to impossible/dangerous. In the latter case, one will resort to focusing on vulnerabilities and capacities, but the fact that the analysis has acknowledged the threat will contribute to ensuring that the response subsequently selected does not exacerbate the population's exposure to the risk.

Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR): As part of the commitment of ECHO to mainstream disaster risk reduction in its humanitarian operations, the needs assessment presented in the Single Form should reflect, whenever relevant, the exposure to natural hazards and the related vulnerability of the targeted population and their livelihoods and assets. This analysis should also assess the likely impact of the humanitarian intervention on both immediate and future risks as well as the partner's institutional commitment to and operational capability in managing risk (technical competence in the relevant sectors of intervention. The DRR approach and related measures are relevant in all humanitarian sectors (WASH, nutrition, food assistance and livelihoods, health, protection, etc.), and should be systematically considered in hazard-prone contexts. Risk-informed programming across sectors should protect operations and beneficiaries from hazard occurrence, and include contingency arrangements for additional or expanded activities that might be required. Information from early warning systems should be incorporated into programme decision making and design, even where the humanitarian operation is not the result of a specific hazard.

All ECHO beneficiaries and activities should be appropriately protected from hazards and shocks – according to their likelihood of occurrence, intensity and

possible impact. ECHO uses two complementary methods for DRR: 1) **Integrated DRR** is where ECHO humanitarian interventions are risk informed 2) **Targeted DRR** refers to specific DRR risk reduction actions – that cannot be "integrated" into ECHO response projects (see above) but that will strengthen a system to avoid future humanitarian needs by reducing risk to vulnerable populations.

For targeted DRR interventions, the information in the Single Form should clearly show that:

- all risks have been clearly identified, including their possible interactions;
- the intervention strengthens and promotes the role of the state and non-state actors in disaster reduction and climate change adaptation from national to local levels;
- the measures planned are effective in strengthening the capacity of communities and local authorities to plan and implement local level disaster risk reduction activities in a sustainable way, and have the potential to be replicated in other similar contexts;
- the intervention contributes to improving the mechanisms to coordinate disaster risk reduction programmes and stakeholders at national to local levels.
- demonstrate that the action is designed including the existing good practice in this field;
- the partner has an appropriate monitoring, evaluation and learning mechanism to ensure evidence of the impact of the action and good practice are gathered, and effectively disseminated.

Strengthening coordination: Partners should provide specific information on their active engagement in cluster/sector and inter-cluster/sector coordination: participation in coordination mechanisms at different levels, not only in terms of meetings but also in terms of joint field assessments and engagement in technical groups and joint planning activities. The partners should actively engage with the relevant local authorities and, when feasible and appropriate, stipulate co-ordination in Memoranda of Understanding. When appropriate, partners should endeavour to exchange views on issues of common interest with actors present in the field (e.g. EU, UN, AU missions, etc.). In certain circumstances, coordination and deconfliction with military actors might be necessary. This should be done in a way that does not endanger humanitarian actors or the humanitarian space, and without prejudice to the mandate and responsibilities of the actor concerned.

Integrated approaches: Whenever possible, integrated approaches with multi- or cross-sectoral programming of responses in specific geographical areas are encouraged to maximize impact, synergies and cost-effectiveness. Partners are requested to provide information on how their actions are integrated with other actors present in the same area.

Resilience: ECHO's objective is to respond to the acute humanitarian needs of the most vulnerable and exposed people while taking opportunities to increase their **resilience** – to reduce on-going and future humanitarian needs and to assist a durable recovery. Where

feasible, cost effective, and without compromising humanitarian principles, ECHO support will contribute to longer term strategies to build the capacities of the most vulnerable and address underlying reasons for their vulnerability – to all shocks and stresses.

All ECHO partners are expected to identify opportunities to reduce future risks to vulnerable people and to strengthen livelihoods and capacities. ECHO encourages its partners to develop their contextual risk and vulnerability analysis and to adapt their approach to the type of needs and opportunities identified (see template). This requires partners to strengthen their engagement with government services, development actors and with different sectors. In that regard, ECHO partners should indicate how they will increase ownership and capacity of local actors whenever possible: community mobilisation, CSOs, technical dialogue, coordination and gradual transfer of responsibilities to countries' administration or relevant line ministries.

Good coordination and strategic complementarity between humanitarian and development activities (LRRD approach) are essential to the resilience approach, particularly in relation to i) increasing interest of development partners and governments on nutrition issues; ii) seeking for more sustainable solutions for refugees (access to education, innovative approach toward strengthening self-resilience, etc.); iii) integrating disaster risk reduction into humanitarian interventions.

Community-based approach: In all sectors, interventions should adopt, wherever possible, a community-based approach in terms of defining viable options to effectively help increasing resilience and meeting basic needs among the most vulnerable. Community inclusion should be considered at all stages – design and implementation. Community ownership of the process is more effective and is encouraged. This includes the identification of critical needs as prioritized by the communities, and the transfer of appropriate knowledge and resources.

Response Analysis to Support Modality Selection for all Resource Transfers is mandatory. ECHO will support the most effective and efficient modality of providing assistance, whether it be cash, vouchers or in-kind assistance. ECHO does not advocate for the preferential use of either cash, voucher-based or in-kind humanitarian assistance. Partners should provide sufficient information on the reasons about why a transfer modality is proposed and another one is excluded. The choice of the transfer modality must demonstrate that the response analysis took into account the market situation in the affected area. Multiple contextual factors must be taken into account, including technical feasibility criteria, security of beneficiaries, agency staff and communities, beneficiary preference, needs and risks of specific vulnerable groups (such as Pregnant and Lactating Women, elderly, child headed households etc.), mainstreaming of protection (safety and equality in access), gender (different needs and vulnerabilities of women, men, boys and girls) concerns and cost-effectiveness. Therefore for any type of transfer modality proposed, the partner should provide the minimum information as recommended in the [Thematic Policy Document n° 3 - Cash and Vouchers: Increasing efficiency and effectiveness across all sectors](#) and demonstrate that the modality proposed will be the most efficient and effective to reach the objective of the action proposed.

For in-kind transfer local purchase are encouraged when possible.

Education in Emergencies

ECHO will support education activities that enable children's access to quality education⁷ in ongoing conflicts, complex emergencies and early recovery phases. Furthermore, it may support longer-term educational activities in protracted crises and in refugee/IDP camps Innovative solutions will particularly be supported. Actions targeting transition to formal education systems in preparation for a development intervention may also be supported.

It is essential that education activities are carried out in close connection with protection programs. It is vital to ensure that children can access education where they feel safe and protected. Therefore, education in emergencies activities under this HIP could also include psychosocial support; mine risk education and provision of life-skills, such as vital health, nutrition and hygiene information, HIV prevention, sexual- and reproductive health information and DRR training and awareness.

Education activities could entail enabling access to education for children currently out of school, but also strengthening the quality aspects of education in emergencies, including the recruitment and capacity building of teachers. To reduce the vulnerability of children affected by conflict, actions in the field of education in emergencies and especially conflict situations, should reflect protection, relevant legal frameworks (International Humanitarian Law, International Human Rights Law and Refugee Law), education in mediation and conflict resolution, child protection (with special attention to vulnerable groups such as unaccompanied minors and former child soldiers), community-based educational activities and the promotion of peaceful reconciliation. Hence, education projects funded under this HIP could include components of child protection and peace education (i.e. mediation, conflict resolution, etc.).

In order to ensure holistic response, linking education to other life-saving humanitarian sectors, such as WASH and health could also be considered.

Activities shall be tailored to take into account the different needs of children based on their age, gender and other specific circumstances.

Coordination is essential and all education in emergencies projects need to coordinate and support the priorities set by relevant humanitarian and if appropriate development governance mechanisms (e.g. Global Education Cluster, Refugee Working Groups, communities of practices, Local Education Groups), as well as national structures (e.g. Ministry of Education).

All actions funded on education in emergencies should in their design adhere to the [INEE Minimum Standards for Education: Preparedness, Response, Recovery](#), as well as the [IASC Minimum Standards for Child Protection](#).

⁷ The Commission adhere to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child that defines a 'child' as a person below the age of 18.

3.2.2.2. Specific guidelines

Principles of DRR programming

DRR frameworks

- All actions supported by ECHO under DRR programme have to fit into the respective **national and regional DRR frameworks**, as well as contributing to those being developed. This includes policies, strategies, legislation, planning at various levels, as well as roll-out measures at different levels. Improving policy and legislative frameworks for **disaster prevention and mitigation** should be promoted.
- Proposed disaster preparedness actions should contribute to **building resilience** and a **culture of safety** in line with the **Sendai Framework for DRR 2015-2030 (SFDRR)**, to which all governments in the CAEN region have made commitments.

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

- a) Greater coordination among DIPECHO partners at country level for (i) information sharing and more extensive and systematic exchanges on lessons learnt, challenges, best practices (ii) harmonization of approaches and methodologies (e.g. for risk assessment and mapping, early warning systems, etc.) (iii) research of synergies between projects for a greater impact.
- b) Adaptation, replication, dissemination, and institutionalization of successful DRR and community-based DRR models developed in previous DIPECHO actions;
- c) Facilitate co-ordination and reinforcement of national and regional DRR platforms for an improved co-ordination among national and regional authorities;
- d) Promote actions supporting the implementation at country and regional levels of the Global DRR Campaigns promoted through the UN International Strategy for Disaster Reduction on School Safety, Hospital and Safer Cities;
- e) Support community-based DRR action through promoting activities empowering vulnerable community and building their resilience to disasters by transferring knowledge and equipment, especially in urban environment;
- f) Promote inclusive DRR as a cross-cutting issue (e.g. targeting socially marginalized people and people with disabilities, and the elderly).
- g) Climate change cannot be a sole focus of DRR interventions; however, DRR measures should whenever possible and relevant integrate climate change adaptation and environment protection components;

General approach

▪ The entry point of DRR programme must be **natural hazards**. This by definition excludes man-made disasters and structural problems not linked to disaster events caused by hazards, and entails a **thorough analysis of the natural hazard context**, in particular:

- Identification of hazards' typology;
- Identification and assessment of related negative consequences and a prioritization of those considered most important by the population(s) at risk;
- Description and prioritization of the needs which can most appropriately be addressed by DRR programme.

▪ **Responding to any other major natural/ man-made** crises will be addressed in case such new crises would materialize in the course of the duration of current HIP.

▪ While not directly supporting **Climate Change Adaptation** (CCA) actions, DG ECHO considers CCA concepts an integral component of DRR. In this context, although Climate Change cannot be the entry point of a DRR programme, risk analysis, tools and methodologies should integrate CCA concepts as well as environment protection components when relevant and feasible. In addition, linkages to and promotion of methodologies for transfer of experience into climate change initiatives are strongly recommended.

▪ Actions supported by DRR programme should prioritise **low-cost, affordable and replicable methodologies** adaptable to local financing and planning mechanisms or mainstreamed in development actions in collaboration with other donors whenever possible, through advocacy measures and systematic collaboration with the development sector.

▪ The strategic dialogue with stakeholders that results in the conception and design of DRR programme will have to **successfully merge technical knowledge with local knowledge** in a socio-culturally appropriate manner, thereby assuring an acceptable, effective system that capitalises existing knowledge and capacities and consequently maximises ownership and sustainability.

▪ Actions should ensure participatory approaches and methodologies that address **vulnerabilities and inclusiveness** as far as gender, children, elderly, marginalised groups, people with disabilities, ethnic minorities are concerned. Full participation by those vulnerable groups and persons, beyond protection aspects, should always be taken into consideration.

▪ **Strong collaboration** between ECHO partners at country level is an essential requirement. Collaboration is expected at country and field levels in view of creating

synergies and consolidating the common methodological models through joint efforts, from project development to implementation, at technical and advocacy levels. Partners' proposals should clearly commit to adhere to these working modalities and reflect this through joint activities and indicators in the Single Forms and Logical frameworks.

- The partner must demonstrate a clearly defined strategic and programmatic perspective that will ultimately conclude with phase-out and handover, either to the target community/institution, the appropriate authorities, or an appropriate longer-term funding instrument, so that sustainability and replication of actions undertaken is maximized. This is crucial in the countries where ECHO decided on a phase out after the next round, namely Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. For the other countries in the region, where a phase down approach is applied, these recommendations remain valid as well. In this sense, sustainability and replication plans proposed by the stakeholders to whom the project will be handed are welcomed. It is recognized that in some cases possibilities for hand-over to local actors are limited. Partners may also propose other approaches.

- **Regional projects** covering Central Asian countries are encouraged, where this approach can contribute, to increased impact and exchanges of good practices, confidence building in the field of DRR and consolidating common efforts at technical and advocacy levels. Similarly, regional projects covering South Caucasus countries are encouraged. Particular impulse will be given to the continuation and replication of trans-border projects.

- Investing in **improving policy and legislative frameworks** for DRR/DP in those Central Asian and South Caucasus countries where there is a substantial financial capacity to mainstream DRR, but also a considerable level of commitment of respective governments to change DRR legislative frameworks.

- Establishment of formal and regular **coordination mechanisms** among ECHO partners (ad minima) is strongly encouraged, both at country and regional levels.

- Develop **risk transfer measures** aiming at minimizing the impact of disaster for the vulnerable communities (transferring risks away from vulnerable communities and governments) should be considered. Examples of risk transfer mechanisms and schemes include: disaster insurance (insurance paid to compensate for loss caused by disasters); a contingency funding plan (CFP) as a liquidity crisis management instrument; a micro insurance plan which provides protection to individuals who have little savings and is tailored specifically for lower valued assets and compensation for illness, injury or death; post-disaster loans, aimed at offsetting economic losses because of reduced revenues caused by the disasters; weather insurance can also reduce risk in planning.

Miscellaneous

- It is imperative that strategies **encompass low cost solutions and technical assistance designs** that accurately reflect the degree of sustained budgetary commitment that can realistically be expected from national, sub-national and/or local budgets.
- Applicants must systematically consider the **capitalisation of experiences** (key lessons learned and **lessons to be applied**, as well as documentation processes) and their dissemination in widely and appropriate manner (development of new documents should be limited to the cases when there are no similar tools or when no experiences have been already systematised). These activities should be explicitly envisaged under the activities and in the work plan of each proposal aiming at developing a **common documentation methodology**.
- To ensure that the large number of software innovative approaches is implemented within the timeframe of the project, **a project manager with international experience in DRR/DRM is required**. ECHO partners need to ensure timely recruitment and to ensure he/she is in place **as soon as the project starts**. For consortia, **the timely recruitment of a coordinator** (in addition to projects managers) is **also strongly recommended** to ensure overall coordination and quality. The development of Terms of Reference (ToR) for project manager/coordinator and a detailed description of monitoring /quality assurance mechanisms within the project are welcomed.
- Partners should integrate into their proposals and budgets, participation in joint activities with other DRR stakeholders and ECHO partners (e.g. Disaster Reduction Day, programming processes and consultations on the implementation of DRR agendas; participation in and contribution to regional workshops and regional DRR/CCA forums contributing to regional DRR/CCA efforts) from the beginning of the Action Plan. A Regional Lessons Learnt workshop will be organised at the end of the Action Plan.
- **Donor visibility** is a requirement. Proposals should include relevant measures to this effect. A communication plan must be submitted for prior approval, when visibility costs exceed the threshold indicated in ECHO Visibility Toolkit.
- Activities related to the **promotion of DRR** (communication and advocacy on DRR, awareness- raising, public events such as DRR Day celebrations, journalists' visits as part of DRR training) must be included under project results and their associated means and costs.
- Monitoring by the Partner and by ECHO must be possible.
- **Study visits** will not be preferred and ECHO will expect a reasonable justification from the Partner.

- **Baseline surveys** at the beginning and at the end of the project at community and institutional level should be carried out in order to measure the achievements of the project (e.g. KAP⁸ surveys).

General Recommendations

The following are non-sectorial recommendations for the applicants, not conditions that have to be necessarily fulfilled:

- Collaborative strategic formulation and planning between potential ECHO partners that promote **mutual complementarity** is strongly encouraged. This can take the form of **joint initiatives** implemented through several projects or joint projects (**consortia**). Nevertheless, a clear **operational added value** should be demonstrated. Different intervention modalities are open to partners such as national project (one operation, one proposal, one agreement), multi-country projects (same organisation with several countries targeted and one agreement) or regional projects (one operation with several countries targeted in one agreement). Regional projects go beyond the mere sum of national projects and should have an outreach component. They should be defined taking into consideration existing regional or global initiatives and involving national stakeholders in the definition and formulation of the operations. For multi-country projects or regional projects, a project coordinator with responsibility for project implementation covering the project as a whole in all the countries of the action will be requested to ensure a coherent approach.

Foreseeable administrative, logistic, security and operational constraints as well as time needed for institutional agreements should be integrated in the proposal timeframe, be realistic and not over ambitious in the formulation. Appropriate staffing should be foreseen to ensure overall coordination and quality.

- While systematically referring to the Sector "DRR/Disaster Preparedness" in the Single form, applicants should consider addressing one or more of the proposed sub-sectors, based on their experience, mandates and specialization.
- Partners are encouraged, when applicable, to take into account Sphere minimum standards, indicators and guidance notes so as to ensure the quality of the DRR actions proposed.
- Synergy with supranational and global DRR strategies such as the UN International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR) is encouraged in particular in the case of regional projects.

⁸ Knowledge, Attitudes and Practice

- It is recommended to start preparatory activities such as preparation of strategic alliances, agreements with institutions and partners, staff recruitment, terms of reference, etc. as soon as the partner receives the communication that the proposal has been accepted in order to gain implementation time. The eligibility date can be fixed before the start date of implementation.
- Integration of technical, academic and scientific institutions in projects' activities is encouraged particularly when the partner does not have the technical expertise available in house.
- Reinforcement of local response capacities through building stocks of emergency and relief items may only be considered when adequate local management capacity is proven and accountability ensured.
- Activities aiming at piloting, promoting and strengthening the protection of livelihood and economic assets in a DRR/CCA context are not a priority but may be considered.

A. Main selection criteria

Relevance

- How relevant is the proposal to the **objectives** and **priorities** outlined in the Humanitarian Implementation Plan and in Section A of the present Technical Annex. In particular:
 - Does the action contribute to the promotion and dissemination of community based DRR models developed, towards sustainable options?
 - Does the action transfer ownership and leadership to local actors, for them to implement DRR?
 - Does the action encompass inclusive and participatory approaches, and integrate cross-cutting issues?
- Is **natural hazard** the entry point and rationale for the intervention? Does the action target the **most vulnerable and hazard prone populations and areas**?
- Is the proposal **part of the applicant's strategy** in the country of intervention?
- Does the applicant integrate DRR across its programmes in the country of intervention in a strategic and comprehensive manner?
- Has the applicant sought to understand the **changes** that have taken place at the local level **in the context of a changing climate**, and considered how the action contributes to developing adaptive capacity?
- Does the action **contribute to development programmes** in the target area?
- Does the action fit within the established or planned **DRR legal, policy and planning frameworks (including Sendai Framework on DRR)**?
- Does the project take into account: **gender, children, elderly people, environmental, cultural issues and disabilities**?
- Does the proposal take into account lessons learnt/best practices and recommendations of evaluation missions from the previous DIPECHO projects?

Methodology

- Does the action address the **findings** of the **needs assessment**?
- How clearly defined and strategically chosen are the **stakeholders** involved (intermediaries, final beneficiaries, **target groups**)?
- Have the **needs** of the **target groups** proposed and the final beneficiaries been clearly defined and does the proposal address them appropriately? To what degree have the

target beneficiaries been involved in project conception and design? How will they be involved in implementation, monitoring, evaluation and follow-up?

- Has the proposal been **discussed** and agreed with the local authorities responsible for disaster risk reduction at the appropriate levels?
- How coherent is the overall design of the operation (**logical framework** including **objectively verifiable indicators** relevant to the proposed outcomes and timeframe)? Are the **activities** proposed appropriate, practical, and consistent with the local constraints, the objectives and expected results?
- Is the **Action Plan** clearly detailed and feasible? Are the technical **human resources** allocated to the operation adequate, including the technical aspect? Does it include adequate preparatory time or inception phase? Is the presence of a project manager with international experience ensured?
- Does the proposal define contingency measures and activities included in case of the materialisation of pre-identified risks ("plans B")? Do these properly address **security** and/or **access** constraints?
- Does the proposal contain **objectively verifiable indicators** for the outcome of the operation?

M&E Sustainability

- Does the proposal include a clear Monitoring and Evaluation system (M&E) that will allow the applicants to **measure the benefits** of the action?
- Are the expected results of the proposed action leading to sustainability: financially, institutionally, locally and at policy level and within a well-established timeline?
- Is the operation likely to have a tangible **impact** on its target groups?
- Is the proposal likely to have **multiplier effects**?

Budget and cost-effectiveness

- Are the proposed costs relevant and justified for the proposed outcomes?
- Is the proposed expenditure **necessary** for the implementation of the operation?
- Are **material** resources and **services needed properly described**?
- Are Means and Costs related to results and activities sufficiently explained?

B. Financial questions

There is no specific pre-allocation per country or region. Priority will be given to quality proposals and communities/countries with highest vulnerability. However, some general orientations will be taken into consideration when approving an action to ensure the achievement of ECHO's strategic priorities both at country and regional levels.

As a general policy, priority will be given to co-financed projects, in order to maintain the perspective of contributing to a strategy elaborated by a partner.

As a general rule, ECHO's contribution will not exceed 85% of the total eligible costs of the action. It is expected that at least 15% of the total eligible costs will be financed from the partners' own resources, or from sources other than the European Union's budget. This priority will be applied in the overall appraisal of submitted proposals. The proposal, both in the narrative and financial documents, should reflect the full amount proposed (i.e. the co-financing and the contribution requested to ECHO, without separate earmarking).

Except in duly justified circumstances, costs related to external audits will not be approved. Audits on ECHO funded projects may be carried out at any moment by the European Commission.