

## Questions and Answers (v. 24.02.2010)

### 1. Call for Expression of Interest

**Q 1 - The title mentions "Expression of Interest" whereas all the supporting documentation, guidelines etc. seem to suggest a full application is expected, and no concept notes. Do interested agencies have to officially "Express their interest"? If so, what level of detail is required in this expression?**

A - The legal base of DIPECHO is article 2.f of the Regulation on Humanitarian Aid. DIPECHO thus falls under the framework of humanitarian aid and as such should follow the same procedures. In particular, EU-funded humanitarian aid is exempted from the obligation of calls for proposals. However, because disaster preparedness gives more room for ahead planning and more time to select than humanitarian response, ECHO has taken the option of selecting DIPECHO proposals through open calls. Open calls streamline the process within the available timeframe and allow streamlining the appraisal of suitable, quality proposals. Applicants have to express their interest within a given timeframe. Expressions of interest have to be presented in the form specified by the Guidelines, but once submitted they can still be fine-tuned, in the same way as proposals presented in the framework of humanitarian response.

As a rule, an expression of interest in DIPECHO actions following the launch of a new Action Plan is expected to be presented on the Single Form, completed as appropriate following the indications of the Guidelines. An organisation who chooses to present a different document with different modalities than specified in the Guidelines risks to have its expression of interest not taken into account because it is not sufficiently or timely articulated and not inclusive of all the elements required by ECHO for a proper appraisal in due time.

### 2. Duration of an action and eligibility of expenditures

**Q 1 - The Guidelines indicate that there is an 18-month timeframe to implement 15-month projects, and that expenditure is eligible as from 15<sup>th</sup> of May. What does it mean? Does it mean that we can implement activities for 18 months and that expenses will be eligible from 15<sup>th</sup> of May until the end of the project? Our team fears that the grant agreement could be 18 months but project activities' implementation restricted to 15 months.**

A - There is no change compared to the 6th Action Plan. The guidelines clearly indicate that the proposed actions:

- cannot be longer than 15 months
- cannot start before 1/5/2010
- cannot end after 31/10/2011

This means that projects can have a maximum duration of 15 months and that they must be implemented (i.e. initiated and completed) within the period comprised between the 1/5/2010 and the 31/10/2011.

During their implementation period and upon relevant justification, some actions can be extended through an amendment to the original funding agreement. In these justified cases, the final total duration of the project can become longer than 15 months. In no case, however, can actions be extended beyond 31/10/2011 (unless for reasons of "force majeure").

The start date for eligibility of expenditure is to be agreed with DG ECHO and cannot be earlier than 1/5/2010. Typically, the eligibility of expenditure starts with the start date of the action. In duly justified circumstances, partners can request that the eligibility start date be set earlier than the action's start date. In these cases, if the request is accepted, the eligibility period (= the time allowed to commit the project expenditure) will be longer than the implementation period (= the time allowed to carry out the project activities).

### 3. Geographical Coverage

#### *Burma/Myanmar*

**Q 1 - For Myanmar, the geographic target area in the guidelines is stated as 'the western coastal areas from the Irrawaddy Delta to Rakhine State'. Can you please confirm if this target area covers the whole of the Irrawaddy Division as well? Or what specific area falls under western coastal areas?**

A - The targeted areas have to be understood in consideration of the geographical coastal characteristics of the intended project area, in direct relation with the natural hazards DIPECHO intends to focus on for this first country programme. Therefore, only the coastal areas of the Irrawaddy Division and up to Rakhine State will be considered.

#### *Multi-country*

**Q 2 - Will there be a preference by DG ECHO for Multi-Country applications, by comparison to separate country proposals?**

A - DG ECHO will first and foremost look at the quality of the proposals and their relevance (please refer to points 3 and 4 as well as to pp. 28-30 of the Guidelines). Any country component of a Multi-Country proposal will be considered and appraised together with all proposals submitted for that particular country, looking at the best way to ensure a comprehensive, complementary and coherent country programme.

It is up to applicants to choose the option which is the most appropriate in respect to the country context and needs, and the most feasible and workable for the organisation, in respect to its operational capacity. Applicants should in all cases remain realistic in the scope and number of proposals they present.

### 4. Priorities and sectors of intervention

**Q 1 - The reference to HFA priorities does not appear in the Single Form. Shall we put this into an attachment or for each result (after the sub sector)?**

A - There is no obligation to refer to the HFA priorities, but such a reference is most welcome. At minima, it could be a simple reference linking each relevant result (or activity, or indicator) to the corresponding main Priority of the HFA (I, II, III, IV or V). Such a reference should appear in the Logframe. At best, applicants could provide a wider elaboration of the intended activities in relation to the said Priority. This should appear in section 4.3.2 of the Single Form.

**Q 2 - Is the list of the sectors and sub-sectors the same as the one in the 6th DIPECHO Action Plan for SEA?**

A - The sector to use is "Disaster Preparedness". The list of sub-sectors is as indicated in Point 2.2.1 of the Financing Decision ECHO/DIP/BUD/2010/01000.

## 5. Eligibility of applicants

### **Q 1 - Can non-profit making organizations that are in the process of applying for signing the FPA 2008 still flag their interest in the 7<sup>th</sup> DIPECHO Action Plan for South East Asia?**

A - As a general rule, NGOs who have applied to sign the ECHO FPA and whose application is in the process of being screened can still show their interest and send a Single Form in accordance with the Guidelines of the 7 DIPECHO Action Plan SEA. However, the potential signature of a grant agreement, resulting from a favourable appraisal of the proposed action, can only occur if the application process for the signature of the FPA gives a positive result.

## 6. Presence in the country of operation

### **Q 1 - Does the grant holder also have to be present in the country of operation with a MoU?**

A - Generally speaking, the presence of the grant holder in the country of intervention is desirable, although it is not compulsory. When the grant holder chooses to work through other agencies, a sound relationship between the grant holder and its implementing partner(s) is a must. This implies criteria such as: clear and proactive role of the grant holder in the partner(s)'s strategy and action, grant holder's own strategy in relation to the proposed country of intervention and partner's programme, grant holder's input or added-value to the project in terms of geographical, sectoral and DRR strategy, complementarities between partners. These criteria should be clearly defined in point 3.1 and point 7 of the Single Form.

## 7. - Safer City Campaign

### **Q 1 - What is the scale of a “small and medium city”?**

A - There is no official definition of a “small to medium city”. However, the following general and indicative criteria can be considered: areas or locations that can accommodate approximate populations of 3,000 to 50,000 persons are considered towns. Above these figures would relate to various sizes of cities. The concept of small and medium sized city needs to be contextualized on a country to country or location to location basis. More specifically, for the selection of target areas in an urban setting, indicators related to the city's geography, economy, politics, social characteristics, as well as the effects on, and caused by, the built environment should be taken into consideration. It is up to the applicant to elaborate on these factors and justify the choice of the pilot urban location.

As indicated in the Guidelines, DG ECHO will prioritise medium and small cities. This does not exclude wider urban contexts, in particular in the framework of support to the global or regional campaign. However, in line with DG ECHO's mandate and DIPECHO focus to work in the most remote and vulnerable areas, and also in view of the lesser resources available in smaller urban centers, compared, for instance to megacities, DG ECHO would like to maintain an approach relevant to “community level” in relatively limited urban environments.