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**Disaster Preparedness and Prevention (DPP):
State of play and strategic orientations for EC policy
Working Paper**

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1. INTRODUCTION

Year after year 200 million people are affected by natural disasters or technological accidents world-wide. More than 60,000 of them are killed and material damage accounts for 69 billion € a year in the last decade. While the number of geophysical disasters reported over the last decade has remained fairly steady, there has been a steep increase of hydro-meteorological disaster events (floods, tropical storms, droughts) since 1996¹. Many scientists assume that this trend will continue and could even be reinforced as a result of global climate change. Together with increasing population pressure and changing habitation patterns in the coming 35 years², this scenario suggests that, a few years down the road, the number of people affected by natural disasters could increase massively. On top of that, some scientists suggest that climate change may cause large scale migration of populations and trigger new or exacerbate existing conflicts about scarce resources like arable land or water.

Such scenarios will inevitably be a major challenge to any of the existing external relations policies of the European Community, be it in the area of poverty reduction, conflict prevention, human rights or humanitarian assistance, particularly in view of stagnating aid budgets.

As a key donor of development assistance and humanitarian aid the EC must have a vital interest to prevent such bleak scenarios from becoming reality. Promoting sustainable development is one such counter strategy, in which the EC has already made progress and which, as a side-effect, can prevent or mitigate the effect of natural disasters. It is a necessary but not sufficient condition to mitigate the impact of natural disasters. Specific disaster preparedness and prevention measures are necessary to ensure the success of sustainable development.

The **objective** of the present paper is to take stock of the state of play at EC level and to present the outline for an EC strategy on disaster preparedness and prevention. It is written from the perspective and experience of ECHO but should be open for amendments and proposals from other Commission services, aiming at a truly common and coherent approach on an issue that has been addressed so far in a piecemeal and ad hoc fashion.

¹ Figures taken from International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC): World Disasters Reports 2001 and 2002.

² According to the World Bank there will be an increase of 2.5 billion people, mainly in developing countries. <http://www.worldbank.org/depweb/english/modules/social/pgr/>

For the sake of clarity and simplicity, and to avoid a debate of institutional competence, the scope of the paper will limit itself to natural disasters³ and to Commission instruments.

2. BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE FOR AN EC DISASTER PREPAREDNESS AND PREVENTION STRATEGY

During the past four decades, natural hazards such as earthquakes, volcanic activity, landslides, tropical cyclones, floods, drought, and other hazards have caused major loss of human lives and livelihoods. They equally destroyed economic and social infrastructure and created environmental damage⁴.

Economic losses have increased almost 10 times during this period. In recent years, floods in Bangladesh, Mozambique and elsewhere, volcanic eruptions in Ecuador, DRC, Indonesia and the Philippines, and earthquakes in Afghanistan, El Salvador, Indonesia, Peru or Turkey have created widespread social, economic and environmental destruction. In some cases, natural disasters have amplified man-made emergencies, as epitomized by recent events in Afghanistan.

The escalation of severe disaster events triggered by natural hazards is increasingly threatening not only the sustainable development and poverty-reduction initiatives in the disaster-affected countries but in many cases also requires the provision of humanitarian aid.

The loss of human lives and the rise in the cost of reconstruction efforts and loss of development assets has forced the issue of disaster reduction and risk management higher on the policy agenda of affected governments as well as multilateral and bilateral agencies and NGOs. This trend led to the adoption of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR) by governments to succeed and promote implementation of the recommendations emanating from the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction (IDNDR, 1990-1999).

ISDR estimates that in economic terms the global cost of natural disasters is anticipated to exceed \$300 billion annually by the year 2050, if the projected impacts of climate change are not countered with aggressive disaster reduction measures. The environmental impact of natural hazards, in particular the loss of environmental services (water, forest, biodiversity, ecosystem function, etc.), is still difficult to assess and is often underestimated. Indirect economic losses of 'market share,' following the disruption to trade after a disaster, also is not factored in.

The lack of capacity to limit the impact of hazards remains a particular burden for developing countries. An estimated 97 percent of natural disaster-related deaths each year occur in developing countries and, although smaller in absolute figures,

³ For the purpose of this note, the definition of natural disaster will include epidemics.

⁴ This chapter is largely based on a background paper of the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR) Secretariat: Understanding the Links between Vulnerability and Risk to Disasters Related to Development and Environment. The paper was prepared by a panel of 350 experts from 80 countries for the Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development August/September 2002. See <http://www.unisdr.org/unisdr/WSSDdocrevisedsept02.htm>

the percentage of economic loss in relation to the Gross National Product (GNP) in developing countries far exceeds that in developed countries. 24 of the 49 least developed countries face high levels of disaster risk; at least six of them have been hit by major disasters every year in the last 15 years, with long-term consequences for human development.

In geographical terms, Asia is disproportionately affected with approximately 43 percent of all natural disasters in the last decade. During the same period, Asia accounted for almost 70 percent of all lives lost due to natural hazards.

The European Union is well placed to assume a leading role in the pursuit of a disaster reduction strategy within the context of global sustainable development. It is the world's largest donor of development aid, and one of the main donors of humanitarian assistance. The Commission has acknowledged the triple challenge imposed by disaster preparedness:

- to developing countries themselves because disasters continuously exhaust the coping capacities of their populations and imprison them in the poverty trap
- to donors of development cooperation assistance because the effects of natural disasters pose a high risk to the billions of Euro invested in cooperation projects each year
- to humanitarian assistance because scarce humanitarian funds are drained by at least partly avoidable effects of natural catastrophes, particularly of such catastrophes that are known to be recurrent on a regular basis (e.g. epidemics, annual floods) and for which sufficient remedies are envisageable through forward-looking infrastructural and policy measures.

Several recent policy documents, notably the Commission Communication on a Global Partnership for Sustainable Development⁵, highlight that it is imperative to design appropriate development policies to reduce disaster risk. In this Communication the Commission committed itself to "*integrate disaster prevention into European Union development and environment policies*", thus reinforcing the commitment made already in the 2001 Commission Communication on Linking Relief, Rehabilitation and Development⁶ where disaster preparedness is seen as an issue that requires "*increased attention both in humanitarian assistance, and particularly in development co-operation strategies and programmes*".

In addition, the (draft) Commission Communication on Climate Change in the Context of Development Co-operation⁷ stresses that "*since people and all types of systems are generally more vulnerable to sudden disruptive changes than to gradual ones, adaptation options [to the adverse effects of climate change] should also take into account disaster preparedness and prevention*".

⁵ "Towards a Global Partnership for Sustainable Development". COM (2002) 82 final, 13.2.2002

⁶ "Linking Relief, Rehabilitation and Development-An Assessment". COM (2001) 153 final, 23.4.2001

⁷ This draft Communication is expected to be adopted by the Commission by end February or early March 2003.

The systematic incorporation of disaster preparedness and prevention activities into development policies, therefore, is increasingly becoming a political imperative in order to avert natural disaster, and to reduce/mitigate negative impacts of such disasters on the population. Appropriate disaster preparedness also results in more cost-effectiveness and more efficient allocation of humanitarian assistance and a more rapid recovery from the effects of disasters.

Some agreement on concepts and terminology is still necessary among services to clarify the distribution of roles. Currently there is too much confusion about concepts and thus a considerable risk of misunderstanding and duplication of work. ECHO experts have proposed the following working definition, which will be used in this paper:

Preparedness : Organisational activities which ensure that the systems, procedures and resources required to confront a natural disaster are available in order to provide timely assistance to those affected, using existing mechanisms wherever possible. (e.g. training, awareness raising, establishment of disaster plans, evacuation plans, pre-positioning of stocks, early warning mechanisms, strengthening indigenous knowledge).

Mitigation: measures taken before disasters which intend to reduce or eliminate their impact on society and environment. These measures reduce the physical vulnerability of existing infrastructures or of vulnerable sites which endanger directly the populations (e.g. retrofitting of buildings, reinforce "lifeline" infrastructure).

Prevention : Activities conceived to ensure a permanent protection against a disaster. These include engineering, physical protection measures, legislative measures for the control of land use and codes of construction. These activities reduce the physical vulnerability and/or exposure to risks through infrastructures (e.g. dams, flood barriers, building of refuges) and through improving existing infrastructures (e.g. restoring original flood patterns of rivers in order to avoid excessive floods downstream) and sustainable development practices (e.g. no deforestation in upstream areas, active reforestation).

3. THE EC POLICY ON DISASTER PREPAREDNESS AND PREVENTION - STATE OF PLAY AND LESSONS LEARNT

3.1. Legal provisions

DPP is not systematically enshrined in all EC external relations aid programmes and related legal documents. Preliminary research undertaken by ECHO has identified only three legal documents in which explicit reference is made to disaster preparedness.

3.1.1. ECHO

DPP is part of ECHO's core mandate. It is specifically mentioned ECHO's legal base, Council Regulation (EC) no. 1257/96 on Humanitarian Aid. Article 1 and 2(f) therein specify that "*such aid shall also comprise operations to prepare for risks or prevent disasters or comparable*

exceptional circumstances" and "...The principal objectives of the humanitarian aid operations... shall be ... to ensure preparedness for risks of natural disasters ... and use a suitable rapid early-warning and intervention system."

3.1.2. Cotonou Agreement

The new Partnership Agreement signed between the EU and the African, Caribbean and Pacific States on 23 June 2000 in Cotonou/Benin ("Cotonou Agreement")⁸ stipulates in Article 30 concerning regional cooperation that cooperation activities shall support a wide variety of functional and thematic fields, including *"regional initiatives for disaster preparedness and mitigation"*. Similarly, the scope of financing also encompasses disaster preparedness (Article 60g).

3.1.3. ALA programme

Council Regulation (EEC) No 443/92 of 25 February 1992 on financial and technical assistance to, and economic cooperation with, the developing countries in Asia and Latin America states in Article 5 that *"...Part of the aid may be used for rehabilitation and reconstruction following disasters of all kinds and for disaster-prevention measures"* Article 6 of that Regulation further specifies that *"Financial and technical assistance, shall be extended to the relatively more advanced ALA developing countries, in particular in the following specific fields and cases:... prevention of natural disasters and reconstruction in their wake"*.

It is important to note, however, that the Commission proposal for a successor instrument of Regulation 443/92 does not contain a direct reference to DPP any more⁹.

3.1.4. Other Instruments

All other main external aid instruments (MEDA, TACIS, PHARE, CARDS, Regulation (EEC) 1292/96 on Food Aid and Food Security, Regulation on Aid to Uprooted People, Rapid Reaction Mechanism, Regulation 2258/96 on Rehabilitation) do not explicitly make any reference to DPP.

One may thus conclude three things from this brief analysis:

- Although DPP is not systematically part and parcel of Community legislation, the legal situation allows an almost world wide coverage of disaster preparedness measures through Commission instruments other than ECHO. Yet, in order to be fully credible, amendments of legal instruments in the area of external relations should include a DPP element, notably MEDA and TACIS.

⁸ For the full text see OJ of 15.12. 2000; L 317/17 and 18.

⁹ COM (2002)340 final of 31.12.2002.

- The situation raises questions whether the legal provisions are sufficiently developed to match the current international commitments in the area of disaster preparedness.
- The fact that DPP is not specifically mentioned in the legal base, does not exclude that programmes can more or less directly contribute to DPP.

3.2. State of Play: ECHO's DPP policy

ECHO's disaster preparedness policy rests on three pillars: the DIPECHO programme, mainstreaming and advocacy.

3.2.1. The DIPECHO programme

In 1996, ECHO set up the so-called DIPECHO (Disaster Preparedness ECHO) programme. DIPECHO is the name given to the specific programmes financed by ECHO in the area of disaster preparedness and reduction of risks to natural catastrophes within budget line B7-219. In order to optimise the administration and financing measures, Action Plans have been established which focus on geographical zones in areas under high risk of natural disasters and low coping capacities.

DIPECHO's main objective is to address DPP in a regional framework, targeting the most vulnerable populations in the main disaster-prone areas in the world (with low coping capacities). Its main focus is on "preparation" rather than "mitigation" or "prevention". Some financing of Mitigation works is also included with demonstrative purposes. The scope of activities that were supported under DIPECHO¹⁰ is wide and include:

- community training / capacity building, (including e.g. material and services for capacity building, training of disaster brigades, simulation exercises)
- provision of equipment (including e.g. equipment for refuges, primary emergency kits, scientific material)
- small-scale mitigation works for demonstration purposes and awareness raising (including e.g. reforestation, machines and material, building of emergency shelters, water tanks)
- early warning systems (including, e.g. radio communications)
- emergency response planning, hazard mapping

Other activities supported include advocacy and public awareness raising, education, research and dissemination, facilitation of coordination, institutional strengthening.

¹⁰ Comprehensive information is not available at this stage. The information based on the situation in Central America and the Caribbean communicated by ECHO Managua.

DIPECHO projects have mainly focused on the local level where short term results are possible and where ECHO partners are most effective. A couple of projects have also been financed to support regional organisations (CEPRENAC in Central America, ADPC in Asia) for coordination and information activities in order to promote the exchange of best practices.

DIPECHO's annual budget amounts to approximately 8 million €. More than 200 projects were funded since 1994. The total spending 1998 - 2002 was 39 million €. DIPECHO currently encompasses 5 regional Action Plans: Central America, Caribbean, Andean Community, South East Asia, South Asia. An Action Plan for Central Asia will be launched in 2003.

The method applied for each Action Plan follows an established pattern:

- diagnosis of the regional situation
- definition of a strategy
- publishing call for proposals on ECHO's web-site
- assessment and selection of projects
- approval of Action Plan by the Commission after the Member States have given their opinion in the HAC Committee.
- Implementation: Contracts are awarded and the projects are launched on the ground.

All Action Plans except for the Caribbean have been assessed by external evaluations. Their results will be taken into consideration when the follow-up Action Plan is established. The main results of the most recent evaluations are presented in annex 1.

3.2.2. Mainstreaming DPP into ECHO's humanitarian operations

The second pillar of ECHO's DPP policy can be characterised as a step-by-step integration of DPP elements into ECHO's main operations. Examples for such activities include operations such as

- Training in earthquake resistant rehabilitation after earthquakes (El Salvador and Peru)
- Training in water quality control after floods (Indonesia)
- Emergency cholera prevention and treatment (Somalia)
- Food security monitoring and early warning (Ethiopia, Central America)
- Cholera preparedness (Tanzania)

Those activities are undertaken outside DIPECHO as an integral part of ECHO programmes in areas affected already by humanitarian crises.

The establishment of suitable crisis information systems at ECHO HQ (e.g. Impending Crisis Knowledge Management System ICONS, Digital Map Archive) can also be considered as mainstreaming activities.

3.2.3. *Advocacy*

For a long time ECHO has been the only Commission service dealing with disaster preparedness. It has not been a priority for key development players as was confirmed in the 1999 Commission Communication on Assessment and Future of Humanitarian Aid (“Art. 20 Communication”): *“Outside ECHO, the Commission pays very little attention to disaster preparedness in its development policy and in its research programmes”*¹¹.

ECHO therefore has continuously advocated the key services in the area of development cooperation and external relations (DGs DEV, RELEX, AIDCO) to integrate DPP in their own programming and operations. For example, in July/September 2001, ECHO organised two regional meetings, one on Asia and one on Latin America, inviting DGs RELEX and AIDCO to attend. These meetings analysed the potential for inter-service cooperation in DPP.

Progressively, DPP has received higher priority in other Commission services. DG RELEX, for example, plans to allocate more than 70 million € for DPP in its strategy for Latin America. Despite such progress the Commission is still some way from systematically mainstreaming DP into the “heavy-weight” development programmes, as will be seen in the following chapters.

3.3. **State of Play: other RELEX Services’ disaster preparedness and prevention policy**

As there is no coherent strategy within the Commission to address DPP, the overall picture can therefore be described as piecemeal, ad-hoc, and partly overlapping.

3.3.1. *DG DEV*

Based on information received from DG DEV¹², DPP activities are included in Country Strategy Papers for some ACP disaster prone countries, as the following examples show.

Mozambique: The Country Strategy Paper (CSP) and National Indicative Programme for the 9th EDF specifically address this chronic vulnerability and propose continued EC support to strengthening capacity building in food security and early warning information systems.

¹¹ "Assessment and Future of Humanitarian Aid" (COM (1999) 468 final, 26.10.1999)

¹² Note DEV 020 (02) D/2702 of 14 June 2002

The 9th EDF **Regional Strategy Paper for Southern Africa**, currently under discussion, will cover, at the request of SADC, support to a SADC Regional Disaster Management Centre, especially with regard to water related disasters in the region.

In the **Pacific**, the CSP for **Vanuatu** deals with aspects of disaster preparedness. Vanuatu ranks amongst the most vulnerable state out the developing small states. It is foreseen that funds from the B envelope (€3.3million) could be allocated to disaster preparedness.

In the **Caribbean**, DG DEV states that DP is "fully taken into account" at national and regional level¹³. The 8th EDF Caribbean RIP foresees that support for activities related to risk prevention will also include the areas of disaster forecasting, prevention, preparedness, mitigation and response. In this framework, the programme "Radar Network System for the Protection and Sustainable Development of Cariforum Countries (13.4 M€)", has entered now in its final phase of appraisal. Considering the reduced amount of 9th EDF initial allocation resources, it is not foreseen to include natural risk management in the 9th EDF RIP. However for the 9th EDF, EDF B envelopes for the countries concerned were given additional resources to take into account their high level of vulnerability. In Guyana and for several NIPs in a row, rehabilitation of sea defenses, which is also a disaster prevention measure, is an important component of the focal area.

In addition to the CSPs, there are a number of **thematic** policies and instruments which can contribute to DPP. These concern rural development, food aid/food security and environment measures. Examples for rural development where these concerns are taken into account include **Uganda or Guinea** (e.g. drought tolerant crop varieties, strengthening savings and credit institutions, rationalisation and improvement of early warning systems. In the food aid/ food security sector, activities with preparedness components include, for example, enhancement of crisis management (crisis prevention capacity enhanced, support to relief-rehabilitation provided) (**Ethiopia**) or provision of targeted financial assistance ("safety nets"). Addressing environmental issues can help to reduce the seriousness of certain risk situations. Environmental Impact Assessments, for example, are important to identify potentially negative environmental consequences (deforestation) which may, at some stage, exacerbate natural disasters. They also play a role in identifying socio-cultural issues, and thus serve to avoid potential conflicts with local populations with regard to development projects. The **Sahel** region provides a good illustration. At the sectoral level, Strategic Environmental Assessments can help to identify negative environmental consequences of proposed sectoral strategies (e.g. road networks leading to deforestation or loss of biodiversity, intensive agricultural practices leading to excessive use of water and soil degradation).

¹³ This needs to be verified. According to ECHO's expert in the region, DP has not been taken into consideration in the programmes/NIPs for Haiti and Dominican Republic.

3.3.2. DG RELEX

DG RELEX has also started taking disaster preparedness into account in their programming, mainly in **Latin America** and **Asia**.

The current multi-annual programming of DG RELEX for Latin America (regional level)¹⁴ foresees prevention, preparedness and reconstruction activities in Latin America in the order of 70 million €. These activities will include awareness raising of local populations, networking of experts, and the establishment of a reconstruction fund. Implementation will be from 2004.

In **Central America**, DG RELEX programming includes support for regional DP initiatives, measures to reduce vulnerability of populations through sustainable use of resources (water). Some of the envisaged measures are designed to consolidate the projects initiated by DIPECHO.

In the area of the **Andean Community** DG RELEX envisages support for the national civil protection institutions.

In **Asia**, DG RELEX objectives for **Afghanistan** include activities designed to contribute towards the alleviation of the impact of future droughts.

The NIP 2003-2005 for **Bangladesh** includes the strengthening of disaster preparedness as an objective. Specific funds will be allocated in 2003. The NIP 2004-2006 for **Cambodia** also includes 20 million € for rural development measures, part of which to be devoted to water management and irrigation programmes designed to improve protection against drought and floods. Support for a disaster preparedness programme is included as a priority in the India 2002-2003 NIP, dedicating 10 million € to help **India** develop plans to strengthen indigenous disaster preparedness and management system at government level. The **Vietnam** CSP/NIP mentions disaster preparedness as a cross-cutting issue.

Though DPP is mentioned as one of the objectives to pursue in several CSPs, this approach is not widely followed in the first generation CSPs, even in disaster-prone countries.

4. TOWARDS A COHERENT EC DISASTER PREPAREDNESS AND PREVENTION POLICY - THE WAY FORWARD

Considering the upcoming mid-term reviews of the CSPs and the implementation phase of the above mentioned programmes, it is of utmost importance that this period is used to intensify the co-ordination and linkages between ECHO and the other longer term instruments.

¹⁴ As communicated by DG RELEX, Directorate H, on 26 July 2002

Appropriate DPP measures can avoid or mitigate some of the risks of natural disasters and should thus become an integral part of the Commission's external relations and development cooperation policy.

In order to avoid the risk of duplication it is therefore necessary to define a common Commission strategy on DPP. Such a strategy should contain four main elements:

- A common conceptual and terminological framework of disaster preparedness and prevention.
- Identification of the most vulnerable populations, countries and areas.
- Establishment of a clear division of labour between the Commission services
- Procedural arrangements and schedules

4.1. Clarifying the terminological framework

In a very broad sense, some may argue that all sustainable development activities contribute to a better preparedness for disasters in that they prevent or mitigate the impact of natural disasters. While this may be true to some extent, there remains a case for specific disaster preparedness measures. In many cases the concepts of prevention, mitigation and preparedness are ambiguous. A joint definition should be agreed along the lines described in chapter 2 above.

4.2. Identifying and agreeing on a priority list of disaster-prone countries

4.2.1. Methodology

A list of priority countries should be established on the basis of two main elements: the risk of a country to be exposed to a disaster and its capacity to cope with that disaster. Countries should be ranked into three categories: high, medium, low vulnerability. A list can be established in several steps:

- "quick-and dirty" approach based on CRED¹⁵ disaster data and the UNDP human poverty index (HPI). This can be done immediately with available data and provides a rough approximation of the vulnerability of a country. Although poverty is not equal to vulnerability, there is a strong relationship between both, i.e., poor societies are more vulnerable and their coping mechanisms are more rapidly exhausted.
- In a second step, this "quick and dirty" analysis could be improved by an analysis of the vulnerability of each country (institutionally, socially and economically) given the vulnerability might vary in a significant way in a couple of years (for example, countries going through a peace process). The new index of vulnerability produced by UNDP (available in April 2003) could be explored for this purpose. The involvement of other

¹⁵ <http://www.cred.be/emdat/intro.html>

players (e.g. USAID, UNDP) in disaster preparedness project would be another factor to be considered at that stage.

- In a third step, the vulnerability list can be refined at the sub-national level to identify regions that are more vulnerable than others and thus to improve targeting. JRC is currently testing a methodology to do this at a global level¹⁶.
- The ideal priority list would also include a coping capacity assessment. ECHO experts have pointed out that the coping capacity of societies and nations is a decisive factor to determine ECHO's entry strategy, the level of aid and the kind of assistance. This approach, however, requires considerable research efforts, both in methodological terms (essentially how to measure preparation and response capacity, economic and social factors in any region of a country) and data availability. The global DIPECHO evaluation envisaged could be used for this purpose.

4.2.2. Reporting mechanisms and indicators

In order to be able to measure the performance of disaster preparedness measures appropriate reporting mechanisms have to be established. As far as ECHO is concerned, current statistics systems (HOPE) are not capable of providing the required data.

Measuring mainstreaming of DP is most of all a methodological challenge. As a first step, agreement has to be found which kind of activity can be considered as contributing to disaster preparedness.

Within the context of the Annual Management Plan 2003, ECHO has started to develop specific reporting sheets that allow a qualitative assessments of progress made.

4.3. Establishing a Meaningful Division of Labour Between Commission Services

Looking at the situation outlined in the preceding chapters, ECHO should continue with its advocacy role in **the DPP issue** for some time because of the acquired experience in the area. Essentially, the division of labour should reflect the comparative advantages of each service.

ECHO has an advantage in preparedness considering:

- its knowledge of what should be the response (in particular at the level of its experts);
- its good partnership with specialised partners
- its ability to work at local level with the most vulnerable populations even where the government does not assign high priority to the intervention.

¹⁶ T. de Groeve: Population Resilience to Disasters: a Theoretical Framework (draft)

- ECHO can take advantage of an humanitarian response in a crisis context to launch a preparedness programme in an environment where communities are much more receptive to such training.
- DIPECHO projects monitored by our ECHO experts constitute in some cases a good monitoring base for regions where humanitarian interventions are sporadic (synergy DIPECHO/ECHO).

DGs DEV/ RELEX and AIDCO have the following advantages in DPP:

- they can involve the national governments and therefore have a more generalised impact and have access to certain vital key sectors for prevention such as the legislation for the building sector, environmental legislation, education
- they can mainstream DPP in nearly all cooperation instruments (reconstruction, rural development, food security, NGOs etc.)
- they can put in place a longer term strategy.

The following typology could serve as a first basis for discussion:

Actors	Preparedness	Mitigation	Prevention
ECHO – humanitarian aid / emergency	Recommended: Taking advantage of response to boost a “preparedness culture”.	Yes, in small-scale rehabilitation of essential small infrastructure as health center, shelter, water systems, etc... in the later stages of ECHO emergency operation or in the first phases of slow onset disasters such as drought.	low priority (only when the risk is imminent and no preventive multiannual programme has been launched on time)
ECHO – DIPECHO	Yes, Cross-cutting activities in order to link DP vertical activities (awareness raising in local communities, local early warning systems). Preparation of communities in areas difficult to access for the national authorities or ignored by them. Focus on local community level, non-state actors	Yes, but only as a limited means for prevention activities; pilot and demonstration projects limited to a specific sites	No.
DEV/RELEX/AIDCO	Yes, especially in education (disaster training as part of curricula) and training (teachers trained through disaster programmes), health sector (vaccination campaigns, prepositioning of stocks). Strengthening national civil protection bodies and regional networks focus on national level and regional organisations focus on countries with recurrent disasters (annual floods, outbreak of epidemics)	Yes; For priority existing infrastructures. Nation-wide dissemination of pilot and demonstration projects	Yes, especially in environmental and forestry legislation, construction code, land use, good practices, policy framework (technical assistance), large scale infrastructure (e.g. dams). sustainable development projects (food security, rural development, fisheries, forestry).
ENV/RTD/JRC	Transfer of technology and experience		

4.3.1. Scope and content of ECHO’s DPP strategy

ECHO’s DPP policy should continue to rest on the three pillars DIPECHO, mainstreaming and advocacy. However, certain adjustments and clarifications should take place.

4.3.1.1. DIPECHO

In the light of the experience gained with the DIPECHO programmes, the following adjustments and clarifications are proposed for DIPECHO:

- ECHO will establish a coordinated **multi-annual strategy** document that can serve as a conceptual framework for regional DIEPCHO Action Plans and maximise coherence across regions. This document should spell out clearly the priorities in terms of themes, areas and activities to be covered by DIPECHO, as well as the tentative dates for implementation and end of Action Programmes. Individual DIPECHO Action Plans and annual strategies would be seen as implementing parts of that "masterplan".
- The masterplan will encompass a list of the **priority countries** with high vulnerability. DIPECHO will focus on the most vulnerable countries except those in open conflict where ECHO has an emergency operation. In these countries disaster preparedness will be dealt with through mainstreaming.
- The type of activities to be financed under DIPECHO should clearly concentrate on the **preparedness** phase (to increase the “capacity to react”). The activities funded will include community training/capacity building and awareness raising, provision of equipment, local early warning systems and institutional strengthening at local level.
- Small-scale mitigation projects with demonstrative character (pilot projects) can also be considered.
- DIPECHO will apply a bottom-up approach targeting the **community** level, in particular in areas or population segments neglected by the national authorities.
- **NGOs** would be regarded best suited partners to working closely with the indigenous population. local authorities and non-state actors (e.g. local Red Cross branches).
- DIPECHO Action Plans should also include support for the coordinating role of **key players at global level** (e.g. UN, IFRC) in setting up or improving early warning systems or networks in specific regions.
- As for the sectors to be addressed, certain partners have requested to extend the DIPECHO programmes to the health sector (epidemics). These could be covered under mainstreaming activities. DIPECHO itself should not get involved in this issue.
- Future DIPECHO calls will be much **more targeted** in terms of themes, priority areas (regional spread) and types of activities. The number of applications can thus be expected to become lower.
- By its very nature, disaster preparedness requires sometimes a longer-term approach than just one year in particular if ECHO wishes to improve the dissemination aspect of best practices. As a first step, **a general extension of the duration of DIPECHO decisions to 18 months** should be considered. Possibilities/merits of an extension to 2 years should be explored.

- A **moderate increase of the financial envelope** of B7-219 from currently 8 m€ to something in the order of 10 to 12 m € as of 2004 should be considered to be coherent with the extension of the DIPECHO programme to new regions (Central Asia) and in order to avoid increasing the gap between two action plans in a region. This would send a positive political signal to the European Parliament, which requested that ECHO increase its efforts in DPP ("Carlotti-Report").
- ECHO will systematically support the building up of a **knowledge-base on disaster preparedness** to share experience and build up best practice. It could be particularly helpful to share it with other DGs in building up DPP strategies in areas currently not covered by disaster preparedness activities (e.g. Pacific islands).

4.3.1.2. Mainstreaming DPP into other ECHO operations

One may argue that ECHO has already a well-established policy of mainstreaming DPP in its operations (see chapter 3.2.2.). However, a clear understanding of what can be considered DPP mainstreaming and what not is still missing. As a consequence, mainstreamed DP activities are difficult to report on and difficult to quantify. The main challenge is to make DPP activities more visible. Within the context of the AMP 2003 exercise, ECHO 4 and the operational units have undertaken a first attempt to **better define and identify a typology of DPP operations**. This initiative needs to be reinforced in the course of 2003 aiming at a clear typology and a reporting mechanism before the end of 2003.

In some cases ECHO has undertaken stand-alone pre-disaster DPP operations, i.e., at the very early outset of an **exceptional** epidemic, drought or flood season, i.e. where a specific crisis is sufficiently announced in advance (e.g. El Nino). It is within the scope of article 1 and 2f of the Humanitarian Regulation to present an ad-hoc decision specifically addressing preparedness of disasters, particularly if related to early warning mechanisms or intervention systems.

4.3.2. Other RELEX Services

Because of their possibility to integrate DPP in broader development programmes and their capacity to negotiate with national authorities, other RELEX services should become the main actor in DPP and in particular in preparedness at national level and in prevention. DPP must be integrated within the project cycle, from the identification up to the implementation.

Sometimes, there is DPP at programme level, but it has not been earmarked as such (e.g. sea defenses in Bahamas). The deconcentration process has to be used properly to ensure that Delegates are sufficiently sensitised.

With respect to the type of activities, nation-wide mitigation and prevention projects (“preventing the disaster from happening”) should be tackled by DGs DEV, RELEX and to AIDCO, as well as the institutional support and broad dissemination of best practices.

For the time being DIPECHO has been involved in institutional support at regional level as well as in mitigation projects in some regions.

DIPECHO should gradually phase out from these programmes which could be better managed by longer term instruments and should be progressively transferred to regional programmes of the other RELEX services.

In cases where the disaster is a recurrent, quasi “normal one” (e.g. annual floods in Asia) mitigation/prevention measures should be better dealt with by development cooperation programmes. ECHO would only step in (with an emergency operation) when the preparedness and prevention measures would not suffice to avoid a disaster, e.g. in case of exceptionally devastating floods or major epidemics.

4.3.3. Other Commission Services (DG ENV /DG RTD / DG JRC)

Through their civil defense or research projects, these DGs can promote the transfer of technology or experiences. This could involve the participation of member states civil protection technical support for example.

Another component could be the wider dissemination of web-based decision support and early warning tools currently developed by the Mapping for Aid and Preparedness Group at the EC Joint Research Centre for ECHO ("Digital Map Archive").

Such research activities should include the development of methodologies for hazard and risk mapping and the use of geo-referenced data, particularly where local response capacities are low or where areas are difficult to monitor with other means (inaccessible areas, long-distance areas like the Pacific islands region).

Local and regional early warning mechanisms like the INETER seismic warning system in Nicaragua, should be integrated in those systems.

4.3.4. Other Actors

ECHO should consider extending advocacy efforts to include disaster preparedness elements into the strategies of other actors, like Member States and the UN-system. For example, the CAP for Tajikistan 2003 included such a reference.

5. CONCLUSIONS AND FOLLOW UP

The following steps are suggested to implement the above proposals:

- (1) PGM to set up an interservice working group to establish a joint Commission approach on DPP on the basis of the present paper.
- (2) The group should also ensure a complete stock-taking exercise to find out what has already been done in terms of DPP.
- (3) The group should establish and agree a list of priority countries where DPP should be reinforced. This would obviously require agreement on a

methodology. Such a methodology could be established in different steps, as proposed in this paper.

- (4) The group should make proposals as to the order within which the priority countries will be dealt with. DG DEV in their note of 14 June 2002 suggested to focus on the Caribbean first. DG RELEX has recently expressed the need to establish a sort of task force to establish a strategy and division of tasks in response to natural disasters in Latin America.
- (5) ECHO's DPP policy will be better focused along the main axes described above, in particular
 - (a) DIPECHO to concentrate on preparedness and small-scale mitigation activities at local/Community level. DIPECHO budget to be moderately increased.
 - (b) DIPECHO to phase out from institutional support at national level and from mitigation projects at regional level.
 - (c) DIPECHO to stay abreast from the health sector (epidemics)
 - (d) Mainstreaming activities to be better defined (methodologies, reporting), in particular in terms of ECHO's involvement in recurring natural disasters
 - (e) Advocacy to be reinforced
- (6) A global evaluation of the DIPECHO programme should be launched.

The timeframe for the implementation of this follow-up is 18 months.

Annex 1: Evaluations of the DIPECHO programmes

ECHO regularly evaluates the DIPECHO Action Plans. The conclusions from the three most recent evaluations can be summarised as follows:

- DIPECHO should work at the local (community and municipal) level, co-ordinated and integrated with national and regional programmes. This is because (i) the comparative strength of NGOs is working at the local level, while they tend to lack credibility or clout at the national or regional level. (ii) DIPECHO's limited budget would have greater impact through local-level activities that are often more cost-effective and sustainable than national or regional initiatives. (iii) Certain governments (in the Andean region) that have incorporated DP into their development planning and policies are in a process of decentralisation.
- DIPECHO and its partners should participate in national disaster networks, and co-ordinate more with other international agencies.
- Implicitly/explicitly in the reports it is considered that DP is not reflected as a high priority within ECHO, either at headquarters or in the region, and there is a lack of clear management systems for setting and achieving targets in support of DP work.
- Better links with other EU services would help integrate disaster preparedness/prevention in longer-term, sustainable development. DIPECHO projects should be planned with the objective of connecting to Commission development programmes, particularly those aimed at environmental protection, poverty reduction and food security.
- In most of the cases project duration was a limitation because DIPECHO provided funding for a year, while effective disaster preparedness is a longer-term process. Effective reduction of vulnerability requires a sound background in community development and participatory approaches; however, such approaches cannot be successfully achieved in the short-term and the creation of durable and effective community structures requires a time horizon of two to five years. Therefore, continuity of funding support is a critical issue for many smaller NGOs to allow for proper dissemination of the best practices acquired in the first year.
- A results-based approach would improve the effectiveness and impact of DIPECHO's projects and programme. It would also make it easier for DIPECHO to evaluate and publicise its results within the EU and with the European public. DIPECHO and its partners should clearly define programme/project objectives and concrete, realistic results.
- A programme approach, rather than a project approach, would facilitate the exchange of experiences and create synergy among projects. Project planning and design should include activities to foster national and regional integration.

- Operational recommendations for DIPECHO would include improving partner and project selection, introducing a results-based approach, developing a gender perspective, and extending project duration.
- The trilogy awareness, preparedness and prevention are the core of DIPECHO intervention and should be reintroduced in proposals. (ECHO has focussed on preparedness due to budgetary limitations and the absence of a partition of responsibilities for ECHO, DEV/RELEX).¹⁷
- There is scope for sharing of methodologies and standardising educational materials for populations facing the same disaster hazards; this can lead to both cost savings for project development and better coherence with regard to approaches to DP.
- DIPECHO should develop its networking with relevant institutions.

Specific conclusions drawn for the regions were :

- For the Andean region, DIPECHO should build an effective regional programme that would have a greater multiplier effect and impact than isolated, unconnected projects. The first action plan was also seen as over ambitious, although the selection of projects was satisfactory. Better project results and a lighter workload for ECHO could be obtained by using external expertise to assess complex technical projects
- For South Asia, there is little added-value in attempting to adopt a regional approach, especially considering the small scale of DIPECHO financing; therefore, future activities if the budget is not increased should focus on smaller portfolios of country specific projects or geographically concentrated projects addressing a specific type of hazard. The majority of projects were found to be well designed and executed projects that incorporate livelihoods components, thereby linking relief activities with broader developmental benefits that are much more likely to be sustainable.
- For Central Asia, it is not clear that all the countries in the region are ready to co-operate with each other. Therefore the evaluators doubted whether a full-fledged regional approach in Central Asia will be possible in the near future. Project selection was generally good. Project selection was generally good and almost all projects were successfully implemented. Some concerns were raised about the quality of the needs assessments submitted and the sustainability of the outcomes. The evaluators also stressed the need to focus on the most vulnerable groups.

In conclusion, given that a number of common elements have been found in the three evaluations, the terms of reference of the envisaged next global evaluation, already foreseen, could be extended to accomplish certain of the matters already raised in the draft working paper on Disaster Preparedness. Specifically - establish a list of countries where DP is relevant, define

¹⁷ This needs to be discussed with the other services in the light of their increasing involvement into DP.

ECHO's DP role in terms of geography/countries, themes and partners. Identify a typology for DEV/RELEX DP activities as distinct from ECHO's. And how best to establish the link between ECHO funded DP and DEV/RELEX funded DP.

In addition the study should produce a methodological tool for use by ECHO's desks/NGO's and other Commission services setting out DP Vulnerability and Capacity assessment factors - before, during and after disasters, both at local and national levels. (The IFRC has already carried out work of this nature in respect of Palestine.) The study should also identify quantifiable indicators, propose how best to mainstream DP into normal operations. Other tasks may be added to the study at the review stage for the draft ToR.