

## Overview:

By the end of December the interim reports for all projects in South Asia were analyzed. More than 15 amendments were processed.

DIPECHO TA has also initiated the planning process for the upcoming National Consultation Meetings to be hosted in all 4 operational countries – Bangladesh, India, Nepal and Pakistan. The NCMs have been tentatively scheduled to be held between mid-February to end of March 2007 to further update and consolidate national DP strategies for DIPECHO 4<sup>th</sup> Action Plan. DIPECHO team is currently working towards finalizing the administrative, logistic and programmatic issues (i.e.: dates, venues, list of participants, schedules, modules etc) and plans to send out NCM invitations by mid-January to all potential partners and stakeholders – to start with India. Currently there are ongoing intensive consultations with DIPECHO DO in order to finalize the NCM planning process. Further on, request for budget approval to A3 and B3 is being prepared and would be processed during the first week of January.

During the RSO New Delhi meeting, the DIPECHO TA took the opportunity to make a detailed presentation on Disaster Preparedness and Disaster Risk Reduction to the ECHO South Asia team organized on 11<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> December 2006. The presentation helped facilitate much needed discussion on the aspects of mainstreaming DP into on-going ECHO Decisions and how this has been successfully initiated and taken forward in countries like Afghanistan or Pakistan as well as in other parts of the world.



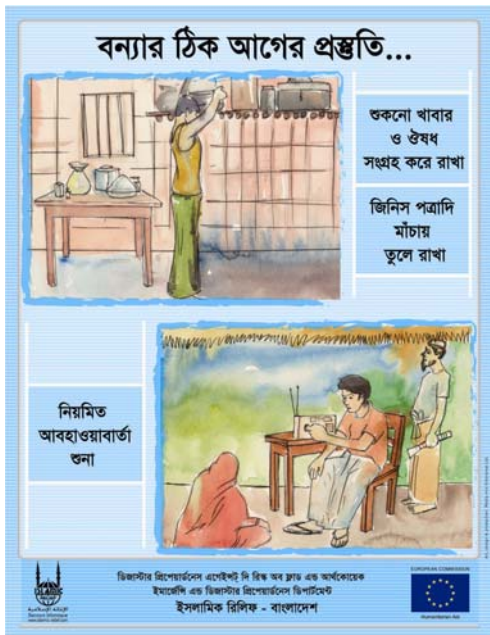
## Bangladesh

In Bangladesh, the volatile political situation continued well into December with long and uncertain periods of nationwide blockades, with clear signs of deterioration. During the first half of December the political situation did not allow safe in-country travel even in times when the blockage was lifted. This has understandably affected the implementation pace of DIPECHO project activities as well as hindered the regular project monitoring at the field level.

The DIPECHO partners have been reviewing the on-going political/ security situation and regularly sharing the updates with TA so that the *Suspension Clause* may be applied when absolutely necessary. Fortunately, things improved by the end of the month and of-late the blockades have been called off and DIPECHO partners have resumed their project activities and field monitoring. However, it is expected that political disruptions would soon follow in the aftermath of the elections, which have now been postponed to March 2007.

Further on, the monthly DIPECHO partners' coordination meeting was held on 17<sup>th</sup> December and hosted by Concern Universal. The minutes of the meeting have been duly circulated highlighting the latest political/security updates, progress on the AAB-DIPECHO website and further developments on the joint advocacy initiative. Also, a fresh idea had been floated that Action Aid, Bangladesh plans to make a documentary film on Earthquake Preparedness under the DIPECHO banner with collective contributions from other DIPECHO partners.

**IEC-Information Communication and Education Materials as developed and distributed under DIPECHO Projects**



Taking the joint DIPECHO Partners Disaster Preparedness Advocacy Strategy further, the DIPECHO partners have collectively worked out a tentative plan of action, budget details and chalked out respective responsibilities amongst each other. Some of the proposed activities under the joint advocacy strategy are to publish a common booklet compiling good case-studies and pictures addressing DP in Bangladesh, organizing a public exhibition and getting media space with BBC World Service, etc. In general, it is encouraging to see that by using the DIPECHO coordination mechanism, the partners in Bangladesh are pursuing their larger DP advocacy goals even in adverse times of political disruptions and keeping their spirits of collaboration at high level.

The next partners' coordination meeting has been scheduled for 24<sup>th</sup> January 2007 to be hosted by Handicap International. Currently, DIPECHO team has no mission planned for Bangladesh in the month of January.

Regarding the upcoming NCMs for the DIPECHO South Asia 4<sup>th</sup> Action Plan, DIPECHO SA team is planning for a one-day session tentatively scheduled for the third week of February in Dhaka, in view of the upcoming elections which have been postponed to March 2007. Yet again, even the new date could possibly be readjusted in line with announced election date which keeps changing.

## India

The Christian Aid project in Shimla is proceeding as per schedule with very good impact of local capacity building component and wide-spread advocacy and media coverage. The partner continues to share its informal monthly project updates regularly.

Further on, the SEEDS, local implementing partner of Christian Aid, is organizing an International Conference on School Safety in Ahmedabad, Gujarat. The conference is organized to strengthen the UN campaign for the year 2006-2007 titled *"Disaster Risk Reduction Begins at*

*Schools*” and aims to make “disaster reduction” an integrated part of school based learning. The conference is co-organized by the Gujarat State Disaster Management Authority (GSDMA), Coalition for Global School Safety, UNISDR, UNDP and SEEDS. And it is expected to have senior government officials, UN representatives, INGOs and academic institutions as active participants. DIPECHO TA has also been requested to participate in the event and provide her inputs. Hence, TA has scheduled to attend the conference from 17<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup> January 2007 and take the opportunity to strengthen DIPECHO network in India for the upcoming NCM.

#### **Search and Rescue Drill carried out by school children**



Regarding Save the Children project in Rajasthan, in follow-up to the previous meetings with SCF in September and November, a field monitoring mission has been planned to the 2 operational districts of Jaisalmer and Barmer to oversee the current status of implementation and assess the impact of floods on the DIPECHO project. DIPECHO PA has scheduled the mission from 9<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> January 2007.

Regarding the upcoming NCMs for the DIPECHO South Asia 4<sup>th</sup> Action Plan, DIPECHO SA team, , is planning for a one-day session like in Bangladesh and Nepal, tentatively scheduled for the third week of February in Delhi

## **Nepal**

In Nepal, on the political front the peace process continues, while the appointment of the interim government has yet to materialize. At the operational level, this has not impacted the DIPECHO program in general as the partners are proceeding smoothly with their respective projects. However, UNDP has communicated that this uncertainty at the government level does inevitably impede their efforts as they are working very closely with the government departments/officials. Nonetheless, UNDP would keep up its efforts and would continue to consult the DIPECHO TA in case a situation arises where UNDP may need to request for the limited *Suspension*.

On a less positive note, DIPECHO TA was informed that Oxfam’s DIPECHO Project Manager, recruited only in August, and just after 3 months in a job, has resigned. Hence, on emergency basis, Oxfam would place an expatriate from its South Asia Regional Center on the DIPECHO project to oversee the remaining several months of implementation.

The DIPECHO partners’ coordination meeting was hosted by ICIMOD on 11<sup>th</sup> December, minutes of which have been duly circulated. In the meeting the Action Aid DIPECHO Project Manager informed that he would attend the ECHO Partners’ Meeting scheduled from 12-13<sup>th</sup> December. Moreover, in preparation for the upcoming NCM in Kathmandu, DIPECHO partners are planning to use the coordination mechanism to collectively discuss common approaches for the forthcoming DIPECHO Decision.

On the advocacy front, Action Aid, Nepal proposed to organize a joint-briefing of political parties ahead of the upcoming elections on integrating DP in Development policies of the government. All DIPECHO partners are planning to tie hands in joint collaboration for National Earthquake Day on 15<sup>th</sup> January 2007 and collectively organize activities for the event under the DIPECHO banner. In addition, UNDP would be undertaking a mass media campaign on promoting disaster management messages in January. Moreover, UNDP has also planned a National Workshop on Disaster Management Strategy on 24<sup>th</sup> January 2007 which would involve all stakeholders at the government and INGO levels. DIPECHO TA has been requested to TA ha scheduled a mission to Nepal from 23<sup>rd</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup> January to take part in this interactive and important platform and also use the opportunity to make the necessary arrangements for the upcoming NCM in Kathmandu.



**Street Dramas with DP messages**

The next DIPECHO partners' coordination meeting is scheduled for 10<sup>th</sup> January 2007 to be hosted by DCA with the tentative agenda that Action Aid's Project Manager would brief other partners on his participation in the Partners' meeting in Brussels; fine-tune plans for the joint collaboration on the National Earthquake Day and discuss financial issues pertaining to DIPECHO financial requirements.

Regarding the upcoming NCMs for the DIPECHO South Asia 4<sup>th</sup> Action Plan, initial planning stage has already kicked off with tentative schedules being proposed for a one-day session whereby the Nepal NCM is tentatively scheduled for the first week of March in Kathmandu.

In January 24<sup>th</sup>, the DIPECHO TA would attend UNDP organized workshop with main focus on formulation of the "National Disaster Management Strategy".

## Pakistan

Overall, all DIPECHO projects continue to proceed smoothly with their respective operational areas, with the exception of Islamic Relief, which has duly communicated to DIPECHO TA that their operations in Neelum Valley (Azad Jammu & Kashmir) are being temporarily suspended due to some local political problems. Islamic Relief DIPECHO Project Manager is currently in the field to assess the situation further and would keep DIPECHO team officially updated.



The monthly DIPECHO partners' coordination meeting was held on 27<sup>th</sup> December at Mercy Corps office, the minutes of which are currently in the process of being circulated.

Regarding the upcoming NCMs for the DIPECHO South Asia 4<sup>th</sup> Action Plan, DIPECHO SA team is planning for a one and half-day session in Islamabad, tentatively scheduled for the third week of March. Presently, DIPECHO team has no mission planned for Pakistan in the month of January.

## Sri Lanka

The DIPECHO TA's mission to Sri Lanka scheduled for December 2006 had to be called-off in consultation with the Head of Unit and Sri Lanka and DIPECHO SA Desk Officers. The mission was cancelled with the understanding that the currently volatile security scenario in the country would not be conducive for implementing disaster preparedness operations. Nonetheless, DIPECHO TA would continue to facilitate DP mainstreaming in the on-going ECHO programs in the country.

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DIPECHO South Asia Web Sites as developed by partners:

[www.aabdipecho.org](http://www.aabdipecho.org)

[www.pakdipecho.org](http://www.pakdipecho.org)

[www.disasterpreparedness.icimod.org](http://www.disasterpreparedness.icimod.org)

[www.dipechonepal.org](http://www.dipechonepal.org) (*under construction*)

Links to various DIPECHO SA project publications:

[www.lcgbangladesh.org](http://www.lcgbangladesh.org) (*under special*)

<http://www.irb-dipecho.org>

[www.concern-universal.org/bangladesh.html](http://www.concern-universal.org/bangladesh.html)

[www.oxfam.org.uk/what we do/where we work/bangladesh/index.htm](http://www.oxfam.org.uk/what_we_do/where_we_work/bangladesh/index.htm)

[www.nrcs.org/documents/EQ%20brochure.pdf](http://www.nrcs.org/documents/EQ%20brochure.pdf)

[www.ifrc.org/cgi/pdf\\_appeals.pl?annual06/MAANP00102.pdf](http://www.ifrc.org/cgi/pdf_appeals.pl?annual06/MAANP00102.pdf)

[www.unisdr.org/eng/public\\_aware/world\\_camp/2006-2007/iddr/docs/PR-DIPECHO.doc](http://www.unisdr.org/eng/public_aware/world_camp/2006-2007/iddr/docs/PR-DIPECHO.doc)

[www.unisdr.org/eng/public\\_aware/world\\_camp/2006-2007/iddr/docs/PR-Islamic-relief-bangladesh.doc](http://www.unisdr.org/eng/public_aware/world_camp/2006-2007/iddr/docs/PR-Islamic-relief-bangladesh.doc)

[http://practicalactionconsulting.org/?id=region\\_nepal\\_ia1](http://practicalactionconsulting.org/?id=region_nepal_ia1)

[www.dca.dk/sider\\_paa\\_hjemmesiden/where we work/asia/nepal/what we do](http://www.dca.dk/sider_paa_hjemmesiden/where_we_work/asia/nepal/what_we_do)

[www.undp.org/bcpr/documents/dru/proj\\_fact/FactsheetNepal\\_final.pdf](http://www.undp.org/bcpr/documents/dru/proj_fact/FactsheetNepal_final.pdf)

[www.nepaldisaster.org/](http://www.nepaldisaster.org/)

[www.akdn.org/focus/disaster\\_mitigation.html](http://www.akdn.org/focus/disaster_mitigation.html)