

## “Evaluation of DG ECHO's disaster preparedness and DRR actions in Southern Africa & Indian Ocean”

Contract n°: ECHO/ADM/BUD/2011/01205

### Final Report (without Annexes)



Flood Early Warning System in Malawi

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**20<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2011**

Cost of the report (124.424,00 €, 0.75% of the budget evaluated: €16.568.343)



The report has been financed by and produced at the request of the European Commission. The comments contained herein reflect the opinions of the consultant only.



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## List of Acronyms

ALNAP	Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance
BNGRC	National Bureau for Disaster Risk Management (Madagascar)
CCA	Climate Change Adaptation
CLaSP	Coordination, Learning and Sharing Platform
COM	Communication
COOPI	Cooperazione Internazionale (Italy)
CPGU	Unit for Prevention and Management of Emergencies (Madagascar)
CRED	Centre for Research on Epidemiology of Disasters (Belgium)
DFID	United Kingdom Department for International Development
DG ECHO	European Commission – Directorate General for Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection
DIPECHO	Disaster Preparedness Programme of DG ECHO
DRM	Disaster Risk Management (including response)
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
EC	European Commission
EM-DAT	Emergency Database of the CRED
EU	European Union
EWS	Early Warning Systems
FA	Food Assistance
FAO	United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization
FS	Food Security
FSTP	EC Food Security Thematic Programme
GFDRR	Global Facility for Disaster Risk reduction
GIS	Geographical Information Systems
HQ	Headquarter
ICPM	Joint Advocacy Initiative in Madagascar
IGA	Income Generating Activities
INGNC	National Institute for Disaster Management (Mozambique)
PARTNER	Implementing Partner
LRRD	Linking relief, rehabilitation and development
MdM	Médecins du Monde
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
ODI	Overseas Development Institute (UK)
OFDA	United States Office for Foreign Disaster Assistance
SADC	Southern African Development Community
TA	Technical Assistant
ToR	Terms of Reference
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UN-HABITAT	United Nations Human Settlements Programme
USAID	US Agency for International Development
USD	United States Dollar
WB	World Bank



## 1 Executive Summary

### Introduction

1. In 2008, the Commission included Southern Africa and Indian Ocean as the 8<sup>th</sup> region of its DIPECHO programme. This region constituted of 10 countries exposed to hazards, climatic and geological is somewhat distinct from others: The main impact of hazards is severe food and livelihood insecurity rather than immediate loss of lives and goods. In addition, Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) was locally in its infancy with few, if any, community preparedness programmes.

2. Four countries were selected for DIPECHO first plan of action (2008-2010): Comoros, Malawi, Madagascar and Mozambique. Comoros program was terminated before the evaluation date. The scope of the evaluation covers both Action Plans including the Food Aid DRR projects not funded under DIPECHO.

3. This evaluation is reviewing different options to continue the Commission's DRR programme, for example:

- To keep the interventions focused on the same main natural hazards but to expand to new geographical areas (i.e. countries) thus far not covered by DIPECHO;
- To include other natural hazards and adjust accordingly the geographical area.

4. The methodology consisted in the review of documents (137 listed in annex), field visits to Harare, Malawi, Namibia (a candidate for expansion), Mozambique and Madagascar, interviews with 207 stakeholders and discussions with 529 beneficiaries (over 50% women) and finally the analysis of questionnaires completed by 140 interviewees. The report is organized around the eight questions formulated in the ToR on relevance, effectiveness, complementarity and efficiency.

**Relevance:** To what extent have DG ECHO strategies addressed the needs of the most vulnerable communities and categories of population, in the areas most exposed to frequent natural hazards?

5. The majority of interlocutors and data concur that the countries, the regions and the communities selected are among the most exposed to the selected priority hazards. This selection of hazards changed over time with the de facto termination of volcanic risk reduction in Comoros and the exclusion of drought as an eligible hazard in DIPECHO II. Among the few dissenting opinions (believing that there were communities more exposed than those selected) are some national officials in each of the three countries.

6. Evaluating whether within those communities, the most vulnerable are targeted is more difficult. Maintenance duties and benefit from DIPECHO funded infrastructure (shelters, silos, irrigation) and services (seeds, technical support...) are determined by arrangements proper to each community. In several instances, implementing partners (PARTNER) pressed to deliver more visible outputs overlooked those soft aspects of management.

7. Targeting the most vulnerable (and remote as per DIPECHO guidelines) resulted in projects either inaccessible or spread over an unpractical number of beneficiaries. One PARTNER added criteria of dynamism and cleanliness of the community to select those most likely to buy in and sustain the external effort. This approach is more compatible with the concept of and visibility required by pilot projects, the essence of DIPECHO.

8. "Needs" is a subjective concept. Shelters were occasionally built when the only rationale option was the relocation of the community. In other instances, infrastructure (school) or institutional strengthening of public health services appeared to respond to a real daily need but with tenuous justification from a DRR point of view.

9. In general, the DRR projects were designed to address the needs of the most vulnerable in the most exposed communities as recognized by 90% of the 125 respondents to a written question.

10. Those conclusions are affecting several recommendations (R1, R4, R5 and R12).

**Relevance:** To what extent have DG ECHO strategies addressed the needs of national civil protection agencies in the concerned countries?

11. The national DRM organization expressed above all a need for direct funding for their activities and contribution to the DIPECHO DRR projects: an option currently not available. The absence of UNDP in DIPECHO II, the usual supporter at national level, was also noted. Limited and relatively unsuccessful efforts were made to involve and strengthen middle level (district) Disaster offices. The main impact of DIPECHO was in the strengthening (or set up) of local DRR committees at community level, a highly praised achievement.

12. DG ECHO dedicated considerable efforts to promote inter-governmental coordination through the promotion of the creation of a centre in Mozambique. Few interlocutors expressed knowledge, understanding and/or support for this activity of little perceived benefit for community level projects.

13. Those conclusions are affecting recommendations R5, R9 & 10, R15 and R 17.

**Effectiveness:** To what extent DG ECHO-funded activities have contributed to reinforcing local response capacities, including preparedness and awareness of local communities?

14. The effectiveness was observed in terms of outputs (silos, shelters, access road, seeds, training, etc.), outcome (improved crop and reduced food insecurity, general awareness, Early warning systems, etc.) and impact on the actual response to cyclone Bingiza in Madagascar (February 2011). The Partners initiative to launch jointly an independent evaluation (with control groups) was excellent and permitted to document the improvement in risk reduction and quality of response.

15. The effectiveness was in terms of prospective (but hypothetical) benefits in case of disaster but above all in immediate and more tangible results (better crop, access to safe water, etc.). This association of benefits was regarded as critical to the ownership at local level.

16. Those conclusions contributed to recommendations R2 and R5

**Effectiveness:** To what extent DG-ECHO funded activities had an impact at national level, through replication in other areas?

17. There were some hints that some of the interventions may be duplicated on a modest scale. However, the evaluators endorse the views of the interlocutors that the short duration of the projects precluded the current or potential communities to appreciate the benefits of the preparedness and risk reduction measures therefore limiting opportunity for and therefore evidence of a systematic replication effort. See recommendations R3, R6 and R8

**Effectiveness:** To what extent have partners' activities funded by DG ECHO had an impact at national level, through an increase of funding for DRR-related interventions in the countries of intervention?

18. Although some donors have increased their funding for DRR related activities (climate change, for instance), it is too early to determine a clear trend towards overall DRR budget increase and determine how ECHO may have contributed to this effect.

**Coherence:** To what extent can the constitution of longer-term strategies be attributed to DG ECHO-funded DRR activities?



19. The evaluator's findings support the opinion of 96 out of 109 interlocutors that national strategies predated DIPECHO projects. However, these documents were mostly oriented towards preparedness and response with limited mention of prevention (risk reduction). Community level interventions have influenced positively the thinking of some stakeholders and will probably contribute to improve the long-term strategies in the future. See recommendations R6, R7 and R8.

**Complementarity:** To what extent can DG ECHO-funded activities at the community level complement the current interventions at macro level, reinforcing a possible positive impact and contributing towards the objective of Linking Relief, Rehabilitation and Development? To what extent has the DG ECHO strategy been adopted by other donors and national civil protection agencies?

20. Interlocutors and the evaluators noted a discontinuity between the community level activities and the macro-level (regional) DIPECHO funded projects. Although there is some evidence that the technical assistance provided regionally has been reasonably appreciated at field level, the dimension of information sharing, M&E and coordination at regional level was perceived as of little relevance to national context and even as a burden by field project officers.

21. The close dependency of community level DRR to cultural and local context and the evolving national strategies and mechanisms advocate for coordination, information sharing being focused at country rather than inter-country level

22. Considerable efforts have been made by DG ECHO Technical Assistance to inventory and liaise with macro level programmes of other donors. The largest (financial institutions) however do not regard DG ECHO as a development interlocutor but deal with the DG of Development Cooperation or the Delegation. A need to improve the cooperation of DG ECHO with those EC instruments was identified to ensure complementarity, sustainability and replication.

23. The relevant recommendations are: R5, R7, R9, R14, R15 and R17.

**Efficiency:** Which elements in the institutional context and in the relations between the different actors have had a higher impact in the effectiveness and scaling up of the DRR interventions?

24. Several positive factors were identified: The smooth integration of the traditional DIPECHO preparedness projects with food security DRR interventions (R2); Investing in DRR local committees; Selection of communities based on their ability and eagerness to participate in the pilot projects (R4); Participation of local associations; Personalizing the EWS; National rather than regional coordination and advocacy projects (R9 to R11); and priority on soft activities (management of infrastructure) (R12).

25. Negative factors included: Contradiction between the design of some projects and their pilot; Limited impact at intermediate and national level contrasting with a venture into inter-country coordination mechanisms (R5); A shift from concrete projects in communities to a top heavy coordination / support structure (R17); Lack of DRR focus or justification for some development initiatives (R1); and finally a lessons-learned process geared to promote PARTNER "achievement" rather than to identify what can and should be sold to other donors (R6).

### **Crosscutting conclusions**

26. The magnitude of the need for DRR in the region should lead to a strict priority setting. The existence of vulnerability and humanitarian needs is not a sufficient criterion for funding a pilot DRR project. In terms of location (access and number of communities), hazard (drought, earthquake), thematic priority (urban or rural), there is a need for improving and explaining the coherence and consistency of the DG ECHO strategy. See recommendations R1, R9 and R13.

27. The selection of partners and projects appears to be participative within DG ECHO, but does not meaningfully involve outside stakeholders essential for ensuring sustainability: national authorities, EU delegation and some agencies with critically relevant mandate such as UNDP and Red Cross. See recommendations R7, R8 and R15.

28. A remarkable effort has been made to attempt monitoring, evaluating and coordinating all projects. Technical support, lessons learned exercises, best practices identification and information sharing has been entrusted to four regional projects. The cost-effectiveness of this regional effort is very low. Community projects are very specific to the local context, NGOs are notoriously reluctant to share information and the selection process of proposals is stimulating competition rather than cooperation. See recommendations R10 and R16.

29. Sustainability and replication of interventions is a high priority for DIPECHO and correctly so. However, including proof of impact and replication into the indicators or merely expecting evidence within such a short cycle is unreasonable. The concept of an exit strategy, an inherent element of DIPECHO pilot approach, is poorly understood and not taken seriously by Partners. Requests for funding the same activities for different nearby beneficiaries could be anticipated and should not be approved. It is time for consolidation to ensure full ownership and moving on to new innovative untested ideas, expanding the hazards (drought) or the context (urban?) and including new unchartered countries. See recommendations R13 and R18.

### Recommendations

Many recommendations are addressing several key questions and cannot be easily listed under the corresponding heading. For this reason, the recommendations are didactically grouped in three themes: improving the strategy, ensuring sustainability and specific suggestions for DIPECHO III.

Improving DIPECHO strategy	
<b>R1</b>	Debating and clarifying outstanding issues such as urban Vs rural target, size of small mitigation works, short-term DRR justification for funding development projects, inclusion of drought in targeted hazards...
<b>R2</b>	Routine inclusion of food/livelihood security DRR activities
<b>R3</b>	Routine extension of duration of financing to 24 months
<b>R4</b>	Adoption of operational criteria for selection of targets specific to increase the chance of success and visibility of pilot projects
<b>R5</b>	Continuing the focus on communities, increasing impact at national level and curtailing intergovernmental coordination initiatives
Ensuring sustainability: the exit strategy	
<b>R6</b>	Identifying among the "best practices" those that are actually scalable up and focusing on their marketing before other donors.
<b>R7</b>	Establishing true partnership with EU Delegation and other development instruments
<b>R8</b>	In partnership with EuropeAid, organize a meeting of global donors to promote a few specific interventions most suitable for integration into projected DRR related programs.
DIPECHO III in Southern Africa	
<b>R9</b>	Favoring a consortium approach (one joint project) in each country
<b>R10</b>	Including M&E, advocacy and coordination in the national consortium proposal
<b>R11</b>	Limiting isolated projects to highly innovative interventions too specific or risky for adoption by all partners of the consortium.
<b>R12</b>	In the three countries with on going activities, concentrating funding into consolidation of results in promising communities with special attention to the soft aspect (management of infrastructure and services)
<b>R13</b>	Adoption of a common and transparent scoring matrix of projects with greater weight on the potential for success and scaling up.
<b>R14</b>	Sharing decision making on selection of projects with the EU delegation and involving national authorities in the process.
<b>R15</b>	Identify a mechanism for funding of the involvement of the national DRR authority

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	(Civil protection, UNDP or other).
<b>R16</b>	Establish a roster and mobilization mechanism for rapid and systematic evaluation of DRR effectiveness (impact) in the aftermath of a disaster in the target communities.
<b>R17</b>	Limiting regional projects mostly to the provision of technical assistance and support.
<b>R18</b>	Extending DIPECHO to Namibia in soliciting a joint (consortium project from UN and Red Cross and preparing the ground for further expansion in Southern Africa.

## 2 Introduction

30. ECHO developed the DIPECHO Programme in 1996 in the three most disaster prone regions (South East Asia and Bangladesh, Central America and the Caribbean). In 2008 the DIPECHO programme was extended to the Southern Africa & the Indian Ocean that is the target of this evaluation.

31. The principal objective of DIPECHO (Disaster Preparedness ECHO) in this region is to “reduce the vulnerability and increase the coping capacities of populations in the south-east African and south-west Indian Ocean region living in areas most affected by natural hazards”. The specific objective is to “contribute to increasing resilience and to reducing vulnerability of local communities and institutions through support to strategies that enable them to better prepare for, mitigate and respond to natural disasters”.<sup>1</sup>

32. The Region of Southern Africa and Indian Ocean includes ten disaster-exposed countries (see Annex 1). In four selected countries (Malawi, Mozambique, Madagascar and Comoros) ECHO has launched two action plans for Disaster Preparedness: DIPECHO I<sup>2</sup> (1<sup>st</sup> October 2008 - 31<sup>st</sup> March 2010) and DIPECHO II<sup>3</sup> (1<sup>st</sup> June 2010 – 30<sup>th</sup> November 2011). DIPECHO I supported 14 Implementing Partners (Partners) including 1 regional programme through the first action plan with a total contribution of EC general budget of €5,568,343.00 (16 grants). Under DIPECHO II 13 Partners including 3 regional programmes are being co-financed through the second action plan with a total EC contribution of €6,000,000 (18 grants). DIPECHO III will be launched in early 2012. See Table 1.

**Table 1: Grants under DIPECHO**

	DIPECHO 1	DIPECHO 2	FA
Regional	1	3	1
Madagascar	6	7	3
Malawi	3	3	3
Mozambique	6	4	1
Comoros	0	1	0
<i>Total</i>	<i>16</i>	<i>18</i>	<i>8</i>

33. The human impact of disasters in this region is more in terms of food security and livelihood than casualties or infrastructure losses. In line with the EU policy of Humanitarian Food Assistance<sup>4</sup>, the second DIPECHO Action plan was complemented by grants funded under ECHO Food Aid (€5,000,000 of EC general budget 1 August 2010). While DIPECHO contracts are for 15 months, food aid projects can run for 18 months.

34. In both DIPECHO Global Plans, “Pilot aspects are core to the strategy, aiming at demonstrating successful models for replication. Ideally a hand-over of the experience developed should be considered, in the country and if relevant in the region, in the framework of an exit strategy”

35. Two thematic considerations were prioritized by DIPECHO in its second Plan of action.

- 1) Floods and cyclones, volcanic activity;
- 2) Exposure of densely populated urban areas, with vulnerable communities, to natural hazards.

<sup>1</sup> See footnote 2

<sup>2</sup> Financing Decision ECHO/DIP/BUD/2008/04000:

[http://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/funding/decisions/2008/dipecho\\_04000\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/funding/decisions/2008/dipecho_04000_en.pdf).

<sup>3</sup> Financing Decision ECHO/DIP/BUD/2010/04000:

[http://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/funding/decisions/2010/dipecho\\_04000\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/funding/decisions/2010/dipecho_04000_en.pdf).

<sup>4</sup> COM(2010) 126 final [Communication on Humanitarian Food Assistance](#)

### 3 Objective and scope of the evaluation

36. The evaluation focuses “on the effectiveness of the different sets of activities implemented and their “fitness for purpose” in order to allow DG ECHO to select those interventions which should be prioritized for consolidation in the third Action Plan (2012 – 2013) and thus implement a viable exit strategy from the current geographical areas.”<sup>5</sup> The Terms of Reference are in Annex 2.

37. The evaluation is to propose different options to continue DG ECHO DRR programme in Southern Africa and Indian Ocean region. The options include, for example:

- To keep the interventions focused on the same main natural hazards but to expand to new geographical areas (i.e. countries) thus far not covered by DG ECHO;
- To include other natural hazards and adjust accordingly the geographical area.

In both options, an implicit assessment of the suitability and availability of an appropriate institutional environment (from national DRR-related authorities to donors) to facilitate the carrying out of DIPECHO actions, is included.

38. The scope of the evaluation covers both Action Plans including the Food Aid DRR projects not funded under DIPECHO.

- In the case of DIPECHO I, it focuses mainly, but not solely, on the issues related to the effectiveness of the activities, their sustainability and replication at other levels or in other regions.
- In the case of DIPECHO II, the evaluation mainly focuses on issues such as the relevance of the targeted natural hazards, the efficiency of the mechanisms in place for continuity and scaling up, and the institutional environment and its impact on the replication and sustainability of the actions.

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<sup>5</sup> Terms of Reference

## 4 Methodology and limitations

### 4.1 Methodology

The details of the methodology are in Annex 3.

39. The evaluation, based on **Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance** in Humanitarian Action (ALNAP) guidance (ODI 2006), includes the following steps:

- Collection and review of the documentation. The most significant were the official financing decisions and the single form of all projects. The latter were made available during the visit in ECHO Office in Harare. A list of 137 most relevant documents is in Annex 4.
- Briefing in EC/HQ: this one-day visit permitted the team to clarify the terms of reference and led to the submission of the inception report.
- Country field visits: Initially, the evaluators planned to visit the four countries with DG ECHO funded DRR projects. At the meeting in Brussels, it was decided to substitute Comoros, a country where DIPECHO activities have been terminated with Namibia, one the potential candidates for extension of DIPECHO III coverage.
- Administration of a written questionnaire (in English, French, Portuguese, and Malagasy) to all interviewees; 140 interlocutors completed the questionnaire in Annex 5.

40. In these visits, the team or part of it met with 207 DG ECHO Partners, donors, government authorities and other stakeholders. The institutional and country distribution of the interviews is shown in table 2. All interviews were semi-structured based on the key questions from the ToR.

**Table 2: Institutional and country distribution of the interviews**

	Number of Persons interviewed				Total
	EU	Implementing Partners (Partners)	Government Agents	Others	
Malawi	1	23	21	7	52
Mozambique	4	26	11	5	46
Namibia	3	NA	9	10	22
Madaqascar	4	33	27	4	68
Others	9	4	-	6	19
<i>Total</i>	<i>21</i>	<i>86</i>	<i>68</i>	<i>32</i>	<i>207</i>

41. In addition, in every project site visited, focus groups discussions were held with a total of 529 beneficiaries. The number disaggregated by gender and country is shown in table 3.

**Table 3: Number of beneficiaries interviewed (Focus Groups)**

	Number of beneficiaries interviewed		
	Female	Male	Total
Malawi	50	57	107
Mozambique	9	15	24
Madaqascar	209	189	398
<i>Total</i>	<i>268</i>	<i>261</i>	<i>529</i>



Figure 1 Focus groups meetings

42. An interactive debriefing session was organized with all interlocutors and interested parties in each country and the draft report shared with interviewees for accuracy and factual check.

## 4.2 Limitations

43. In the three countries under DIPECHO II, only 10<sup>6</sup> of the 14 active Partners were visited in the field. The list of all DG ECHO DRR projects and those visited is attached in Annex 8. The short duration of each visit meant that the evaluators could not gain the knowledge to decide where, what and whom they should see after the initial guided introduction tour.

44. Only one country candidate for future expansion of DIPECHO has been visited, making difficult for the evaluators to confirm that, indeed, this country is the most appropriate candidate for activities in DIPECHO III.

45. The implementing partners (with some exceptions) organized the focus groups in rare instances, mainly members of the local DRR committee. This limitation is not critical given the large number of participants met.

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<sup>6</sup> In Malawi (all 3 active Partners); in Mozambique (2 out of 4 active Partners plus field discussions with UNHabitat staff); in Madagascar (3 out of 4 Partners plus FAOs regional effort in field). Some interventions of MdM (the 4<sup>th</sup> partner) have been observed / reviewed on site (including interviews with national counterparts).

## 5 Definitions

46. Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR): any intentional effort to reduce risk to disasters. Risk is referred to as a function of both hazard exposure and vulnerability (see below). Risk is therefore reduced when exposure has been lessened (i.e. evacuating people from the trajectory of a cyclone) and/or when resilience is strengthened (i.e., households have access to credit or seeds to replace loss). DRR does not include humanitarian response or general development aid.

47. Vulnerability: the condition of a household or community that makes it less resilient to hazard impacts. Typical indicators of this type of vulnerability are poverty and/or malnutrition. Resilience is often considered an antonym to vulnerability.

48. Food Security: when a household has the ability to acquire sufficient quantity and quality of elements to achieve adequate nutritional status. Food Security is has three components: food availability, access and utilization and their efforts can equally target entirely non-agricultural initiatives, such as livelihood security with Income Generating Activities (IGAs), or even water and sanitation efforts (as these improve food utilization). This scope is in line with that adopted by EC for the humanitarian food assistance (COM(2010) 126 final).

49. Climate Change: climate change is one category of wide-reaching hazards. Climate change adaptation is therefore a subset of the activities under DRR.

Pilot projects: There are distinct views among evaluators, interlocutors and DG ECHO staff on what are the definition and attributes of a pilot initiative. Classic definitions include a) activity planned as a test or trial<sup>7</sup> b) a small-scale project carried out to see whether a large-scale project will work;<sup>8</sup>. Features of pilot projects include novelty of the initiative for the partner or the place, testing with the associated *risk* of failure (mitigated by improving conditions for success: promising targets, longer timing, increased funding), *visibility/demonstrability* (i.e. not in the most remote communities), built-in scaling up or handover and closer monitoring and Evaluation (M&E)<sup>9</sup>. Pilot projects are not necessarily successful.

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<sup>7</sup> [wordnetweb.princeton.edu/perl/webwn](http://wordnetweb.princeton.edu/perl/webwn)

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.science-dictionary.com/definition/pilot-project.html>

<sup>9</sup> Managing Pilot Projects- Some Guidelines Derived from Experience WCI (Workplace Competence International Limited) 2002



## 6 Key questions

50. This chapter is organized around the eight key questions formulated by DG ECHO in the Terms of Reference of this evaluation. Each section (for one question) will include the findings from direct observations, focus groups discussions and analysis of the questionnaires, conclusions and specific technical recommendations. Broader strategic or cross cutting issues will be discussed in the general conclusions and recommendations

**6.1 Relevance: To what extent have DG ECHO strategies addressed the needs of the most vulnerable communities and categories of population, in the areas most exposed to frequent natural hazards?**

51. This question has three components: exposure to hazards, vulnerability of selected beneficiaries and addressing the “needs”.

### **Findings**

#### Exposure to hazards: the countries targeted

52. All countries targeted for DIPECHO activities are exposed to frequent natural hazards from earthquakes in Mozambique and Malawi; cyclones in Madagascar and Mozambique and volcanic eruption in the Comoros. Cholera, flood and drought in all southern countries,

53. Among these possible hazards, DIPECHO I Plan of Action selected floods, cyclone, volcanic activity and drought. In DIPECHO II, drought was not included while de facto volcanic activity was abandoned with the termination of DIPECHO project and presence in the Comoros.

54. In Malawi, DIPECHO II focused exclusively on floods. The frequency of flooding is recognized by the population which clearly identified this hazard as a priority. However, local interlocutors in one focus group mentioned drought (dry spells) as their most pressing concern.<sup>10</sup>This concern is legitimate as the latest flood has been followed by several years of relative rain shortage.

55. In Mozambique, earthquakes and bush fires (a result of drought) were maintained under DIPECHO II guidelines while drought was excluded.<sup>11</sup>

56. In Madagascar, Guidelines for DIPECHO I identified drought and locust as a priority while DIPECHO II still encouraging multi-hazard approach clearly limited the eligibility of projects to cyclones (windstorms) and floods.

57. In Namibia, a country not yet covered by DIPECHO, the exposure to flooding is as severe as in the other countries of the Zambezi Basin.

58. There were numerous queries from Partners on why DIPECHO II excluded drought as hazard when many of the ECHO-funded food security activities increased resilience to all climatic hazards.

#### Exposure to hazards: the geographical areas

59. The broad selection of the areas of intervention in each country was the result of the National Consultative Meetings with potential partners and authorities. Individual applicants for

<sup>10</sup> To be quickly “corrected” by the accompanying Partner staff.

<sup>11</sup> Apparently, no project was including preparedness to bush fires.

funding “should thoroughly justify their geographical choice based on the identified natural hazards vulnerabilities and capacities”. Overall, the projects reviewed had a good justification for their geographical choice.

60. In Malawi, the PARTNER selected the districts and then jointly identified vulnerable communities with **local** authorities, a lengthy consultation process from which the National Disaster Management Organization felt somewhat excluded. Activities and projects were concentrated in limited number of villages which received a wide scope of the potential benefits.

61. In Mozambique, the Partners appeared to select the areas (mainly where they were already active) and the national authority (INGC) expressed no concern with the selection. Community selection was also done jointly with local authorities, and appeared somewhat limited geographically.

62. In Madagascar, the number of projects and the wide dispersion of the activities over a large number of small communities many hardly accessible was impressive. The fine scattering of benefits noted in the North may be justified by the implementing Partner from a fairness point of view (they had to give something to all those villages where they are present) but it is not consistent with pilot projects aiming to demonstrate the visible impact of DRR. One other PARTNER has added additional criteria for selecting its target communities: dynamism and cleanliness of the village to identify communities more likely to own and sustain the project.

63. The results of Partners interlocutors to the written questionnaire are illustrative. First the number of those who declined to respond (blank) is very high

64. Both Financing Decisions, however, stressed “the need to include urban areas in DIPECHO interventions” and placed as second thematic priority “The exposure of densely populated urban areas”. However, all communities visited by the evaluators were rural areas as instructed by the guidelines for DIPECHO I and II. From interviews, it appears that this was the case in most projects of DIPECHO II. A Medair initiative to improve storm drainage and waste disposal in the Urbane Commune of Maroantsetra in Madagascar has not been deepened in DIPECHO II, as after an engineering survey determined the lack of potential impact to mitigate flooding. In Mozambique, Vilanculos-based interventions of UN-Habitat were the only known country urban focus in DIPECHO 1 (not visited). Urban leaders in Antalaha, Madagascar expressed interest for an extension of CARE projects to urban communities and national government agents called for an urban pilot.

#### The Most vulnerable:

65. Vulnerability in terms of loss of lives, livelihood and food security is above all at household level. Not all households in the same community are equally vulnerable.

66. All visited communities were poor and vulnerable. Systematically, the evaluators attempted to determine how the benefits of any specific activity were shared among members of the communities. Were the most vulnerable routinely targeted?

67. If access to shelter was provided according to a list of most vulnerable established by the community (or the DRR local committee), the use of other ECHO-funded facilities was more problematic: In some places, reportedly everyone has access to the flood or cyclone resistant grain silos, for instance, provided they contribute a modest part of their stored crop. In other places, there was an association of users not open to everyone. Similar enquiries were made regarding the stabilization of the riverbanks on



Figure 2 Model flood resistant houses

land privately owned: the whole community contributed to the planting, watering and maintenance of trees (many of them were fruit trees). We could not confirm the arrangement reached by the community concerning who would benefit from the crop once reaching maturity.

68. If most interventions targeted the most vulnerable in principle, some were poorly conceived in this regard. Although the model cyclone-resistant houses developed by various Partners under UN Habitat guidance were built (or in some cases reinforced) with “locally available material”<sup>12</sup> the additional cost (in cash and scarce wood) made the model (see photo) inaccessible to all but the least vulnerable. Those with the most vulnerable houses have little to “reinforce” and could not afford to build a new one.

69. The community management of infrastructure and services is key to address the needs of the most vulnerable as well as to ensure sustainability. Under the principle of local ownership, each community developed (or was supposed to) its own approach to providing access to and use of services/facilities by the most vulnerable members. Ascertaining how it is actually done so early in the implementing process was beyond the scope of a short visit by outsiders.

### Addressing the needs or the wants?

70. Finally, once the beneficiaries are properly selected, are the real “needs” met? This calls for a review of the needs as perceived in each of the communities versus the broad array of preparedness and food security interventions. Projects reviewed offered a broad scope of services (interventions), each targeting a potential need. The extensive interviews with beneficiaries and their representatives in the local committees activated by DIPECHO demonstrate a wide consultation process and a final decision made more by the beneficiaries than by the Partner.

71. The more concrete, tangible and immediate the benefit, the more it is appreciated by the community. There was a great degree of pride and ownership in all projects visited by the team. Whether the choice was the best from an empirical point of view may be occasionally arguable. Coastal villages annually destroyed by cyclones may choose to build shelters when relocation is perhaps the only viable long-term approach a measure beyond the reach of DIPECHO projects.

72. Food security measures especially the introduction of short cycle rice, a measure initiated by Partners has been readily accepted and appreciated. When food security and preparedness are offered as a comprehensive package, the level of acceptance of the less tangible preparedness measures is higher. Relevance and level of satisfaction is more difficult to gauge comparatively when a community receives only one intervention.

73. At least 113 of the 125 (90%) who replied to the question whether ECHO projects are addressing the most vulnerable in the most exposed areas responded positively. Five of the 12 who believed that there were other groups more vulnerable were national authorities (all three countries).

74. Regarding their own project, out of 81 Partner respondents, 8 opted not to reply while 47 claimed that the main criterion for their choice of communities for ECHO DRR activities is vulnerability even if outside their normal work area. The percentage varies from country to country: 89, 75 and 35% respectively for Malawi, Mozambique and Madagascar (N=27, 12 and 37), respectively). There is some discrepancy between professed intentions and practice: only eleven of the 47 respondents claiming to be willing to go outside their normal area of work were actually working in new areas (8 in Malawi and 3 in Madagascar).

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<sup>12</sup> Locally available is subject to interpretation. Wood may not be from the inside the country but available relatively far away

## Conclusions

75. Although, the process used for initial selection of the four countries<sup>13</sup> could not be documented, they are all exposed to disasters. The selection of countries appears to be based on their relative vulnerability and exposure. Within the countries, some national authorities (Malawi) wished to have been more closely included in the process of selecting the areas of implementation (regions, districts).

76. Within districts or regions, there was a tendency in some projects to include a large number of villages thereby providing limited benefits to everyone. Many of these were very remote and inaccessible both for the evaluation and the effective promotion of successful replication. Although this humanitarian approach responds to the guidelines issued by DG ECHO, it is a poor practice for pilot projects.

77. All DRR activities (contrary to humanitarian response) are part of development, although not all development initiatives reduce risk. Among those development activities with a positive DRR impact, the comparative DRR benefit might be, however, so light and indirect that including them under DIPECHO activities with a label of DRR may be misleading. One case in point is the DIPECHO funding of some health activities that the PARTNER itself describes as outside the scope of DRR.<sup>14</sup>

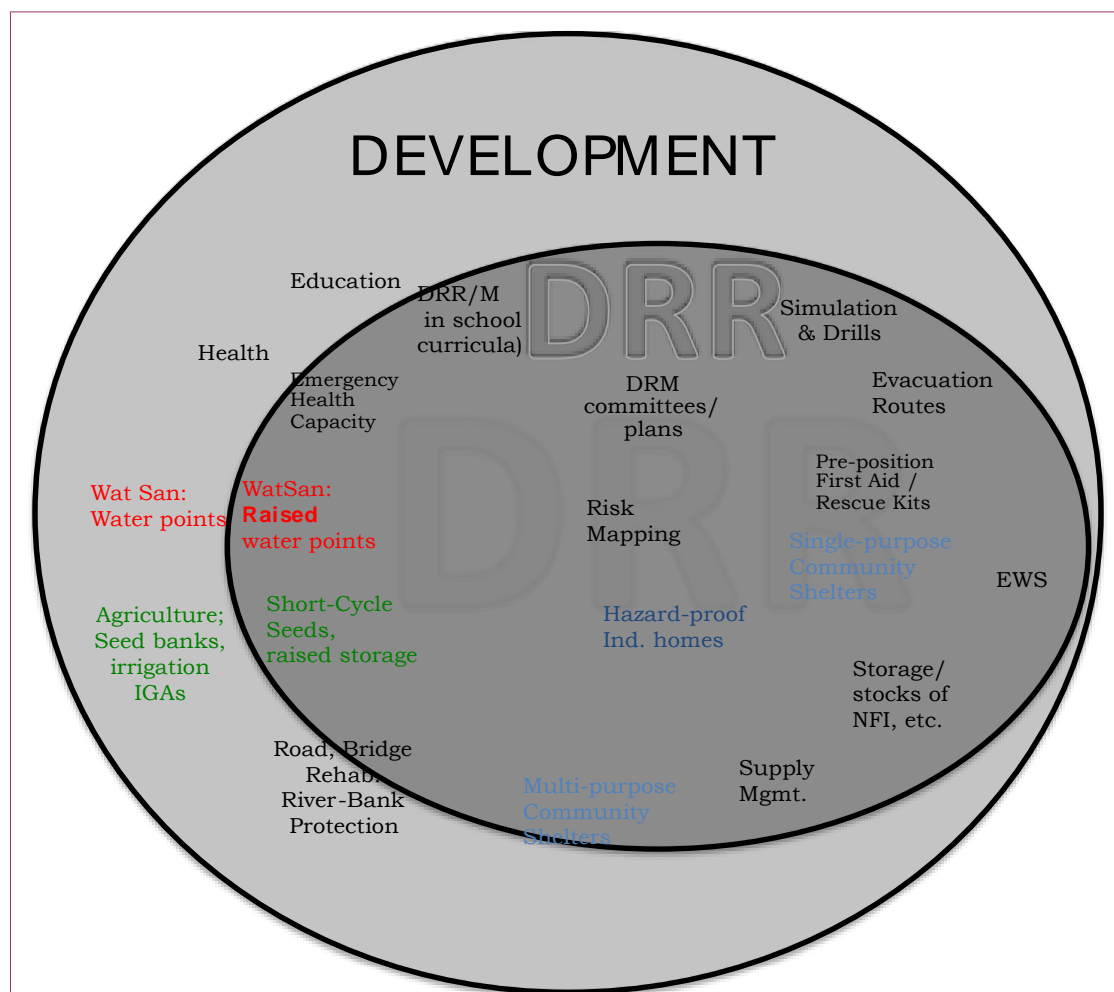
78. Figure 3 illustrates the respective development and DRR content of various interventions currently funded by DG ECHO. The current approval process does not seem to respond to established strategic criteria and the result is potentially counterproductive and distracting from the primary purpose of pilot projects meant to influence strategy and lead to replication at national level.



**Figure 3 School or Evacuation Centre?  
Classrooms with kitchen and permanent deep latrines in Malawi**

<sup>13</sup> Comoros included

<sup>14</sup> Christophe Buffet, Dec. 2010. Synthèse de Capitalisation : Madagascar. p.11 articulation entre GRC et Santé



**Figure 4 Respective development and DRR content of various interventions currently funded by DG ECHO**

79. There is a need to initiate an internal debate on where to draw the line between valuable development initiatives with only a modest or hypothetical impact on DRR and others worth funding by DG ECHO. Finding and strengthening a niche would be beneficial.

80. More difficult to confirm is whether each individual intervention benefits primarily, or at least in part, the most vulnerable within the community. The process of managing infrastructure (access and contribution) is a soft activity specific to each community. Not enough attention and time have been given by Partners to this aspect critical for equity and sustainability.

81. The evaluators also noted the apparent lack of coherence between the thematic priority on urban areas (Financial Decisions) and the operational reality (guidelines and projects). Indeed, there are strong points in favour of focusing on rural areas where food security and preparedness measures are more relevant and likely to take root. Implementing partners often advanced the “turnover of the government appointed leaders in urban areas” as an obstacle to sustainable work in all constituent areas. Considering the nature of the countries and the rural vulnerability in terms of food security, it is a legitimate priority to focus mostly but not exclusively on rural areas. Perhaps, DG ECHO would benefit to reconcile the priorities as expressed in the documents (Financing decisions and Guidelines).

82. DG ECHO projects are pilot projects. Not all are designed according to the definition in chapter four. There is some contradiction between the search for the most remote and under attended places, the short duration of the projects or the fine sprinkling of activities to increase the number of beneficiaries and the visibility/demonstrability purpose and the objective of influencing strategies and level of funding at national and regional level.

83. Vulnerability and exposure should be initial prerequisites for selection of communities. Eagerness to participate and contribute as well as accessibility are also important for pilot projects.

84. Finally, the above conclusions on the relevance of DG ECHO DRR activities in meeting the needs of the most vulnerable are only applicable to national projects, not to the four regional projects that will be discussed in section 6.7.

## 6.2 Relevance: To what extent have DG ECHO strategies addressed the needs of national civil protection agencies in the concerned countries?

85. The wording “national civil protection agencies” is in line with the EU terminology but not the reality in Africa. In all countries visited except Madagascar, there was one national coordinating body covering all aspects of disaster risk management (DRM, including both DRR and response). For clarity, the term DRM agency will be used.

### Findings

86. The best source of information was through interviews with national authorities willing to frankly express their views. Rapidly it became evident that the needs, as perceived by the DRM agency, primarily include the provision of direct institutional support and funding for their own operations. ECHO procedures do not allow direct funding of governments. UNDP, the traditional source of support for the national DRR authority, did not participate at all in DIPECHO II (or in the regional workshop in Johannesburg).

87. In all countries, the national DRM strategy and plan foresee the decentralization of DRM structures at district, community and village level. In practice, local committees are nearly inexistent outside ECHO funded projects.

88. In Malawi, village DRR committees are elected with a pre-established gender balance. They are part of the government structure but were never actually constituted until the arrival of DG ECHO DRR projects. One could observe the acceptance of those members by the community and the active involvement of the district level (DRM agency, agriculture, forestry and other departments as required) thanks to the logistical support from the Partners. Promoting national involvement was indeed more problematic due to the perceived restrictions on the use of EU funds (per diem) for official travel.

89. In Mozambique, the central DRM entity, INGC, has a strong arm focusing on DRR and preparedness. The INGC has a limited number of decentralized agents in the high-risk provinces that are willing but poorly equipped to cover the large areas for which they are responsible. Agencies (including some ECHO Partners) have varying ways to engage the provincial agents; those interviewed were very active, knowledgeable and supportive. Although impact is strong at local levels, Partners clearly expressed frustration with the DRM entities at the district level.

90. In Madagascar, there are several actors at central level: the BNGRC (National Bureau for Disaster Risk Management) an agency still too focused on response and preparedness as shown by its organigramme (Civil Protection and Operations are the only two Departments) and the newly established CPGU (The Unit for Prevention and Management of Emergencies) attached to the Prime Minister office. The later, supported by the World Bank, is strategic and multi sectorial



Figure 5 DRR Agency in Madagascar

in nature. It should be expected that CPGU will progressively assume all policy making and fund raising power for risk reduction. A third of lesser relevance to DG ECHO is the civil protection arm of the Military, a purely operational capacity “coordinated” by BNGRC. It is not a prospective counterpart for DG ECHO DRR projects.

91. In Namibia, the Directorate for Disaster Reduction Management has a strong understanding and commitment to DRR as evidenced by a nationally driven workshop on the topic. This Office should be expected to play its leading role without direct support from DG ECHO.

92. According to the questionnaire, 85, 71 and 51% of Partner respondents (N=26, 14 and 35) respectively in Malawi, Mozambique and Madagascar claim to have consulted with national

Coordination with National Authorities Score of 0 (no coordination) to 5 (excellent coordination) (# respondents)			
Country	NGO	UN	National Authorities
MALAWI	4,38 (22)	3,25 (3)	4,00 (14)
MOZAMBIQUE	4,18 (12)	3,33 (3)	4,58 (6)
MADAGASCAR	3,02 (24)	3,2 (5)	4,38 (21)

authorities prior to submitting their DIPECHO proposals. According to the table below, coordination between DG ECHO and national DRM authorities remains relatively high (highest is 5) despite the challenges. UN Organizations are markedly more critical while authorities are usually reluctant to appear critical in the questionnaire while occasionally being more open in discussions.

93. The efforts to develop a cooperative inter-country centre among the four initial countries will be discussed in section 6.7 complementarity.

## Conclusions

94. DG ECHO strength is at community level. Strengthening the national DRM system is however essential in light of the objectives to have a solid and sustainable impact at national level (strategy and amount of funding). While in all countries visited, the projects addressed the needs of local institutions or committees. Except in Malawi), intermediate level (districts or regions) are not targeted. Needs as perceived at central (national) level were also not directly addressed but only due to the Partners creativity in making possible the local participation of national officials.

95. Expecting the bottom–up approach of DG ECHO to be quicker to reach national (and international) levels than top-down approaches are to impact local levels, is unrealistic. They are complementary and will eventually meet, but not in the immediate future or time frame of DG ECHO projects.

96. Several factors compound the issue: one is the reported reluctance of the Office in Harare to permit compensation or per diem to national officials. Another is the notorious absence of two institutions that have a particular influence on the national DRR authority: UNDP and the national Red Cross Societies. It is hard to conceive how DG ECHO can achieve a durable impact at strategic level without a dialogue, if not direct cooperation, with those two partners, regardless of their perceived performance as Partners.

97. Finally, DG ECHO Technical Assistants are poorly equipped to maintain a strategic dialogue involving national DRR/M policies linked to sustainable development. The support and active participation of the EU delegation is absolutely necessary. The evaluators note the interest of the food security and rural development officials of the delegation in all countries. The eagerness of the Delegation in Namibia to add resources and efforts to those anticipated from DG ECHO is only one example. Unfortunately, the latter feel somewhat out of the loop and unsure whether their opinion and advice will be formally taken into consideration.

98. DRR is a development activity. DG ECHO should involve more transparently the EU Delegations into decision making (selection of projects and monitoring), request their ongoing and proactive liaison with authorities and lobby with other donors (World Bank and bilateral).

**6.3 Effectiveness: To what extent DG ECHO-funded activities have contributed to reinforcing local response capacities, including preparedness and awareness of local communities?**

99. DG ECHO projects and DIPECHO in particular are defined and widely known across the world by their focus at community —LOCAL— level. This clearly is spelled out in all funding decisions and guidelines to Partners. How effective this presence is evaluated in terms of outputs, outcomes and in one instance impact.

### Findings

100. Systematically, the evaluators could observe in all places visited the presence of *outputs* (either tangible as dikes, silos, shelters, radios, alert material, monitoring gauges, presence of new rice plantations or cash culture, irrigation work, plantations of trees or mangroves, improved roads, or on the soft side, established committees, training courses and material, maps of risk and vulnerability, etc.). Surprisingly, the set of preparedness interventions seems almost identical in all projects (a cut and paste approach)—the only variety being in its local adaptation. The next photos show from top to bottom a silo established with ECHO relief / recovery funding, the traditional local silo totally vulnerable to climatic hazards and parasites and finally three examples of flood /cyclone resistant permanent structures built or being built with DG ECHO DRR funding.



**Figure 6 Different silo constructions: (1) Traditional unprotected silo (Malawi); (2) Silo with local material in Madagascar (relief funds); (3) Permanent Granary in Malawi (with office space); (4) Silo with local material in Malawi; (5) Concrete silo in Madagascar**



101. The *outcomes* (improved awareness and preparedness) are less measurable but could also be noted in the interviews. There are some noteworthy successes. The understanding of DRR concepts, the dedication and enthusiasm of the local committees is the most noticeable achievement. They and their communities are clearly better aware of the benefits of preparedness and less fatalistic in their behaviour. Sustainability was enhanced whenever the Partner has developed Income Generating Activities for those committees, created bank accounts and institutionalized their existence. This awareness, seen at all levels- not only in the communities, is also an outcome of the training and promotional efforts of ECHO DRR activities.

102. Flood Early Warning Systems (EWS) in Malawi (and to a lesser extent in other countries) are a particular success. The main and appreciated feature is the truly community or rather intercommunity approach whereby villages upstream are monitoring the level of water and calling by mobile phones their counterparts downstream. The communities, through IGAs, support the cost of the calls. It has a human dimension of solidarity and a direct impact on local committees, benefits that are often lost in the centralized automated EWS promoted by the larger Financial Institutions (the village committee, the most concerned user, is usually the last informed!)

103. The benefits of many interventions, especially in food security, are perceived **immediately** irrespective of their future impact on resilience to disasters. This impact on the daily life was most often mentioned. A leading example is the introduction of new rice seeds. Promoted for its shorter cycle and storm/flood resilience (and therefore reduced risk), they were quickly adopted in small or large part for better yield. All income generating activities (yam, processing of food, etc) intended to increase disaster resilience also improve daily life. On the other end of the spectrum, some DRR interventions, especially stabilization of riverbanks or coastline through mangrove/trees plantations, cannot be expected to produce any result before 4-5 years (see photos).



Figure 7 Restoration of Mangrove in Madagascar

Figure 8 Riverbank stabilization in Malawi

104. The proof of DRR effectiveness is in the actual *impact* on the local response after a disaster. Cyclone Bingiza struck twice Madagascar between 14<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> February 2011. Interviews with district authorities, leaders and Partner in the first affected area (Maroantsetra) are consistent in noting a significant improvement in the quality of local response. The Head of the District admitted it scepticism before Bingiza and its “conversion” thereafter. He added that the ECHO communities did suffer significantly less permitting to channel the outside assistance to other unprepared and more affected villages...in some sense creating a potential disincentive for those investing their own resources in reducing their vulnerability!

105. Given that those statements are all somewhat subjective and potentially biased, the four partners in Madagascar commissioned a joint independent survey of the impact of their DRR interventions in the Bingiza-affected area.<sup>15</sup> The methodology included two “control” zones in which the NGOs were not carrying out DRR activities. The questionnaire used was relatively

<sup>15</sup> Christophe BUFFET, July 2011. A comparative survey of DIPECHO programmes in the wake of cyclone Bingiza. Released late October 2011.

simple but highly pertinent for the purpose.<sup>16</sup>The findings and conclusions, only available at the time of writing this report, remarkably converge with those of this much broader (but also thinner) evaluation.

106. The main findings from the survey are:

- *“Compared with the control zones and the initial situation, the local authorities ‘preparedness and response phases are better organized and more coherent in the NGO zones. The communities have, to a certain extent at least, adopted safer behaviour”*
- *“The micro-projects decided by the communities with the support of NGOs have proven effective for the most part”(shelter, access to water, short growing rice) “these strategies bring benefits even in the absence of disasters”*
- *“The NGO’s areas of expertise and their respective mandates vary in scope but none of them is in position to conduct an exhaustive programme... in all thematic areas.”*

107. Respondents express high esteem for the level of cooperation between projects and community leaders, the highest average being in Mozambique. (score of 4.4 on a scale of 0 to 5)

### Conclusions / recommendations:

108. DG ECHO focus at community –local-level is a best practice and should be maintained. The evaluators agree with Buffet (consultant in Madagascar) that most DRR interventions have improved the resilience and the response at least during the only properly documented disaster. The initiative of a rapid external survey from the partners in Madagascar should be commended.

109. Most sustainable impact appears when DIPECHO effort is complemented by an intervention meeting daily needs. The most illustrative examples are the FA DRR activities (not agriculture only, but any intervention that helps households meet their food needs in case of disaster, such as IGAs, markets etc).

110. DRR effectiveness of small-scale mitigation projects observed in the evaluation has not been tested by disasters. Some are unlikely to make an impact (unaffordable models or reinforcement techniques), others are already appreciated for their daily (and main?) purpose (water/sanitation, schools, health care improvement) while some aimed to prevent the impact of flooding (dikes in Malawi) remain doubtful in spite of the confidence of the Partner.

111. Finally, the last finding of the Post-Bingiza evaluation that “no single NGO is in position to develop an exhaustive DRR programme quoted from the independent Post-Bingiza survey (#82) calls for comments: DRR is a multisectoral developmental exercise. Would a *consortium* of partners providing high-risk communities with a joint holistic program be a better solution in every country?

### 6.4 Effectiveness: To what extent have DG ECHO funded activities had an impact at national level, through replication in other areas?

112. The objective of pilot projects is for innovative interventions to be tested and then, if and when successful, replicated. Replication can be spontaneous (i.e. the neighbouring households, villages, etc.) or planned (i.e. prototype picked up by another Partner or even donor). Failure (risk of) is part of innovation. At this stage, only a modest trend if any towards

<sup>16</sup> The relevance of the questionnaire contrast with the “Impact Evaluation Tool” developed under contract by CLaSP that is too complex (336 indicators) and academic. It is unlikely to ever be implemented by Partners in spite of the training carried out or planned.

deeper adoption or ownership, sustainability and ultimately replication can be realistically expected. Although mentioned in the scope of the evaluation (ToR), sustainability is not specifically mentioned in the evaluation questions. It will be addressed here.

## Findings

113. Sustainability is a lingering concern for most development projects and even more for DRR where most of the benefits are conjectural and are never “cashed in” until the next disaster occurrence. Sustainability is ensured by true ownership of the project activities; such seems to be the case in every community visited. Participation and commitment for maintenance seems to convey community ownership (although some partners used cash for work for heavy manual interventions an approach criticised by some local authorities for the precedent created). IGA (i.e., small businesses) for the committees or the rental of the multi-purpose shelters played a critical role in permitting the sustainability of the activities. Finally addressing food and livelihood security together with preparedness has been a winning combination associating immediate and conjectural benefits.

114. Commitment to sustain preparedness and maintain infrastructure was observed, but how durable this can be, if no disaster strikes for a few years is difficult to ascertain. Elevated silos, latrines and flood proof water wells built five to seven years ago are still in use. The insistence (since 2001) from one community to have its mangrove replanted appears to guarantee the care they intend to give.

115. Replication, however at a modest and technical scale, first occurs between partners at exchanges of best practices, (e.g., CARE model of shelter construction replicated by MdM in a different district; COOPI income generating approach for local committees or the community based flood early warning system adapted by Medair)<sup>17</sup> There are isolated examples of spontaneous replication at lower (not National) levels that hold promise but could not be confirmed by direct observation. COOPI reports the interest of neighbouring local civil protection committees to initiate similar IGAs to sustain their operations; the same for other Partners.

- The use of short cycle rice is a best example of initiative most likely to spread. In one village in north Madagascar, the initial beneficiaries although not yet fully convinced of the advantage of the “new” variety for themselves but saw clearly the economic potential of becoming certified producers of seeds!<sup>18</sup> The main criterion when replacing the 6-month variety is the improved yield, a daily benefit. (see photo next page)
- Yam replication in ICCO /SAF and CARE projects respectively in Mananjary and Antalaha (Madagascar) through the regular promotional display in agriculture fairs illustrates the need for a systematic marketing of even the best ideas in conservative cultures.<sup>19</sup> See photo next page.
- In another sector, the creation by MdM of mobile brigades or emergency health personnel seems well accepted by health authorities that decided to put this activity on their budget for 2012. Similarly, the municipal authorities in Maroantsetra (Madagascar) are sustaining and possibly expanding the solid waste disposal collection initiated and later handed-over by Medair.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>17</sup> Some partners are more prone to learn from others or from their own experience. Medair was noticeable in this aspect. Others are unwilling to receive no-cost professional advice even from specialized technical agencies.

<sup>18</sup> The case was exceptional, as they had received short cycle seeds years before in response to an earlier emergency. The benefit of short cycle was therefore not new or a pilot initiative. They accepted to continue planting the new variety in spite of perceived excess of bran for its advertised flood resistance, a feature they were not in position to test in the past planting season.

<sup>19</sup> An activity initiated and supported by FAO.

<sup>20</sup> As mentioned, keeping the drains and channels clean from trash has been proven to have no measurable impact on the risk and duration of flooding.



**Figure 9 ECHO produced Yam available on the market; Figure 10 Short & long-cycle rice paddies**

116. ICPM, the joint DRR advocacy initiative in Madagascar, contributes to visibility of DRR practices and may have a long-term (yet to-be-measured) impact at national level. The popularity of their newsletter among donors, embassies and agencies is encouraging. Its content is often substantive (promoting ideas rather than partners alone).

117. Finally, the newly funded DFID Climate Change initiative in Malawi has adopted some of the most successful food security practices (and the Partners). Although, it is not a mere replication, it is a tribute to the value of the ECHO-funded interventions.

118. There are also un-convincing examples as pilot projects do not come without risks: the absence of potential replication of cyclone-resistant houses that cost 30% to twice as much is one. Another is the lack of actual use at community level of satellite-based mapping efforts.

119. In all interviews, a consistent finding is that it was far too early to seek even local replication. Behaviour does not change quickly and several planting cycles or repeated disaster events are, for instance, needed to really judge the benefit and inconvenience of a new strain, plant or shelter technique.

120. As portrayed by the questionnaire, 100, 89 and 88% of the respondents respectively from Mozambique, Madagascar and Malawi (N= 12, 35 and 24) claim to have been solicited by others for project materials or efforts. Nearly 91, 81 and 80% of the respondents claim that an entity outside the project has already replicated a project component (respectively for Mozambique, Madagascar and Malawi; N=11, 27 and 20).

121. Replies from the questionnaires generally show a picture more positive than the interviews and the observations. To the scaling (0 to 5) question “are the project activities likely to continue upon the termination of its funding by DIPECHO?“, 73 Partners responded with an average score of 3.5 (average would be 2.5).

**Table 4 Sustainability of the projects**

	NGO	UN	TOTAL
Malawi	3.8 (20)	3.7 (7)	3.8 (27)
Mozambique	3.6 (11)	3.9 (3)	3.6 (14)
Madagascar	3.2 (27)	3.6 (5)	3.5 (32)

*Scores from 0 (Unlikely) to 5 (Very likely). Number of respondents (73)*

## Conclusions / recommendations

122. True sustainability is the maintenance of the effort or infrastructure without external support. Shifting responsibility to longer-term donors may be called a success for a pilot programme such as DIPECHO but it is not proof of sustainability by the communities.

123. It is problematic to expect a spontaneous, visible and measurable trend towards national sustainability or replication in such a short project cycle. The local communities and national governments, even if fully convinced of the benefits, lack the means to replicate. The selected countries are among the poorest and economic parameters, especially in Madagascar under freeze of international cooperation, offer little hope for replication. Most of the measures require technical support and initial investment, perhaps modest but unaffordable for many.

124. A pilot programme in a country like Namibia with communities as poor and as vulnerable as in the three countries but with a significantly higher national income may test the validity and practicality of this replication under more favourable circumstances.

125. The terms 'sustainability' and 'national-level impact/replication' should be used sparingly in future ECHO DRR contracts for pilot projects testing the practicality of some interventions in the particular context. Although uncertainty and risk of partial failure are part of the deal, Partners feel that they are required to prove sustainability and replication with Indicators sometimes "negotiated" by ECHO and accepted by the Partners under time pressure. The evaluators believe that some of those expected results and targets related to sustainability/replication are not realistic and even possible to monitor within the time frame and budget of the projects.

126. Ownership is a necessary but insufficient condition for sustainability. Visibility and advertising (in the right market) is an additional condition for replication. Seeking the most forgotten and vulnerable places has overlooked the need for visibility and the second condition (advertising) was variably attended (reasonably well by some partners for yam introduction, or at national level by ICPM). The promotion of best practices at regional level is discussed later.

### **6.5 Effectiveness: To what extent have partners' activities funded by DG ECHO had an impact at national level, through an increase of funding for DRR-related interventions in the countries of intervention?**

First we need to determine whether there was an increase of national or external funding for DRR in each of the countries. Only then, can we assess the potential impact of ECHO funded activities. Beyond DIPECHO, main donors in the region include EU, The United Kingdom Department for International Development (DFID) and the US Office for Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA). Based on a July 2011 email from ECHO TA, a total of Euros 36.1 million has been proposed or raised for continued DRR work by current Partners in the region.

#### **Findings**

127. In Malawi, obtaining official budget figures was not feasible. The most important observation is the success of the three ECHO partners to become Partners of DFID's €18M 5 year program for adaptation to climate change (a special application of DRR!). As the selection has been through tenders reviewed by an independent committee, the partners' success may be credited to the quality of their current projects.<sup>21</sup> Additional projects are in the pipeline from the World Bank addressing the risk of flooding basin wide. Due to the length and nature of the process, impact from ECHO on mobilizing those funds is unlikely. A role in the implementation however remains desirable (community dimension of Early Warning Systems, for instance).

128. In Mozambique, no additional DRR funding was identified, despite direct inquiries to all in-country donors. In fact, it appeared that some well-known donors, such as Germany are scaling down their efforts, including DRR. Only CARE/Mozambique was able to gain additional funding again related to climate change adaptation.

<sup>21</sup> The effort towards impartiality and transparency was interesting: DFID Climate change advisor in Lilongwe was not part of the selection committee due to its personal knowledge of the actors.

129. In Madagascar, the situation is distinct. Development funds are frozen due to the political situation and donors reduced their presence and funding. Social programs like health have seen cuts of 15% of their budget. DRR at national level has not been spared. However, The World Bank (Global Facility for DRR, track II) is implementing through the CPGU a project of 1.2 M USD including risk mapping, high-level EWS and other themes of relevance to the local activities of the Partners. Additional projects (total unknown) are under consideration by the Global Facility. Information was not available from other donors. How much the DG ECHO funded activities and ICPM advocacy may have influenced this process is unknown. Again the short duration of DIPECHO process makes doubtful a decisive influence. There is however, a consortium of NGOs, named Salohy that has a distinct DRR component funded by USAID. CARE is the only DG ECHO PARTNER that benefits from this funding.

130. Three DG ECHO partners (FAO, ICCO and CARE) constituted a consortium with other NGOs and UN agencies and submitted a proposal to EU's funding to achieve Millennium Development Goals in the South Eastern side of the country (€12.5m.; 3 years duration). The proposal has many elements of lessons-learned from FS/DRR implementation, as scaling-up of short-cycle crops, seed banks, etc. In informal discussion with EU delegation officials, it was confirmed that the proposal will be approved on the sake of LRRD and scaling-up positive experiences from DG ECHO funding.

131. In all countries, a potential source of funding where DG ECHO influence may be decisive is the EU Development or food security cooperation. This opportunity has not been tapped due to the weakness of the relationship between DG ECHO and EU delegations in most cases. Also in all 4 countries, FAO has submitted major proposals to EU FSTP and OFDA for their continued DRR efforts.

## Conclusions

132. Despite questionnaire results, DRR funding does not show any clear increasing trend. Even in cases where additional funds were mobilized; an attribution to DG ECHO initiative is impossible. Partners themselves are actively seeking other sources but remain very discrete on the specifics.

133. EU countries and delegations have a role to play in:

- Advocating for DRR funding from other donors as it aligns with their development strategies
- Finding ways to make European development and DG ECHO funding more complementary (i.e. Food security)

## 6.6 Coherence: To what extent can the constitution of longer-term strategies be attributed to DG ECHO-funded DRR activities?

134. What constitutes a long term DRR strategy is distinct for most of the interlocutors. Does a Disaster Risk Management plan (or policy/strategy) limited to preparedness and response qualify?

## Findings

135. Many of the interlocutors believed that a strategy predated the start of DIPECHO activities. The full text could not be made available to the evaluators with the exception of Namibia. For those more familiar with the content, emphasis was slightly stronger on administrative organization of committees (still, in places, called civil protection) and the planning of response. While disaster risk reduction and prevention may be summarily included, land use management, construction norms and standards are barely if at all mentioned.

136. In Malawi, short of a formal strategy a DRR framework and DRR operational guidelines are soon to be issued. In Mozambique, the national strategy and entity pay credence to DRR and preparedness. In Madagascar, under the encouragement of the GFDRR, the CPGU (attached to the Prime Minister) is planning to update the Disaster Risk Management Strategy issued in 2003.

137. According to the questionnaire, 100, 87 and 84% of respondents claim that a national strategy exists specifically for DRR. (N=20, 39 and 50 for Mozambique, Malawi and Madagascar, respectively). The fact that a true risk reduction strategy does not exist in any of these countries but rather policy documents with varying mention of prevention and preparedness speaks for itself.

## Conclusions

138. The evaluators arrived at the same conclusion as for the previous question: it is unrealistic to expect valuable pilot activities in remote communities to visibly influence the formulation of national strategies affecting sustainable development of the country, especially in such a short period of time. The evaluators could not attribute a direct impact of DIPECHO in this process.

139. A more subtle and long-term impact of advocacy activities on policies and strategies is likely but hard to assess, measure and attribute.

**6.7 Complementarity: To what extent do DG ECHO-funded activities at the community level complement the current interventions at macro level; To what extent has the DG ECHO strategy been adopted by other donors and national civil protection agencies?**

140. The complementarity issue lies at two levels: between DG ECHO funded local projects and 1.) the regional initiatives and 2.) the macro projects from the international community, respectively. An additional important aspect of complementarity has already been discussed above—that of DIPECHO and DG ECHO FA.

## Findings

Between community projects and regional projects

141. Interlocutors from community level projects expressed a rather critical view of the complementarity (i.e. added value) of the regional interventions. With the frequent exception of the specialized technical assistance from the national components of regional projects, they regarded the regional *information management* dimension as an administrative burden rather than an added value. This trend grew more marked the closer one gets to the field. The appreciation of the value of the *technical assistance* (GIS, Food Security or construction standards) varied largely.

142. The added value of the GIS regional component was appreciated in the capitals where maps are used to improve reports to donors. On site, managers or local leaders who were prompted to show the map they prefer (or use most) among the many decorating the walls, consistently pointed to the simplest ones (see photo) rather than the

satellite or remote sensing photos and maps. In a project in Malawi with a dedicated information technology staff member, satellite photos were used to map report of crocodiles and hippopotamus unwanted contact with humans. Requests to explain the practicality of this accuracy (for a hazard not covered by DIPECHO project) and its potential concrete benefit for the community were not met.

143. Community level Partners active in food security were more dependent on technical agricultural advice regarding selection and certification of rice seeds and other products. Occasionally critical of the delays, they nevertheless requested advice as soon as a query or problem was raised by a local community (i.e., too much bran, when to plant or what to do with the crops in case of imminent threat). The cost-effectiveness of the regional component of such a grant (the largest single grant evaluated and the largest for any one entity across the three funding decisions even with 25% going to the purchase of seeds) is questioned. The link of local FAO with the national agriculture authorities and laboratories and its legal and technical expertise were appreciated and remain critical.

144. Finally, expert advice and/or certification of PARTNER's construction by UN Habitat were accepted to varying degrees as a positive contribution. It was noted that this rather expensive expertise is also not cost-effective for simple shelters built with local material. Some Partners saw little added value in this additional expertise.



Figure 11 Simple example of GIS based risk map

Between DIPECHO and macro-level initiatives:

145. Donors such as DFID, OFDA or World Bank approach DRR (or climate change) on a top-down multiyear macro level: i.e., the WB Shire Basin project, the improvement at national level of the mapping capacity in Madagascar and Malawi. Those broader initiatives, if/when fully funded, will include activities and/or communities engaged in current DIPECHO projects.

146. Will the relatively costly effort to 'standardize geographical information' within DIPECHO projects in three different countries be seen as relevant for a national mapping process? Can small mitigation projects be considered within the broader risk reduction strategies to be developed by WB experts under the basin wide projects? Finally, hard evidence is even elusive regarding the complementarity of DG ECHO food security approaches related to floods and cyclones and the macro food security strategies of EU and climate changes donors. The key technical role assigned to FAO is, to an extent, a positive factor for complementarity.

147. In the short period covered by the evaluation, there was no massive Commission's humanitarian assistance in the three countries. Following Bingiza cyclone, the involvement of all humanitarian partners in DRR has resulted in a reduced need for assistance and a smooth linkage between relief, rehabilitation and development (LRRD).



## Conclusions

148. On one side the technical assistance in agriculture and construction was useful and appreciated by most partners, albeit not necessarily cost effective. On the other side, the efforts to standardize information collection and sharing are seen as going beyond the extent required to benefit individual projects. The evaluators strongly support the need for a flexible coordination and compatibility mechanism for DRR activities **within a same country** (i.e. the ICPM effort in Madagascar) the emphasis is on *flexible* given the different local contexts) but we question the cost-effectiveness in money (over 3 M out of a total of 11 M) and time of regional coordination and information sharing among actors whose main commonality is to have received a 15 month DRR support from the same donor. The same effort would have been far more beneficial if it were not so exclusively centred on DG ECHO funded activities and partners.



Figure 12 Community based flood early warning system with names and phones of contacts

149. Most important is the achievement of complementarity between DIPECHO punctual pilot initiatives and larger macro-scale programmes. The exceptional asset of DG ECHO is that the official European voice defending the human dimension of DRR (most vulnerable local beneficiaries). Both approaches bottom-up and top-down are needed. Neither can be expected to reach the end of its spectrum rapidly. Impact at strategic macro scale level can only be a long-term goal for DG ECHO. Macro-scale projects have their own inertia. Some of the success stories (for instance the community involvement in EWS) need more forceful promotion to the large financial institutions.

150. DRR and Climate Change are complex themes that no institution can fully master alone. They all are learning from each other. Every agency is progressively building its own strategy borrowing and adapting building blocks from others. None will ever adopt wholesale a 'strategy'.

151. DIPECHO is a pioneer at local level in a region where DRR was not a household term. However, not all “best practices” identified by DG ECHO Partners are seen as such by other actors or the evaluators. No donor or National Agency has adopted or will adopt DG ECHO DRR ‘strategy’ as is. It is up to DG ECHO and EU delegation to ensure that the many successes and experiences receive a fair trial! This may not be achieved by current meetings (on lessons learned) perceived to be revolving mostly around a circle of DG ECHO funded DRR partners in three countries of a large region.

**6.8 Efficiency: Which elements in the institutional context and in the relations between the different actors have had a higher impact in the effectiveness and scaling up of the DRR interventions?**

152. Under this heading, we summarize elements with a positive or negative impact on effectiveness. We draw not only from best practices but also from errors.

### Observed best practices

153. By decreasing order of importance, the most positive features were:

1. **The smooth integration of the traditional DIPECHO preparedness projects with food security DRR interventions:** First, the Commission rightly asserts that the impact of natural hazards in the region is primarily in terms of food security rather than lives lost. Perhaps more practical, food security interventions respond to the needs as perceived by the beneficiaries. Adding a concrete visible benefit today facilitates an investment in preparedness for a disaster that may not come.
2. **Investing in DRR local committees** through training and building up of financial autonomy: The inclusion of income generating activities for the operation of the committees is one of the most promising factors for sustainability. Without sustainability, there will be no replication.
3. **Selection of communities based on their ability and even eagerness to participate** in the pilot projects.
4. **Participation of local associations** (water, irrigation etc.): the involvement of local associations of farmers, women, well users etc.) to manage and maintain the multipurpose shelter, the use of irrigation work or access to silos adds a check and balance over the DRR committee, ultimately a government body and will improve fairness in the use of income and resources.
5. **Personalizing the EWS** through warning by one local committee to others: It imparts a human dimension to EWS and passes a broader message that what is done upstream to the river is affecting people downstream. That this activity is supported by IGAs in the communities is an additional positive factor.
6. **National support projects such as ICPM:** This joint initiative among partners in Madagascar is more likely to have an advocacy impact than the costly regional projects. It could easily contribute to inter country information sharing.
7. **Work where partners have been and will stay.** Replication will not take place spontaneously or during a short project cycle. Support will be required. Partners that have been initiated to DRR through DG ECHO are most likely to have a vested interest in sustaining and scaling up the best practices.
8. **Importance of soft activities:** Sustainability was best ensured when the Partners dedicated most efforts on assisting communities to develop a management model of infrastructure (silos, wells, shelters, etc.). Pressure has often been too much on the delivery of hardware (silos, etc.).

## Observed shortcomings

154. It is worth stressing that the few shortcomings are not generalized and ultimately are often offset by the many qualities and strengths of the same Partner.

1. **Contradiction between the structure of some projects and their supposedly pilot nature** aiming for a broad national impact: reaching the most vulnerable at any cost, inaccessibility of sites, scattering of activities among too many beneficiaries negating any significant impact, multiple carbon copy projects by the same partner, etc.
2. **Limited impact at intermediate and national level:** It is difficult to address but the problem is compounded by DG ECHO being distracted by venturing into inter-country coordination mechanisms.
3. **A shift from concrete projects in communities to a top heavy coordination / support structure.** Interviewees clearly expressed reservations on the impact of the four regional projects. It is not surprising considering the reluctance of most NGOs to share information or be coordinated. Unfortunately, most actors, critical in private, will play the game in public from respect for the donor strategic decisions.
4. **Lack of DRR focus or justification for some development initiatives.** Communities' leaders are often smart. The wrong message is passed: "DRR is not that important but it is a good excuse to get what you really need (want)". Construction of permanent refuge centres in Malawi was praised above all for their multipurpose function as schools. Considering the high cost of this concrete and brick construction and the relatively low frequency of floods, one must ask whether needed developmental initiatives with only tenuous justification for "Risk Reduction" are not shiftily swept into the grants by eager communities and Partners.
5. **A lessons-learned process** geared to promote Partner "achievement" rather than to identify what can and should be sold to other donors. The value of pilot projects is as much in the analysis of the unavoidable failures than in the "best practices"

## 7 Overall or cross cutting Conclusions

### 7.1 Uniqueness of the Southern Africa Region

155. DIPECHO is now covering eight regions, among them Southern Africa and Indian Ocean is the latest and perhaps the most unique and heterogeneous in many aspects. Disasters in this region did not bring the catastrophic impact of past earthquakes or tsunamis mobilizing huge amount of humanitarian assistance.<sup>22</sup> The closest to this sudden onset scenario was the massive flood in Mozambique (2000) killing approximately 800 persons.<sup>23</sup>

156. As correctly identified by the Commission, the primary issue is not the immediate loss of lives from storms, floods or other natural hazards but the sustained impact on a precarious food and livelihood security. This is further illustrated by the estimated death toll from a drought in Mozambique in 1981 where an estimated 100,000 died (EM-DAT).

157. The region is also much less homogeneous than for instance, the Caribbean, Latin America or even the Asian Sub-regions. DRR entities/structures are weak and unable to provide meaning support and guidance to individual countries. Significant differences in culture (Madagascar does not see itself as part of Africa, Comoros stands alone in economic status and typology of its vulnerability) and language (three countries, three languages) further complicate and make questionable the feasibility and benefit of a tightly coordinated initiative.

158. Finally, the most important feature is the scarcity of DRR community based initiatives. DIPECHO, although coming late in its history to the region, was a pioneer and found no programmes to emulate from other donors. Although national DRR strategies had been developed with the support of UNDP and the World Bank prior to the Commission's programme, their impact has yet to be perceived at local (district or village) level. Being a leader in unchartered land has some advantages but also creates a greater challenge to change traditional culture and develop a sustainable impact in the time frame imparted by short DIPECHO projects.

### 7.2 The design of ECHO DRR Strategy



**Figure 13 Different forms of shelter: (1) Single use shelter (Madagascar); (2) Multiple use shelter (Madagascar); (3) Multiple use shelter designed to provide a source of income to the disaster committee**

159. The somewhat unique quality of the challenge called for creativity from DG ECHO in the design of its strategic approach. The consultation process leading to the set up of the Programme has been thorough and the dedication and oversight from the Harare office and HQ very effective. However, the resulting design shows room for improvement.

<sup>22</sup> The risk of volcanic eruptions in Comoros and earthquake in Malawi and Mozambique does not exclude such possibility in the future.

<sup>23</sup> Since 1988 the WHO Collaborating Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters (**CRED**) has been maintaining an Emergency Events Database: EM-DAT

160. The magnitude of needs urges DG ECHO to be highly selective in its operational choices. This is not always the case leading to a lack of coherence or a dispersion of efforts:

- Geographically, DG ECHO strength is at community level. The requirement that those local activities be supportive of the national is a definite asset. That alone is sufficiently ambitious given the amount of resources and time available. The costly promotion of coordination / exchange among DG ECHO-funded interventions at regional level and in particular the attempt to create an inter-government collaboration centre (i.e., UN Habitat's DIMSUR) is seen by many interlocutors as a distraction rather an added value to the community focus. Regardless of the interest of improving coordination of DRR among countries, the evaluators agree that DG ECHO and its partners in this endeavour are not the best equipped for promoting regional inter-governmental coordination, especially when there is a DRR unit in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and international institutions with an official mandate in this regard.
- Exclusion of droughts in the second Plan of Action: Although drought was identified by partners as a priority and was listed in several policy documents, Partners were instructed not to cover this hazard. Nevertheless, many of the food security measures in particular the diversification of crops, the irrigation works and the introduction of new seeds indirectly contribute to drought resilience. Projects dedicated to drought alone may too "development like" but a multi hazard food security approach would have been more rational while building bridges with climate change adaptation initiatives.
- Earthquakes are rare in the region (Malawi, Mozambique for instance). Preparedness is almost nil but the risk of severe metropolitan losses is improbable. The challenge would be how to sustain interest and efforts for a risk of such low occurrence. In the context of the region, the evaluators concluded that although earthquake preparedness is a not a priority for DG ECHO short duration interventions, those started (i.e.. Mozambique, DIPECHO 2) should be allowed to continue for another round.
- Development projects and DRR by nature overlap. There is a need to select those developmental initiatives that have a predominant DRR benefit. Multi purpose use of small scale DRR infrastructure is quite desirable but funding interventions with dubious DRR benefit is not a best practice. Those activities are best left to other EC instruments or development donors.

161. One of the most original contributions from the DIPECHO programme is the combination of flexibility, innovation and risk acceptance. Pilot projects do serve the communities, but above all and primarily they should provide convincing argument for replication. To achieve the latter, visibility (access), commitment of the beneficiaries, sufficient critical density of interventions in any single community as well as a broad diversity of partners<sup>24</sup> and projects are required. These conditions often conflict with the humanitarian criteria of selecting those most in need in the most remote places. DG ECHO should review its guidelines to provide a consistent official message on whether it is a DRR pilot activity or a purely need-based development project.

### 7.3 Strategy implementation

162. The selection of projects and partners is the key to the success of a pilot strategy. Visiting partners and their beneficiaries is the highlight of any DG ECHO evaluation. The commitment of the staff and volunteers, the level of satisfaction of the communities as evidenced in numerous private or group meetings are to the credit of DG ECHO.

163. DG ECHO internal process of selection aims for maximum objectivity and quantification -as evidenced by the scoring matrices at Harare level. However, this attempted objectivity is not

<sup>24</sup> In Madagascar, one single agency has 5 contracts for similar activities for a total of 46.8% of the full DIPECHO II and FA budget combined for that country.

known and appreciated by all stakeholders including the EU delegations.<sup>25</sup> National authorities do not feel part of the selection either, although 67% of the 75 Partners interlocutors claim to have concerted with National level authorities prior to submitting their proposal. Considering the importance attached to the replication and buy in by development actors, a trade in of some DG ECHO autonomy and independence for a meaningful consultation with EU delegation and the National DRR agency would go a long way to ensure greater sustainability and political support. The DG ECHO Harare scoring matrix could serve as a good starting point to develop a joint appraisal format providing greater weight to those criteria or factors most determinant for long-term success.

164. Involvement of UNDP and Red Cross Societies, however the form it takes, is critical for this long-term view and impact in DRR: UNDP has unmatched ability to strengthen national institutions and promote strategic changes, an element indispensable for DRR replication. Few national actors have the outreach of Red Cross to sustain local preparedness. The absence of those two key actors in DG ECHO programme is counterproductive for replication and scaling up.

#### 7.4 Monitoring and evaluation

165. The supervision and visits from DG ECHO Technical Assistant and regional support experts reflected the keen interest of DG ECHO to ensure the best level of achievement. Frequent visits are an important element to ensure quality; it has however generated discomfort from partners when observations resulted in change of agreed upon priorities or contractual obligations. Those mid-course changes often occur on a background of additional results and indicators, some impractical, already being included at the ‘suggestion’ of the donor during the negotiation phase. Changes (such as those resulting from a misunderstanding of the original documents) should not be pressed upon during the implementation.

166. One positive example of timely and independent monitoring has been the jointly commissioned evaluation of the impact of DRR interventions following Bingiza Cyclone in Madagascar. The evaluators believe that the rapid mobilization of a similar team of **independent** experts to evaluate systematically the impact of DRR activities in the aftermath of each disaster, is required even years after the termination of the project. The new sophisticated evaluation tool under testing by CLaSP is apparently not taking into account the simpler approach of this successful mission and is, in our opinion, too complex and academic to be of practical field value. A rapid fact finding mission is the ultimate means to ascertain the effectiveness of DG ECHO strategy.

167. DG ECHO has invested funds in M&E through regional projects. Individual projects are not providing the data requested for many reasons: time consuming demands, low cost-effectiveness, failure to see the benefit/added-value and above all a sense of protective competitiveness. Too much was expected from the integration of so disparate and autonomous actors.

#### 7.5 DRR and climatic change

168. Some donors or stakeholders are “moving away” from DRR towards climate change adaptation (CCA). It is a matter of terminology rather than of substance. CCA is indeed reducing risk / increasing resilience to one single set of natural hazards, those resulting from climate “change”.

<sup>25</sup> In Madagascar, the EU focal point reportedly developed its own criteria and matrix for analysis. No feedback was received from DG ECHO.

## 7.6 Sustainability, Replication/scaling up and exit strategy

The three concepts are loosely intertwined and were addressed under effectiveness. They are summarized below:

169. Sustainability requires truly changing knowledge and behaviour of a very conservative society geared to daily survival. In developed and educated societies, building a risk reduction culture is far from achieved. How can this be demonstrated in a matter of two short project cycles in Africa? For agriculture, several planting seasons or years are required! The announcement made at the regional workshop of a change from 18 to 24 months funding cycle is a very positive step.

170. Most projects visited are nearing a phase of consolidation. The first priority is to ensure the consolidation of ownership by the beneficiaries. The soft aspects of infrastructure management and maintenance, somewhat overlooked in the log frame of ongoing projects will need special attention. Those aspects (e.g., community arrangements for the management of a silo) are not as amenable to measurable and objective indicators as the construction of the silo itself. They are however even more critical to sustainability than the timeliness and quality of the construction. Those activities are more time consuming but less expensive than the initial hardware phase.

171. Scaling up: Temptation will be strong for the partners to seek successive DG ECHO support for scaling up the pilot projects in new communities only slightly different from the original ones. This will be particularly likely in projects including a large number of communities or beneficiaries, each receiving only a small sample of the large arrays of interventions covered by DIPECHO II. Funding this approach would however result in the loss of the innovative (pilot) feature of DG ECHO DRR programs and would deny DG ECHO a credible exit strategy given the magnitude of unmet needs. First time communities should only be considered for newly approved hazards, such as drought.

172. Finding alternative sources of support is the best alternative. The obstacle is poor communication among development donors and DG ECHO. Many still consider DG ECHO as only a humanitarian actor doing good deeds at community level. The short (15 month) duration of DIPECHO grants has been cited as an example of this humanitarian approach. In the view of those development donors, the missing interlocutor is the DG Development and Cooperation-Europeaid or the Delegation, instruments that have not been closely enough involved in DG ECHO decision-making process. Lessons learned meetings and regional workshop are seen as an internal matter of DG ECHO partners and, in our opinion, failed to identify and market what could be truly scaled-up. Donors poorly attended the meetings.

## 7.7 The way forward

173. The visited projects and countries are not all in need of significant support in DIPECHO III.

- In Malawi, a consolidation (soft aspects) of the existing projects as well as a scaling up of the community dimension of EWS within the overall top down EWS promoted by the WB and other donors would free funds for new initiatives and ground breaking projects.
- In Mozambique, lacking the successful fundraising in Malawi, it is time to consolidate current efforts and add new communities or Partners only for drought initiatives. Reinforcement of national and decentralized DRR authorities would bring great value to the local efforts.
- In Madagascar, advocacy and fund raising for DRR have not been as successful as in Malawi. DIPECHO consolidation support will be required at least until the political crisis

is resolved and the freeze of the external cooperation is lifted. The admittedly limited observations point towards a need for re-concentrating the support to more manageable (i.e. smaller) number of communities.

174. In a phase of consolidation (with a smaller budget), it is time to consider the proposal made by the partners at the regional workshop to shift from individual projects to one consortium approach for each country. It will simplify administrative processing for DG ECHO and above all promote real coordination from within the consortium instead of one externally “imposed” by regional projects.

Moving to new communities or new countries?

175. The selection of a few countries to start with in a large region was a practical necessity. Now, with three countries left with most of the projects in need primarily of management consolidation, should DG ECHO consider moving on to new communities and/or countries?

- The first priority should be a planned and progressive extension to other highly exposed countries. Namibia presents some unusual challenges and opportunities: a highly vulnerable population exposed to floods in a country with a middle income and therefore potential to scale up, a sophisticated DRR authority, a strong national Red Cross society already active in DRR coupled with an absence of traditional International NGOs and finally a UN office unusually dynamic and active in DRR.
- Including new communities in the same country should be selective and limited to a) those interventions generating such an interest and impact that limited funding may make a significant difference or b) those flagged interventions (community based EWS) that need a boost to insert themselves in the master work plan of the multi-year DRR projects or c) the addition of drought in the DIPECHO portfolio.

## 8 Recommendations

### 8.1 Strengthening the strategy in Southern Africa:

#### **RECOMMENDATION #1.**

DG ECHO should sharpen its future strategy in Southern Africa by debating internally issues such as:

- What is the genuine priority of action in urban areas in the Southern African context?
- How large can “small mitigation works” be?
- How strong and short-term should be the DRR benefit for funding development infrastructures (mixed use) ?
- Should DIPECHO fund mitigation work that generally required 5 years or more for an impact to show any result?
- Should drought be added to the list of eligible hazards?

#### **RECOMMENDATION #2.**

DIPECHO action plan(s) should routinely include FA DRR activities (not agriculture only, but any livelihood intervention that helps households meet their food needs, such as non-agricultural Income Generating Activities, markets etc.).

#### **RECOMMENDATION #3.**

The extended duration (24 months) announced for the financing of DIPECHO III should become integral part of future funding of DRR activities in the Southern African and Indian Ocean Region.

#### **RECOMMENDATION #4.**

To the extent that DRR projects are considered pilot, selecting beneficiary communities should take into consideration the accessibility and visibility as well as eagerness and dynamism of the



community. Pilot projects should not be exclusively humanitarian (needs based) but must be designed to increase the chance of success and their potential for future dissemination.

#### **RECOMMENDATION #5.**

DG ECHO should continue concentrating its support at community level and sharply curtail its regional projects. The effort to promote inter-governmental coordination by establishing an inter-country centre is clearly an initiative better left to UN or regional agencies or bodies with mandates in this field.

### **8.2 Ensuring sustainability: the exit strategy**

Sustainability should be a long-term objective and result. DG ECHO should not expect and request proof of replication in pilot projects of 15-month duration.

#### **RECOMMENDATION #6.**

First of all, DG ECHO should pragmatically identify its “niche” in a limited number of interventions that are potentially scalable, as part of larger development programmes (donors or financial institutions). The best practices selected by the partners themselves are not often suitable for scaling up. The current best practices process will not influence decision makers. Examples of practices suitable for scaling up include the participation of communities in EWS, some food security practices of proven daily benefit, multi purpose shelters, etc. Many others requiring extensive technical guidance and hands holding may not qualify.

#### **RECOMMENDATION #7.**

Secondly, ECHO should seek real partnership with the EU delegation in each country, the only credible development interlocutor for larger donors. Partnership means compromises on both sides.

#### **RECOMMENDATION #8.**

Finally, DG ECHO in Brussels should seek the support of DEVCO and other development instruments and call a meeting of main donors (financial institutions included) and development stakeholders (UNDP and IFRC included) to promote **a few specific interventions** and approaches most suitable for integration into projected development or DRR programmes in the Region.<sup>26</sup>

### **8.3 DIPECHO III in Southern Africa**

#### **RECOMMENDATION #9.**

DG ECHO should aim towards one main proposal from one consortium with all potential partners in any country, with the aim to provide a complete scope of interventions under joint management. This approach will encourage cooperation rather than competition, the latter has been the main obstacle for information sharing and coordination.

#### **RECOMMENDATION #10.**

This proposal from a consortium will include a common mechanism for ME, promotion of DRR and coordination with national authorities and other countries. This country level approach would substitute the regional initiatives that have proven to be costly and poorly effective.

#### **RECOMMENDATION #11.**

Additional isolated proposals could be considered if they are highly innovative and targeting new areas therefore unlikely to be endorsed by all partners in a consortium.

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<sup>26</sup> The scope of this meeting might need to be global considering the mandate of most other stakeholders.

**RECOMMENDATION #12.**

DIPECHO III proposals in Malawi, Madagascar and Mozambique should focus on consolidation of soft managerial aspects of current activities with the overbearing objective to ensure sustainability rather than expand coverage. Soft managerial aspects refer particularly to the community arrangements for the maintenance and use of infrastructure (silos, etc.) and, when possible within the timeframe of the project, IGA for the DRR local committees. In the extent possible, areas of activity should be consolidated to reduce the dispersion of effort noted in Madagascar.

**RECOMMENDATION #13.**

DG ECHO selection and approval process should be made more transparent by the generalized use of a shared scoring matrix developed in consultation with the EU Delegation to objectively appraise those projects meeting the administrative requirements of DG ECHO. This matrix should give greater weight to the potential for success and scaling up than to administrative compliance with the guidelines.

**RECOMMENDATION #14.**

DG ECHO would gain from:

- sharing its decision-making authority with other EC instruments and
- giving a meaningful consultative role to the National authority in the appraisal of the proposal (possibly through completion of the scoring matrix).

**RECOMMENDATION #15.**

As a strong and involved national agency is critical for replication, DG ECHO should seek means to provide support to the national DRR authority to make possible their active monitoring, regular visits and participation. Possible channels to be explored include the active involvement, including provision of funding, by the Civil Protection Programme of DG ECHO (A/5) or a renewed collaboration with UNDP, the traditional supporter of this national agency.

**RECOMMENDATION #16.**

DG ECHO should develop a roster of independent experts to carry out rapidly a simple but sound comparative evaluation of the impact of DRR on the response after occurrence of a disaster. This activity may be included in the existing tenders for technical assistance or other mechanisms. The fitness of the tool developed by CLaSP for this purpose should be reviewed critically.

**RECOMMENDATION #17.**

Coordination, lessons learned and ME should be implemented at national level and be ideally part of the proposal of the consortium of partners. Consequently, regional projects should be drastically reduced in size and cost by limiting their focus on provision of specialized technical assistance as required.

**RECOMMENDATION #18.**

As the proposed consolidation of activities in the three countries will be less costly than the current interventions, DG ECHO should consider including at least one new country in DIPECHO III. Namibia is currently ready and willing and should be considered. Proposals (ideally jointly) should be invited from UN and Red Cross System for activities in the Zambezi river basin (Caprivi Strip).

Preparatory steps should also be taken for inclusion of additional countries at a later stage.

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