

ECHO and the DIPECHO Programme in Latin America and the Caribbean:

Evolution and Challenges

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Ayuda Humanitaria
y Protección Civil

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y Protección Civil



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1. Presentation

Since 1996, the European Union, through the European Commission, Department of Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection (DG-ECHO), works in the Latin America and Caribbean region in compliance with their humanitarian mandate to preserve and save lives, the ultimate end being to reduce risk conditions in the event of disasters, and contribute to increase people's communities' and countries' resilience in the region. During these years, ECHO, through their Disaster Preparedness Programme (DIPECHO), has invested 152 million Euros in the region, reaching millions of Latin Americans with the involvement and participation of a wide range of structures, organizations, agencies, authorities and institutions.

This document reflects the evolution, work modalities, main contributions and accomplishments of the DIPECHO Programme in over 15 years of existence, as well as future challenges. Through key messages and representative examples of good practices and evidence, the reader is intended to know better what the programme has meant and continues to mean to the region and the changes and advancements attained thanks to the committed, continuous work of a great range of stakeholders such as the communities, local organizations, public institutions, authorities, intergovernmental organizations and executing partners.

It is an instrument of reference and consultation that may be used by all actors involved in disaster risk reduction, building of resilience and development processes, to reflect on the approaches, forms of work and achieved progress, in order to be able to make decisions and better plan actions and processes both present and future in their field of responsibility.

This is definitely a chance to stop for a moment and recapitulate, reflect and identify key elements to continue working and uniting efforts of the different actors, sectors and levels to face present and future challenges in Latin America and the Caribbean in regards to disaster risk reduction and resilience construction.

2. But...What are ECHO and DIPECHO?

The European Commission Humanitarian Office (ECHO) was created in 1992 as an expression of European solidarity towards people in need worldwide. The objective of the EU's humanitarian aid is to give humanitarian response based on needs and destined to preserve life, prevent and relief human suffering preserving human dignity where there is need and when governments and local actors are overwhelmed and cannot or do not want to take action. The EU's humanitarian aid is based on the principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence, which implies that ECHO's aid is allocated regardless of political agendas and, without exception, always seeks to help those that are most in need regardless of their nationality, religion, gender, ethnicity or political affiliation.

To carry out the aforementioned humanitarian actions, ECHO currently works with 226 partners including 18 UN agencies, 201 NGOs and 3 international organizations such as the International Red Cross Committee, the International Federation of Red Cross Societies of Red Crescent Societies, and the International Organization for Migration and 4 specialized agencies from European Union member states. The partnership with these humanitarian institutions allows counting on high response capacity to act rapidly where a humanitarian crisis presents itself.

ECHO's actions are framed within the Humanitarian aid regulation¹, where it is acknowledged that humanitarian aid must go beyond the response itself. Article 1 states clearly that 'this aid will cover preparedness actions before risks and prevention of disasters or similar exceptional situations.' Letter f of Article 2 mentions that human aid operations must 'Guarantee previous preparedness before natural disaster risks or similar exceptional situations, and use a system or early alert and proper intervention.'

From the conviction that the humanitarian imperative goes way beyond response, since its beginnings, ECHO has aimed at integrating in its actions elements that will improve preparedness and response capacity. In 1996 were implemented the first projects focused on preparedness actions for organizations as well as for endangered communities. From then, in 1998 is formalized the creation of the Disaster Preparedness European Community Humanitarian Office (DIPECHO) as a programme designed to show, through community-based projects, that loss in a disaster can be limited and that lives in disaster-prone areas can be saved.

The DIPECHO Programme was created to build response capacities at the local, community, authorities and public institution levels to face disasters more efficiently in the world's riskiest regions. As years go by and several projects have been implemented, ECHO and the DIPECHO programme have evolved their approach, strategies and priorities (see chart), through several transformations to adapt to changes, needs, problems and context of the regions and countries where it has operations, as explained in detail in the chapters below. By the end of 2012, through the programme, more than €225 million have been invested and 750 projects have been implemented.

¹ EC Guidelines No. 1257/96 of the Council, 20 June 1996, on humanitarian aid

Evolution of the main frame of reference on humanitarian aid, DRR and Resilience in the EU and DG-ECHO

1996 – Humanitarian aid Regulation 1257/96

In 1996, the European Commission drafted the guidelines on humanitarian aid where it is acknowledged that humanitarian action must go beyond the response itself, and specifies that *“this aid shall also cover preparedness actions before risks and prevent disasters or similar exceptional circumstances”*, and that humanitarian aid operations shall *“guarantee previous preparedness before natural disaster risks or similar exceptional circumstances and use an early alert and proper intervention system”*.

2001 – Civil Protection Mechanism (CPM) of the EU

In 2001, the EU established the Civil Protection Mechanism (CPM) as the main instrument of European civil protection and coordination and solidarity between civil protection systems of the countries affected by disasters that require external aid. Assistance between countries is given in kind, with equipment or the loan of staff specialized in the assessment of damage, and is directly channeled through the affected governments and complemented with the humanitarian aid given by other actors.

2005 – Adoption of Hyogo Action Framework (HAF)

Since January 2005, when the international community approved and adopted the Hyogo Action Framework (2005-2015) as a commitment of all countries towards disaster risk reduction, DG ECHO framed all its DRR action within the HAF, above all through projects developed in the DIPECHO programme in different regions and countries.

2007 – European Agreement on Humanitarian Aid

In November 2007, the European Parliament approved a bill on a European agreement on humanitarian aid (2007/2139(INI)), which means a shared vision of all member states on the principles, values and practices that must guide humanitarian aid of the European Union and the confirmation of the adherence to the principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence on which humanitarian aid of the EU is based.

2009 – EU strategy on DRR

In 2009, the European Commission issued the Release on *“The EU strategy on support of disaster risk reduction in developing countries”*, with the objective of *“contributing to the sustainable development and eradication of poverty, and the reducing, via better DRR, the weight of catastrophes on poor and endangered countries and populations”*.

2012 – The resilience approach

In October 2012, the Commission issued the Release *“The EU approach to resilience –teachings from food crises”²*, where it is acknowledged that strengthening the resilience requires more interaction between humanitarian aid and development processes, and where are established as priorities of the EU’s external aid the construction of resilience in countries where crises are recurrent. In May 2013, the EU Council adopted the *“Conclusions of the EU approach to resilience”³* in which proposal of the previous communication were approved.

² The EU Approach to Resilience-Learning from Food Crises” COM (2012) 586

³ DOC 9325/13, UE

2013 – Action Plan for Resilience in countries prone to crisis (2013 - 2020)

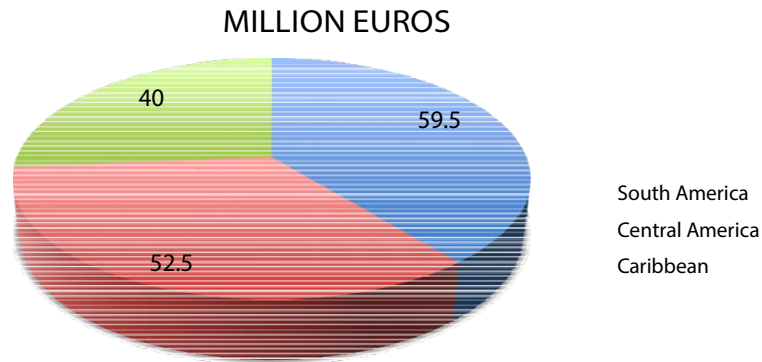
In June 2013, the European Commission drafted the 'Action plan for resilience in countries prone to crises in the 2013-2020 term', where proposals are put forward for the implementation of the principles and priorities defined in the release and the conclusions of the council. The action plan states the bases for a much more effective and collaborative action of the EU and its partners, in the construction of resilience, above all in joint efforts between humanitarian, development and political actors.

2013 – Guided approach on DRR of DG-ECHO

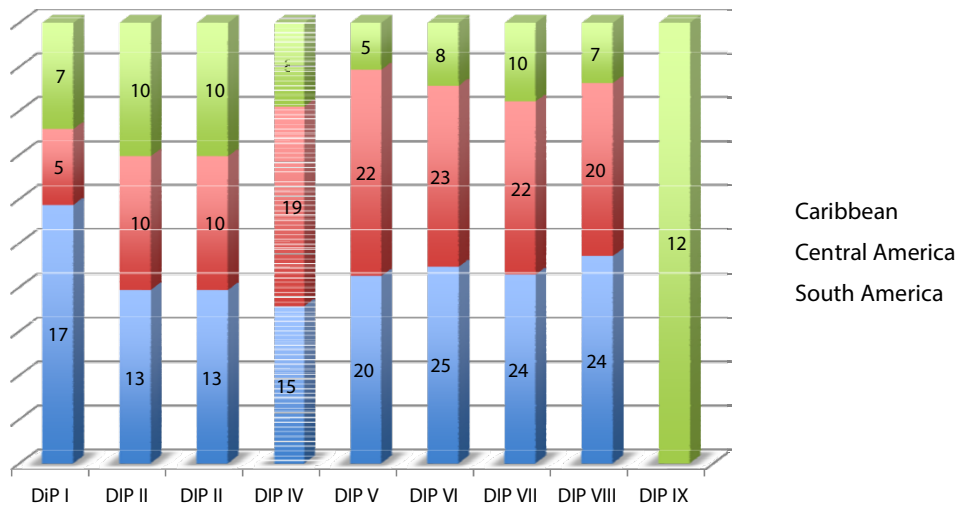
It's a guided approach for ECHO and its partners to maximize efficacy, efficiency and pertinence of actions of DRR, strengthen preparedness to respond rapidly to humanitarian crises and augment coherence with other policies of DG ECHO, as well as the need to link humanitarian action and development processes to achieve a more integral approach that would allow for the construction of resilience in the most vulnerable communities. In this sense, in October 2013 ambassadors of the EU Member States, the heads of the EU delegations and the ECHO offices in crisis-prone countries, receive high-standard guidelines to implement the EU approach to resilience on the spot.

3. Evolution and transformation of the DIPECHO Programme in Latin America and the Caribbean

Half way through 2013, ECHO had implemented 8 DIPECHO action plans in South and Central America and 9 in the Caribbean, allowing for the execution of 258 projects in 32 different countries, with a total investment of €152 million: €59.5 million for South America, €52.5 million for Central American and €40 million for the Caribbean. 73 of all projects have had full regional scope.



Amount of DIPECHO projects by Region and Action plan



Along its evolution, from 1996 to 2013, the programme has gone through a series of changes and transformations as a result of continuous work and progressive adaptation to different contexts and needs, and has had participation of a great range of actors at different levels of action, from the community level to the coordination, continuous work and learning process levels, between different countries and regions. The following chart shows some of the main transformations occurred from the beginning of the programme to date.

Main changes in the Latin America and Caribbean DIPECHO Programme

IN THE BEGINNING...	CURRENTLY
o Priorities set through basic consultations	o Consultation processes are conciliatory and consolidated.
o Limited prominence of governments	o Government leadership and ownership
o Projects based on disconnected analyses	o Projects contribute to national and regional strategy
o Preparedness and response approach	o Disaster risk reduction approach
o No geographical coherence	o Processes of geographical prioritization according to risk levels
o Almost all projects were in rural or regional areas	o Exponential increase in vulnerable urban areas
o No relation between local and national level	o Complementarity between regional and national projects
o No common reference framework	o Hyogo Action Framework as main reference
o Little conceptual clarity	o Harmonization of concepts Proper coordination between partners and governing bodies
o Limited relation between partners and other actors	o Partners and local actors are protagonists of processes
o Secondary role of partners and other actors	o Projects integrate rights and equity approach
o Limited rights and equity approach	o More emphasis on promotion of tools and impact
o Short-term result approach	o Short-term result approach

4. Key elements, teachings and challenges in the evolution of the DIPECHO Programme in Latin America and the Caribbean.

The evolution and elements of change and transformation of the DIPECHO Programme previously identified have left important teachings and aspects that are nowadays considered essential to understand the disaster risk reduction work in the context of Latin America and the Caribbean. Below twelve different key elements had been identified directly related to the evolution of the programme considered crucial for their contribution to the improvement of quality, impact and institutionalization of DRR processes in the region. Likewise, for each of these aspects one set of challenges has been identified to be taken into account when building present and future processes.

Key elements can be divided in two groups: those related to the quality and impact of DRR processes, and, those contributing directly to their institutionalization, as shown in the table.

KEY ELEMENTS AND TEACHINGS FROM THE EVOLUTION OF THE DIPECHO PROGRAMME	
IN REGARDS TO QUALITY AND IMPACT	IN REGARDS TO INSTITUTIONALISATION
Humanitarian aid does not begin after a disaster.	Local work contributes to institutionalization.
Flexibility and adaptation contribute to achieving a better impact.	Consulting and participation towards appropriation and collective construction.
Actions focused on communities and their participation contributes to protecting and saving lives.	Dialogue between governments allows for significant, long-lasting change.
Collaboration and complementarity between actors improves efficacy and efficiency.	Investment in local capacities strengthens DRR institutionalization.
The development and use of appropriate tools contributes to improving quality.	The promotion of rights, inclusion and equity approach provokes change in key actors.
Humanitarian aid and disaster risk reduction are part of development processes.	

4.1. Key elements related to quality and impact of DRR

4.1.1 Humanitarian aid does not begin after a disaster

Relevant aspects

- € Disaster risk reduction and building of resilience are part of the humanitarian imperative that must not be limited to emergencies.
- € Agencies and humanitarian actors must incorporate DRR as part of its humanitarian action.
- € Actions of reduction of vulnerability in exposed communities are key to prevent and alleviate human suffering provoked by disasters and must be based on a proper knowledge and risk analysis.
- € Humanitarian response actions must contribute to correct the existing hazards and not generate future risks.

In the early years of the programme, there was more work being done in actions for community and institutional preparedness which progressively extended to greater linkages and synergies with medium and long term processes stressing prevention, mitigation, planning and sustainable land management, involving new development actors.

As part of such natural evolution in 2005 the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) 2005-2015 was adopted, as a mandatory reference for the DIPECHO action plans, which confirms the commitment to a DRR and resilience building approach by ECHO and its partners.

Currently, all partners, organizations and institutions have incorporated DRR in their planning and implementation processes. Many of them are already mulling about the resilience construction approach, which is an important step towards the commitment to preserve and save lives with dignity and sustainably.

Examples and evidence

Continuity of processes after several years. In Bolivia, in the Beni department, within the framework of the DIPECHO actions plans 2007-2008 and 2009-2010 and the disaster preparedness projects implemented by Oxfam and FUNDEPCO, they created, trained and strengthened the Risk Management Unit in the Trinidad municipality, and supported the creation of the departmental COE as part of the department structure management. Currently, after several years and several changes in the management and the political party, the Unit is still working and keeps the trained staff base having responded to several emergency situations, such as the 2010 floods. In May 2013, Trinidad was the only Bolivia municipality to participate in the IV Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction (Geneva, Switzerland), where they highlighted the need to look for mechanisms or to set new agreements for aid and international cooperation to be able to reach municipalities at risk directly, which are definitely who must face and respond to the needs of endangered people and families. <http://gestionterritorialadaptativa.com/>

€ **Support to crop protection measures.** In Haiti, in the framework of a food crisis response project founded by ECHO in 2012, the WFP supported farmer families in the implementation of techniques of mitigation for crops in mountainsides, such as the construction of terraces and the reforestation of trees to protect them from landslide provoked by intense rain and erosion. Measures of mitigation allow for crops to be more resilient to future adverse events and for them not to be swept by water. This support has been provided under the 'Cash for work' mode, which allows families to count on financial resources to allocate to other needs other than food. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tOBPjZzZO&feature=youtu.be>

€ **Continuous support to global DRR campaigns.** During the last few years, DIPECHO Action Plans in all regions have included among their priorities support for global UNISDR campaigns on Safe Hospitals, Safe Schools and Resilient Cities, and most of regional and national projects have incorporated specific actions using the same approach and method and linking with implementation and promotion of such campaigns. As a result of several years of work, authorities and institutions of the healthcare and education sectors from several countries such as Ecuador, El Salvador, Peru, Honduras, Nicaragua, Jamaica and Barbados, among others, have been made aware and educated on the importance of DRR integration. Likewise, thanks to the support of DIPECHO projects, several municipalities and local governments have joined the Resilient cities campaign; such is the case of Peru -35 municipalities-, Honduras -31-, El Salvador -27-, Chile -24-, Jamaica -13-, Bolivia -9-, Ecuador and Colombia -8-, and Nicaragua -7-. In the case of El Salvador, the municipality of Santa Tecla is one of the few at global level to rank as model city. . <http://www.eird.org/camp-10-15/>

Outlook into the future

Building shared concepts and approaches. There is still a need to build, among all key actors, a greater conceptual and approach clarity on the construction of resilience to thus better define the roles and contributions of each key actor in future processes.

Reinforcing the link between emergency response and DRR. Just like in some contexts it has been done, in the future we must keep working for disaster response projects to be a chance to integrate elements of risk reduction, to avoid new risk scenarios or perpetuate the ones existing.

4.1.2 Flexibility and adaptation contribute to achieve better impact

Relevant aspects

- € Planning and execution must adapt to changes in the behaviour of threats, vulnerabilities and capacities.
- € Strategies and actions must be reviewed so that they are indeed pertinent to the changes in social context and to the new needs.
- € A flexible interpretation of the institutional framework allows widening the range and scope of the developed actions.
- € It is important to count on differentiated work strategies depending on the reality, the characteristics and capacities of each country and their institutions.
- € Achieving a better impact requires an analysis of the opportunities according to a certain context.

Since the first few years, the DIPECHO programme has sought continuous adaptation to context changes, new needs and demands arising from the risk analysis performed by different actors, in addition to teachings gathered from project implementation.

This drive for adaptation is reflected in aspects such as involvement of new actors, geographical mobility according to change of risk factors or involvement of new sectors of intervention and work approaches on the demand of different key actors such as communities, institutions and executing partners.

Likewise, a flexible and wide interpretation of the legal and institutional framework has always been encouraged, which has allowed throughout time to find mechanisms and solutions viable for the aforementioned adaptation in order to achieve a more integral compliance with the humanitarian imperative on the part of the actors.

Examples and evidence

- € **Increasing presence in urban areas.** During the last years, in most LAC countries, DIPECHO projects have had greater presence in urban and peri-urban areas to respond to existing vulnerability situations. In large cities like Managua, Tegucigalpa, Quito, San Salvador, Guatemala City, Lima, La Paz, Rio de Janeiro, Santo Domingo or Havana, DRR and preparedness actions that adapt to the urban context and conditions have been developed.

€ **Inclusion of new issues and sectors of intervention.** The components and work sectors of the DIPECHO programme have changed and adapted to the needs and issues that correspond to each country. In 2009, Action Plans included the pre-positioning of stock to improve immediate response in zones of difficult access. In 2011, protection and recovery of livelihoods was incorporated as part of the DRR and preparedness actions that could be included in projects. Currently, most partners have integrated aspects of livelihood into their planning.

€ **Differentiated strategies according to institutional capacities.** The DIPECHO programme adapts to contexts and institutional characteristics of every region or country, and Action Plans respond to the demands and needs of key actors. For example, in some middle-income countries in South America and the Caribbean, they use what is known as the 'acupuncture approach', which consists focusing investments on the support of issues that are strategic for governments so that they will afterwards promote and replicate the transference of knowledge with their own resources. In low-income countries of the three regions, the approach is on complementarity and development of capacities at territorial level that governments have problems to reach, in order for them to take on responsibilities progressively.

DRR work in an armed conflict context. In Colombia, for several years now, organizations such as the Red Cross and Plan International work with DIPECHO DRR projects in areas where there are also action of protection in regards to armed conflict. These organizations take advantage of the credibility and respect that the general population and armed actors have for them, which allows for integral support for populations affected by both natural and man threats. Places such as Bahia Solano and Nuqui, or the Volcanoe Nevado del Huila, are examples of these.

Adapting to contexts of violence and social exclusion. In Central America, due to high violence levels, the programme has evolved according to context, and every time are better taken into account social factors during the area's vulnerability analysis. For example, the Guatemalan Red Cross has worked on their response plans according to a study on migrants in the Mexican border to better respond to the needs of this population during emergencies.

€ **Adapting strategies to a 'Fragile State' context.** Although Haiti has been considered a fragile state due to its history of humanitarian crises brought by social conflicts and natural disasters, the 2010 earthquake was a blow to the hopes and processes of the country's development. In this context, all actors involved in ECHO projects and the DIPECHO programme reflected upon the need to involve transversally an approach of risk reduction and resilience construction in all recovery and reconstruction actions. Currently, all projects financed by ECHO in Haiti count on DRR and resilience construction components, even outside of the DIPECHO framework, and the kind of actions and results expected have adapted to the context and reality of a fragile state along with the strengthening of the institutions' capacities.

Outlook into the future

- € **Continuing to adapt in order to face new challenges and changes of context.** Situations such as social violence, organized crime, work in border zones, immigration, use of new technologies, access and management of water resources or the role of the armed forces in humanitarian aid are, among others, some of the new challenges that require consideration, strategies and appropriate work forms on the part of all actors.
- € **Cost benefit analysis.** It is necessary to identify opportunities, work areas and strategies that will allow to focus, optimize and amplify the efforts and resources invested to achieve a better impact, working hand in hand with other actors that may contribute to replicate and institutionalize the achievements and processes started within the framework of the DIPECHO programme.
- € **Exit strategies appropriate for each context.** In those countries, environments and contexts where tools and processes supported by the DIPECHO programme have done their work and contributed complementary value, appropriate exit strategies, thus allowing for other actors and short and medium-term processes to carry on sustainably over time.

4.1.3 Actions focused on local communities and their participation contribute to protect and save lives

One of the tokens of identity of the DIPECHO programme, as has been previously mentioned, is the emphasis on the community level and the direct work with people, families and organized communities. Since the first project to date, many examples have been documented where it is shown that actions of preparedness and strengthening of capacities with a focus on the local and community level allow saving lives.

It is people, in their communities and neighbourhoods, who first come up with an immediate response when facing adversity, and the better their capacity and autonomy of reaction and recovery, the less the negative impact of disasters affecting them.

Although reaction capacity of a community cannot be attributed to one only factor, it has been documented in some specific cases that actions of strengthening of response capacities carried out by some DIPECHO projects have a direct influence on the way communities reacted and responded before certain adverse events to protect and save their lives.

Relevant aspects

- € Timely and quality information on existing risk is essential to guarantee effectiveness of DRR and preparedness.
- € Preparedness actions focused on local communities are crucial for the construction of resilience.
- € Informed, organized, trained and equipped communities can react faster and overcome adverse events.
- € Active participation and self-management in the community are necessary to achieve sustainable change.

Examples and evidence

- € **Prepared communities respond autonomously.** In El Salvador, during the 2001 earthquakes, some communities trained by the Red Cross within the framework of the 1998-2000 DIPECHO action plan, organized one first autonomous response forming brigades of volunteers and allocating kits that had been preset in the communities themselves. Also, they volunteered at the Red Cross to collaborate with other nearby communities.
- € **Authorities acknowledge resilience of DIPECHO-trained communities.** The Agatha storm, in late May 2010, struck Guatemala and left hundreds of affected communities. During the first days, the Secretary Executive of the National Committee for Disaster Reduction (CONRED) declared in the media that, according to their findings, many communities had responded autonomously and had been able to save more lives thanks to their preparedness; he also acknowledged the effort and achievements of DIPECHO projects running at the time. By late 2011, Tropical Depression 12-E strongly struck Central America, and El Salvador was one of the most affected countries. The Head of Civil Protection talked in several occasions about the value of DIPECHO projects and said that he had himself witnessed how communities supported by DIPECHO were much better prepared and were able to act immediately during evacuations, damage assessment and immediate responses.
- € **Early alert system saves lives during volcano eruption.** In Colombia, the Red Cross, with a 2007-2008 DIPECHO Action Plan, installed an EAS, organized and trained communities that were vulnerable due to their closeness to the Nevado del Huila Volcano. In November 2008, right by the end of the project, an eruption occurred that was previously informed and alerted by the indigenous communities closest to the radio devices donated by the project. This allowed for an evacuation of the urban centre of Belalcazar (Páez municipality), and for the death toll to be reduced to 10 people, whereas in 1994, a similar event or tectonic origin that also produced an eruption, threw a toll of 1100 dead people. Authorities and technical-scientific bodies acknowledged that, thanks to the capacities drilled by the DIPECHO project, many more lives could be saved, since the alert came on time and the population was prepared, organised and trained to respond.
- € **Presence of an ECHO initiative allows for evacuations and quick reaction.** In Bolivia, since 2010, Oxfam and their local partner FUNDEPCO, along with the La Paz municipality, implemented a Small-Scale Response Mechanism project to prepare the population for the imminent risk of landslide in several vulnerable areas. This initiative included the drafting of maps, threat studies and temporary housing construction for possible evacuations of families in high-risk areas. In February 2011, when this project was still running, a large landslide occurred and left about 500 people homeless. The information and coordination actions generated during the project contributed to detect the issue on time and allowed for authorities to evacuate hundreds of families in a matter of hours, thus avoiding the loss of many lives once dwellings were totally destroyed. Afterwards, within the DIPECHO 2011-2012 action plan, a DIPECHO project was developed to finish the processes started in 2010.
- € **Communities in the Caribbean are prepared for hurricanes.** During the Tropical Storm Isaac (August 2012) and the Hurricane Sandy (October 2012), several countries of the Caribbean where DIPECHO projects were carried out, were very affected. Communities in Jamaica, Cuba and the Dominican Republic, which had been organized, trained and equipped during the projects, showed their capacity to anticipate the event by organizing evacuations and response actions such as channel cleansing, deforestation and temporary shelters. Also, authorities and guiding entities from the aforementioned countries acknowledged the added value of the work done during the DIPECHO projects.

Outlook into the future

- € **More emphasis in community self-management.** Achieving continuity over time of capacities strengthened at community level is still a challenge in several contexts of the region, mainly due to the lack of resources and the weak institutionalization. More emphasis must be made on self-management of communities with their own media and knowledge, and on the mobilization of resources and national or external actors must be carried out only when strictly necessary.
- € **Links to local authorities.** Complementing the aforementioned, authorities and local structures must be linked more strongly and must be held liable for supporting vulnerable communities periodically to achieve the necessary sustainability.

4.1.4 Collaboration and complementarity between actors improves efficacy and efficiency

ECHO acknowledges that central responsibility of the states in the reduction of vulnerability of their citizens must go along with participation and collaboration of other key actors.

The DIPECHO programme boosts and promotes complementarity and collaboration internally with other services of the Commission and the member states, and, externally, between a great range of actors such as communities and authorities, humanitarian and development, government and non-government, local, national, international and other donors.

Since the first years, exchange between partners and other actor has been promoted in order to achieve more. Currently, most partners and actors acknowledge the added value, thus yielding many examples of success and impact thanks to this attitude towards collective construction.

“The best part of DIPECHO is that it stopped belonging only to ECHO long ago and now belongs to all of us; we are responsible for continuing to achieve its goals”

ECHO Partner

Relevant aspects

- € Joint efforts allow optimizing resources and achieving goals that would not be possible working independently.
- € Synergies between actors multiply the opportunities to learn and to replicate actions.
- € Collaboration and synergies between key actors allow influencing approaches, carrying out strategic planning and change the practices of organizations and institutions involved.
- € Coordination and collaboration spaces contribute to generate trust between key actors.

Examples and evidence

- € **Inter-institutional synergies in urban context.** In Nicaragua, within the DIPECHO 2012-2013 Action Plan, the Red Cross developed a project in two districts of Managua where efforts have joint with government entities such as the Ministry of Transport (MTI), the Urban Housing Institute (INVUR) and the Institute for Territorial Studies (INETER) and the involvement of private companies such as Plycem Nicaragua to, work together on DRR actions regarding the quality of construction, training and raising

awareness in the population. This joint effort allows optimizing resources and achieving a better impact on the population as well as building the foundations for future processes that will be more sustainable.

€ **Building bridges between government actors.** In El Salvador, in the framework of the DIPECHO 2012-2013 Action plan, the Red Cross has had a prominent role in facilitating spaces of dialogue between national authorities and some vulnerable municipalities governed by opposition parties. As a result of such role, both levels committed to a joint agenda of dialogue and construction of spaces to work on DRR issues in favour of vulnerable communities.

€ **Agreements with the private sector in DRR issues.** In several countries, within the framework of DIPECHO projects, agreements have been reached with actors from the private sector to join forces and improve DRR and preparedness capacities. In Bolivia, for instance, within the DIPECHO 2009-2010 action plan, agreements were signed with the Rancher Association of the Beni department so that their 1000 radio posts in rural areas are put at the service of the early alert system during floods. In Peru, in the framework of the DIPECHO 2011-2012 programme, agreements were reached with logistics networks of supermarkets so that their logistics media and trucks are available for support during evacuations and transport of supplies in the event of a disaster.

€ **ECHO approaches other donors.** The DG-ECHO offices in Latin America and the Caribbean have been the main supporters of the creation of donor tables in different countries, and take active part in the Technical Donors Group of Latin America and the Caribbean for DRR and disaster preparedness issues, where there are also other donors such as AECID, COSUDE, OCHA and OFDA. ECHO takes advantage of these forums to seek synergies and complementarity in the work with other donors in order to achieve better coordination, resource optimization and impact of all the initiatives. In Haiti, in the framework of post-earthquake reconstruction projects and coordination tables between donors, ECHO has held a prominent role in making other actors and donors integrate into their proposals components of vulnerability analysis and actions to reduce disaster risk.

Platforms and coordination areas. Inter-agency coordination groups such as the NGO consortium in Bolivia or the coordination groups between partners in Central America are emerging and becoming stronger thanks to NGO groups that carry out DIPECHO projects. Today they are a well-regarded actor and have direct communication with government entities on DRR issues.

€ **NGOs as guests in DRR government bodies.** In the Dominican Republic, organisations partnered with DIPECHO projects launched the Forum for Risk Management with the participation of several actors linked to DRR nation-wide. Currently, a delegation of this Forum is a guest at the National Technical Committee for the Prevention and Mitigation of Risks, part of the National Emergency Commission. This participation allows NGOs and civil society to be consulted during government-run processes of technical and methodological decision-making on DRR.

Outlook into the future

- € **Appropriation of processes by all key actors.** Processes and synergies built along the last few years have transcended and currently belong to involved actors in LAC: communities, authorities, institutions, non-government sectors, other donors and partners. They are responsible for continuing to construct resilience from their respective roles as part of the sustainable development processes.
- € **Strategic approach in the private sector and universities.** In recent years, work relations have been established with the private sector and with universities; there are now instances of success and good practices that can be capitalized with a much more strategic approach that may allow for the continuous involvement of new actors from the sector.
- € **Integration with new institutional actors.** In more countries from the region, armed forces and police are taking on a more prominent role in humanitarian aid actions and DRR processes beyond the traditional civil defense role. This fact doubtlessly requires reflection and counting on the appropriate strategies and approach to coordinate efforts.

4.1.5 Development and use of appropriate tools helps to improve quality

From the beginning, one of the characteristics of the DIPECHO programme has been the exchange of experiences, teachings and products developed within different projects by partners and involved actors. For years, forums and mechanisms have been encouraged for the systematization, promotion and replication of the tools and methodologies existing in different countries and regions, and information platforms have been supported to favour their knowledge and usage.

Thanks to all these processes, currently exist a great range of tools that, though not always, often have been capitalized and are used by organizations and public institutions usually in their work processes for risk reduction. Their development has also contributed to develop more efficient work, thus improving the quality of many processes.

Relevant aspects

- € The tools developed must be capitalized, promoted and disseminated properly for wide usage.
- € The use and adaptation of existing tools and methodologies contributes to optimize resources and efforts.
- € Key actors must be open to learn and benefit from products developed by others.
- € The continuation of the development and usage of these instruments must be part of the strategy of the project's programme.
- € Participation and leadership of public institutions in the development of tools is crucial for the appropriation and institutionalization of such tools and, particularly so in areas exposed to important or recurrent threats.

Examples and evidence

- € **Development of preparedness indicators.** From late 2005 up to date, regional and nation-wide consultation processes have been developing in Central America to identify collectively the main threats, vulnerabilities and priorities in regards to DRR and DIPECHO projects. In their evolution over the years in the consultation processes, tools have been developed with local indicators to measure objectively preparedness capacities. Currently, there is a Preparedness Indicator Matrix at municipal level that has been applied in several municipalities in Central America, and has been adopted and used by other donors and government institutions to measure progress in DRR issues. It is a living tool, which, with the collaboration of diverse actors across the region. <http://vimeo.com/34090355>
- € **Recovering ancestral sustainable agriculture techniques.** In Bolivia, Oxfam, along with the Kenneth Lee Foundation within the framework of the DIPECHO 2009-2010 Action Plan, recovered an ancestral technique of sustainable agriculture over 3000 years old known as the 'boulevards', which allows to recover pluvial water to keep in the ground and be able to produce off-season. Today, hundreds of peasants and fishermen in the Beni department use this technique as an adaptation medium to face climate change and guarantee family subsistence. <http://vimeo.com/44346421> (<http://vimeo.com/44346421>, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l3ncXPC3nrg>)
- € **DRR and preparedness manuals for schools are institutionalized.** In several countries of South America such as Paraguay, Ecuador and Brazil, governments and Ministries of Education have integrated into their strategies and programmes, methodologies and manuals for training and drafting of school safety plans initially developed within DIPECHO projects. Likewise, in Chile DRR issues were integrated in regards to tsunami risks within the schools' curricula. http://portal.unesco.org/geography/es/ev.phpURL_ID=16544&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html
- € **Innovative social communication on DRR methodologies.** Several years of DIPECHO projects throughout the continent have left countless success and innovation stories on DRR awareness and information actions and on disaster preparedness focused on local communities and vulnerable neighbourhoods in different contexts and cultures, rural and urban. For instance, the TV show 'Z', in Bolivia, set in La Paz, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JD3yV4PiHYU>, the contest and broadcast of songs for preparedness 'Spice it up' for young people in Barbados and Granada in the Caribbean, <http://www.preventionweb.net/english/professional/news/v.php?id=26634>, the usage of space in public buses in San Salvador and fences in the beaches of Barahona in the Dominican Republic to give preparedness messages concerning tsunamis, or short messages in mobile phones tuned as hip hop and rap rhythms to sensitise young people in Guatemalan urban areas.
- € **Studies and management of information before seismic risks in urban areas.** In the framework of post-earthquake reconstruction projects in 2012, Italian organisation COOPI implemented in the Tabarre neighbourhood, in Port-au-Prince, in Haiti, an 'Information System on resources and vulnerability for disaster preparedness, crisis management and preventive management of the land', using and tweaking tools and methods previously tested in Lima, Peru. Agencies like UNESCO, UN-Habitat and OCHA, and donors such as DFID, are interested in replicating the same tool in other cities of the country such as Haitian Cape and Port de Paix. <http://www.sirv.tabarre.ht/>.
- € **DRR tools and information resources catalogue.** The UNDP and CRID, within the framework of the DIPECHO 2009-2010 Action Plan, finalised a process of collecting tools and information resources regarding the strengthening of local response capacities, early warningsystems, healthcare, and disaster training. Compilation was based on products and results of DIPECHO projects and other DRR initiatives in the region by other donors. Today, the tool is available online at the CRID website as a digital or hard copy, in easy notebook format for better handling, and at the disposal of any organisation or institution that is interested in using and replicating it.

€ **Criteria for prioritization of nation-wide DRR actions in Latin America and the Caribbean.** Within the framework of the DIPECHO 2011-2012 Action Plans for South America and the Caribbean, the UNISDR developed an indicator matrix with criteria for the prioritization of DRR actions at national level in countries of Latin America and the Caribbean. These criteria have been used for the drafting of the last Country Documents in 2013 in Central America, and the idea is for them to be applied throughout LAC and to contribute to national processes of risk analysis and decision-making, and to the defining of support and international cooperation programmes.

Outlook into the future

€ **Tools and product capitalization.** An identified need, perceived by almost all key actors, is the review of methods, tools and products developed during all these years, to assess aspects such as quality, pertinence and degree of usage, appropriation and institutionalization, and the knowledge of the degree of capitalization and usage of such tools will influence their promotion, adoption and application.

€ **Better leadership and institution prominence.** In some countries, facing future processes, it is important to incentive and achieve greater participation and leadership of public institutions in the development of tools and methods for them to be appropriate, institutionalized and used by different government sectors.

4.1.6 Humanitarian aid and DRR are part of the development processes

Almost ten years ago, ECHO adopted the DRR approach beyond preparedness taking the Hyogo Framework for Action as a reference for all DIPECHO projects.

This way, the clear message was conveyed that humanitarian aid cannot be unlinked from other medium and long-term processes, and that in fact is part of development itself, since disasters mean an interruption of development efforts and dynamics. That is why, over the years it has been encouraged that executing partners and other key actors develop their actions as part of more integral long-term strategies.

As a result, today ECHO-supported DRR initiatives count on strategies and components to link to other long-term processes, actors and actions that are linked to vulnerability reduction, resilience construction and sustainable development approaches.

“All the post-earthquake recovery and reconstruction projects in Haiti carry a DRR component to be able to build more resilience.”

ECHO

Relevant aspects

- € DRR short and medium-term actions act as a seed and initial impulse to link to and complement sustainable longer-term processes.
- € Humanitarian response actions must incorporate DRR and resilience construction components.
- € Complementarity and good communication between humanitarian and development actors facilitates the achievement of more sustainable impacts.

- € Effective resilience construction is achieved through an integral approach involving different levels, sectors and implementation time frames.

Examples and evidence

- € **Inter-donor complementarity.** There are several examples of DRR actions in the whole continent started from a DIPECHO project that have afterwards been continued by other donors. For instance, in Nicaragua, within the framework of the DIPECHO 2008-2009 and 2010-2011 Action plans, CARE designed integral interventions combining funds of ECHO and COSUDE thus achieving a better impact and more sustained processes. Likewise, in Managua, DIPECHO projects implemented by the Red Cross and ACSUR – Las Segovias within the DIPECHO 2012-2013 Action plan are co-funded by AECID funds. This complementarity has also contributed to the development of a common, shared vision on DRR between different actors in the country.
- € **Other donors take advantage of the tools and existing processes.** In Central America, donors such as COSUDE, OFDA and JICA have taken advantage of the information and data generated in the participative consultation processes through municipal indicator matrixes and documents to inform and draft DRR strategies and priorities for the region due to their credibility and quality.
- € **Links to other initiatives of the European Commission.** In El Salvador, the delegation of the European Union is discussing the integration into their 2014-2020 funding plan, the support of the Civil Protection System with longer-term actions following a method and work model similar to the DIPECHO programme.
- € **Follow-up and extension of communication strategy.** In Bolivia, after the success and impact achieved by TV miniseries 'Z', designed to raise awareness in the La Paz population on DRR aspects, a second phase is being implemented with several strategies including the production of a feature film, and the financial support of institutions, the private sector, the interest of donors such as COSUDE and BID to fund these projects.
- € **Continuity of the Safe Hospitals initiative.** The governments of the Dominican Republic and El Salvador integrated the standards put forward by the programme at national level to promote safe hospitals in the country, meaning, appropriation and institutionalization after the UNISDR campaign supported by several DIPECHO projects in the last few years. Also, in several countries of the Caribbean and other regions, the Safe Hospitals initiative initially supported by ECHO has counted with the financial support of AECID and BID for continuity and consolidation.
- € **Integrating DRR components in reconstruction projects.** In Haiti, currently all projects of the post-earthquake reconstruction plans financed by ECHO must integrate specific DRR and resilience construction elements in which results can be measured independently. Likewise, ECHO and their partners have had and still have a prominent role in coordination and concentration spaces with other donors and actors in the development field, and influence them to integrate vulnerability analysis into their actions. As a result of this effort, there are already instances of complementarity and continuity of processes between partners and actors such as WFP, DFID, the EU delegation and UNDP, among others.

Outlook into the future

- € **Strengthening links with development actors.** Acknowledging that DRR and resilience construction are essential to any development process, facing the future, links must be consolidated with other initiatives, projects and integral work strategies in vulnerable areas and sounder alliances must be established with development actors that work on issues regarding environment, climate change adaptation, ecosystem management, sustainable life, media and water and sanitation, among others.

4.2. Key elements related to institutionalization of DRR

4.2.1 Local work contributes to institutionalization

Relevant aspects

- € Bottom-up approach contributes to strengthen links between communities and public institutions.
- € Local actions must be articulated and linked to institutions in order to be more efficient and sustainable.
- € Work with organized structures of different levels, public and private, contributes significantly to the institutionalization of achievements and processes.
- € Institutionalization of processes must be done along with adjustment of normative and institutional frameworks.

“DIPECHO allowed us to put a face to risk management and to understand people’s reality to integrate it into our federal policies and strategies.”

Government representative

One of the main principles characterizing the work of the DIPECHO programme is the bottom-up strengthening of capacities and process construction, meaning, from the community and local levels to higher ones, linking achievements and processes with institutional actors that may guarantee the appropriation and institutionalization of results and processes locally started.

This work approach has allowed improving relations and communication between communities and local authorities during years, and for the latter to improve knowledge of the risk context of their municipalities, provinces, departments and states.

Examples and evidence

- € **Community-organized EAS for landslides transferred to government.** In El Salvador, the DIPECHO 2010-2011 Plan made a coordinate effort between all projects to support studies and implementation of an EAS for landslides in several vulnerable areas. The Ministry of Environment (MARN) through their environmental observatory later adopted this system, and they committed to guarantee its management and to replicate in other regions of the country the model and method used. <http://www.geociencias.com.gt/foto/Lineamientos.pdf>
- € **Authorities link to communities.** In Argentina, the alliance between the Argentinean Red Cross, UNDP and Directorate General of Civil Protection, within the framework of the DIPECHO programme, has

contributed to civil protection's first-hand knowledge of the problems and reality of the communities and neighbourhoods of several provinces, and the integration of these realities into the processes of planning and tool construction from the central government. <http://www.undp.org.ar/programa/Proyectos/ARG11016.html>

- € **Institutionalised tools.** In Ecuador, the work developed by UNICEF and PLAN in association with the Risk Management Direction of the Ministry of Education in some neighbourhoods and peripheral zones of the Quito metropolitan area has allowed to develop manuals and tools of national scope that have been institutionalised and are currently being promoted and implemented in other zones and educational centres of the country by the Ministry of Education. In El Salvador, a guide has been developed for local observers for the Early Warning Systems at local level as a joint effort between partners of the DIPECHO 2012-2013 Action plan along with the National System of Civil Protection and is currently working as a reference for all work at such level.
- € **School safety plans are institutionalised.** In Santa Lucia (Caribbean), within the DIPECHO 2011-2012 Action Plan, the Red Cross developed a model and method for the drafting of school safety plans that it has been implemented as pilots in some schools of the island. Currently this model has already been adopted and institutionalised by the Ministry of Education and is being used by all schools in the island as the official format for the development of their school safety plans.
- € **South Pacific Early Alert System and Tsunami Regional Protocol.** In the Andes, within the framework of projects implemented by UNESCO in the DIPECHO 2011-2012 Action plan in four countries (Chile, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru), work began in coast areas nation-wide and ended with the signature of a regional communication and coordinated action protocol in the event of a tsunami. . <http://www.plataforma-tsunamis-pse.info/index.php/sistema-regional>.

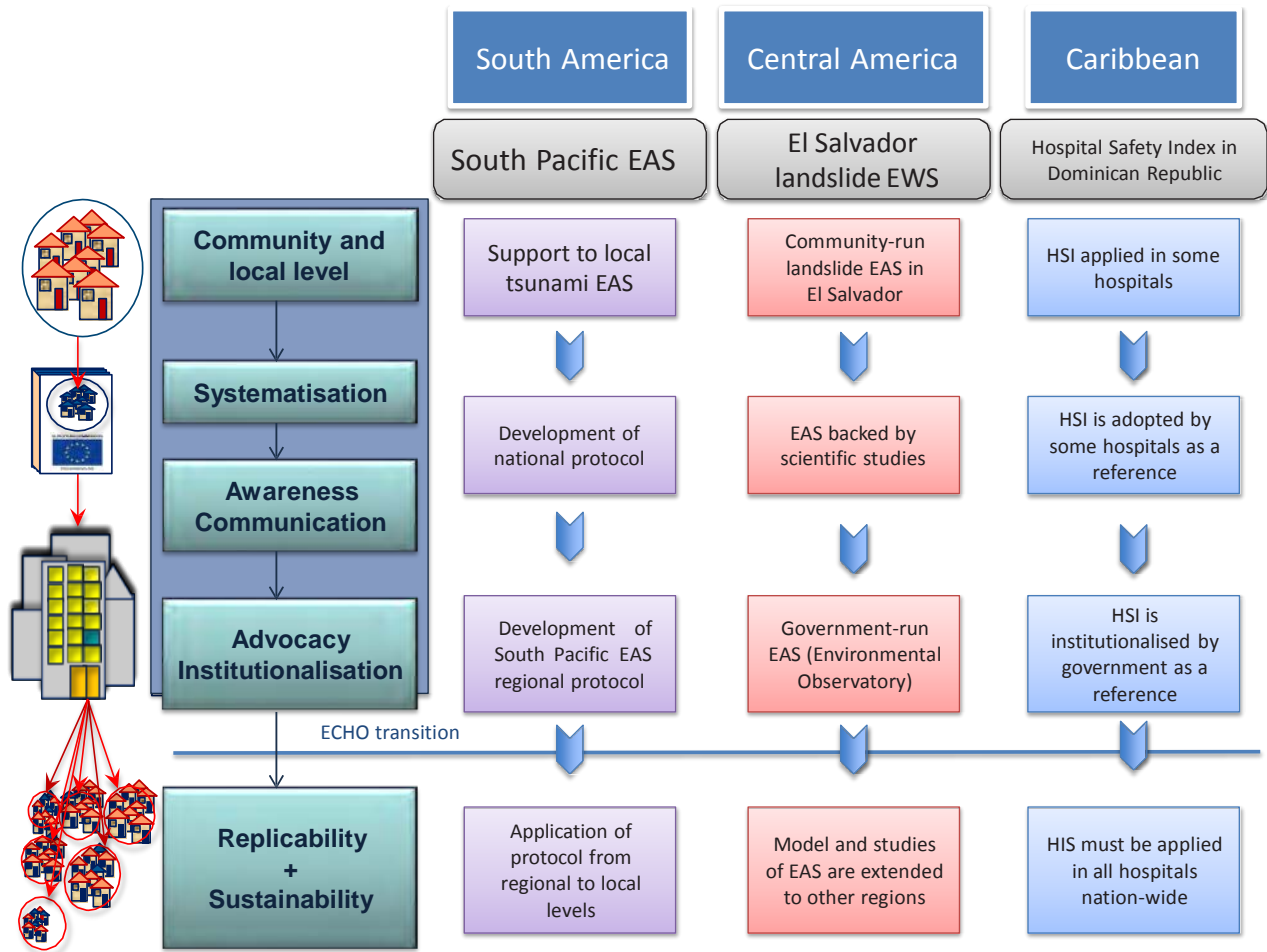


Chart. Model of construction and institutionalisation of bottom-up processes illustrated with concrete regional examples.

Outlook into the future

Better influencing decision makers. In several countries of the region, sensitivity and political willingness of governors and other key actors to prioritize disaster risk reduction is still an issue, although there are also instances that encourage optimism. In this sense, finding strategies, approaches and tools that allow for better influence and a change in perception and attitude of the decision makers at all levels is still a challenge for humanitarian and development actors.

€Institutionalization from the projects. Although there are good examples of DIPECHO-started processes that ended up being institutionalized, in some other cases, once projects end, it is still a challenge for involved actors to achieve better appropriation, responsibility and institutionalization on the part of authorities and public actors to get the desired sustainability. In the immediate future, work must be done to apply methods and approaches that may achieve the desired continuity.

4.2.2 Consultation and participation towards appropriation and collective construction

In the beginning, the programme's priorities were defined by the donors themselves and a reduced group of people, but, progressively, as years have gone by and thanks to ECHO, dialogue with key actors and consultation have been encouraged.

In the last few years, the scheduling of national and regional workshops and the drafting of diagnosis and analysis documents called 'Documents / Reports / Country Profiles', as a result of the participation of wide government and non-government sectors, have been adopted in all regions.

"We have been given the opportunity of full participation... we have taken part in the open call... we feel we are essential actors in the process."

Government representative

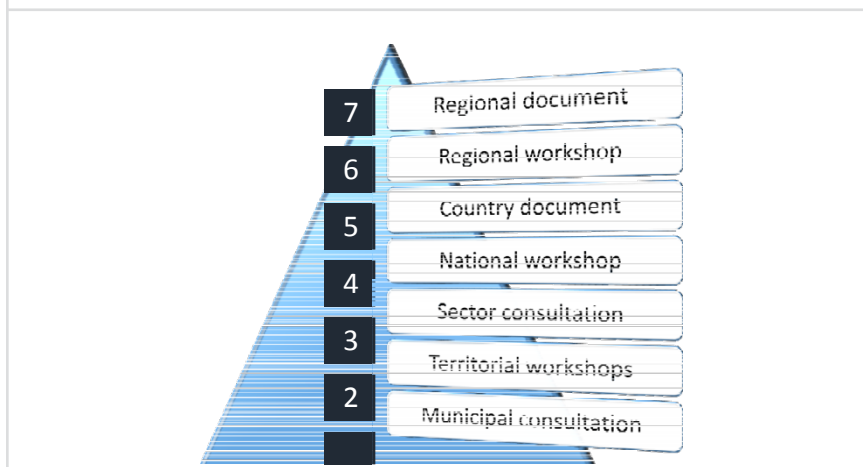
Consultation processes are developed from local to regional levels, involving a great number of actors and using methods, tools and common indicators that contribute to conduct diagnoses and define priorities in regards to the disaster risk reduction, focusing on the country.

Currently, leadership of the national civil protection systems and other public sectors in consultation processes is increasingly more evident and the DIPECHO programme plays a facilitator role for consultation and participation processes under government sponsorship.

Relevant aspects

- € Leadership of guiding entities and public institutions in consultation spaces is essential for their success.
- € Consultation and participation processes facilitate a space where key actors can reflect and reach agreements and learn together.
- € The participation of a wide range of actors and sectors at different levels is crucial to achieve a proper appropriation of results.
- € All consultation and participation processes must incorporate the opinion of those communities and organized structures, which are in most vulnerability in a given context.

Main stages of consultation processes launched in Latin America and the Caribbean within the DIPECHO framework



Examples and evidence

€ **National and regional consultation processes.** From the beginning of the DIPECHO programme, consultation and dialogue processes were facilitated, mainly with different actors at regional level, as was the case of CEPREDENAC in Central America, or during the process of creation of CAPRADE in the Andes region. Afterwards, at the end of the DIPECHO 2004-2005 Action plan, national and regional meetings were organized for the first time as a space for participative consultation and definition of priorities on DRR issues in different countries. In 2005, the same kind of process was carried out in Central America and then the Caribbean. Ever since, the consultation processes⁴ have been held in all regions with the participation of key actors and the drafting of the so-called 'country documents'⁵, which show analysis of threats, vulnerabilities, capacities and priorities in DRR issues of every country. Likewise, these processes have evolved into greater prominence and leadership on the part of governments and inter-government entities. <http://vimeo.com/34090355>. <http://vimeo.com/34090355>, <http://vimeo.com/52037878>

€ **Participation of other donors in consultation processes.** In the last few years, representatives of the main donors of the region in DRR programmes, including EU regional projects, were invited to the regional and national consultation workshops held in South America, Central America and the Caribbean, thus allowing to set links to identify synergy opportunities with executing partners to develop future actions that may be more complementary and integral.

Documents and country profiles as a reference for national strategies. Between late 2009 and early 2010, in Nicaragua started the process to update the 2010-2015 National Risk Management Plan, and, according to people and institutions involved in the process, the then-just-finalized Country Document Nicaragua 2010, drafted in the framework of the DIPECHO consultation process, was one of the main references for information and analysis in the drafting of the plan. Likewise, in Santa Lucia, the National Emergency Management Organization (NEMO), guiding entity in DRR and response, adopted the Country Profiles, equivalent to the Country Documents, drafted within the DIPECHO framework as an official reference in DRR issues, and took responsibility for its distribution to all government institutions and ministries.

€ **Focused prioritization.** Since 2005 to date, reference groups of DIPECHO partners in every Central America country have established coordination's and direct dialogue with the National Civil Protection Systems, and have developed tools and shared consultation processes to determine jointly the geographical areas and priority issues for DRR and disaster preparedness actions.

€ **Country Documents appropriated by authorities.** In Argentina and Ecuador, national civil protection systems lead and actively participated in the process of drafting the Country Documents launched by the DIPECHO 2011-2012 Action plan for South America, where main elements and DRR and disaster preparedness priorities for each country are identified. In both countries, and also in other ones, the Country Documents have become a reference for the decision making process on DRR issues (Argentina <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pfXpEMpqy4>, Ecuador <http://reliefweb.int/report/ecuador/sngr-realiz%C3%B3-el-lanzamiento-del-libro-%E2%80%99Cecuator-referencias-b%C3%A1sicas-para-la-gesti%C3%B3n-de>). Also, in Central America, namely in Guatemala, the Country Report drafting process, developed in 2013, was validated by the National Board for Integral Risk Management. In the Caribbean, in the regional meetings held by CDEMA, Jamaica, through the ODPEM, held a prominent role in the promotion of the added value of the country documents in the framework of the DIPECHO 2011-2012 Action plan.

€ **Support to regional DRR policies.** One of the main achievements of the Central America region in DRR

4 See glossary at the end.

5 See glossary at the end.

issues was the approval of the Central American Policy of Integral Risk Management (PCGIR) in 2010. In the process of conceiving and, now, promoting and implementing the PCGIR, the consultation and dialogue forums facilitated by DIPECHO projects and several other national and regional projects were of great importance, and are still integrating specific components to strengthen its institutionalization and application from community to regional level. A concrete example is the popular version of PCGIR drafted in El Salvador in a joint effort between Oxfam and CEPREDENAC within the framework of the DIPECHO 2010-2011 Action plan. <http://www.cridlac.org/digitalizacion/pdf/spa/doc19110/doc19110.htm>

Outlook into the future

- € - **Institutionalization of consultation processes.** Although there are examples of countries with a high level of appropriation and institutionalization of consults and country documents on the part of the authorities, most still have some steps to take towards a complete appropriation and leadership on the part of governments and institutions.
- € - **Integration of new actors.** So far, consultation processes have achieved the integration of a wide range of government and non-government actors that work on DRR in the countries; however, it is still necessary to achieve better integration and participation of actors from the private sector, the academia and traditional development organizations, among others, as multiplying actors.
- € - **Extension to more community and territory consultations.** After there have been advancements in this sense, just like it has been done in Honduras or El Salvador, another important challenge of participation and consultation is the development of mechanisms and tools that allow community and territorial consultations periodically from each country's institutional framework, along with its replication and application.

4.2.3 Dialogue and engagement of governments allow for significant, long lasting changes

Since its beginnings, one of the DIPECHO programme's priorities in the region was to achieve setliasons with authorities and public institutions from different levels starting with the recognition of and respect for their role as responsible for the rights of people in vulnerable situations and as prominent agents of the institutionalization and sustainability of the achievements and processes of their projects.

Over the years, the collaborative approach and involvement has evolved into a greater commitment to promote the role and leadership of institutions in processes, resulting in their assuming responsibilities that provide support and assistance on Issues and priorities that the institutions have themselves identified.

"DIPECHO is a donor that listens to the government and respects its leadership."

Government representative

Currently, several countries from the region define independently and responsibly the thematic and geographical areas where they find DIPECHO offer an added value.

Relevant aspects

- € Governments are the first defenders of the rights of people at risk or affected by disasters.
- € As a general rule, all DRR processes must be done with collaboration of and under the leadership of the authorities and public institutions.

- € Public institutions count on the normative framework and mechanisms that guarantee sustainable processes.
- € Donors and non-government actors must complement, strengthen and not replace the role of public institutions.

Examples and evidence

- € **Municipalities allocate funds to DRR.** In Central America, thanks to the efforts of several organizations done throughout several years in the framework of DIPECHO projects, by late 2012, more than 50 municipalities counted on specific budget allocations meant for DRR actions, preparedness and disaster response. This fact would have been, until recently, unthinkable in many municipalities since it was not even in the agenda of most municipalities.
- € **Budget for process institutionalization.** In Ecuador, the work model developed in Quito Schools, a UNICEF-PLAN project within the DIPECHO 2011-2012 Action plan, has been adopted and implemented afterwards by the Ministry of Education, which has assigned a budget of \$80 million USD to the standardization of plans and methods throughout the country. In the DIPECHO 2013-2014 Action plan, all projects integrated some education component to support the Ministry and the strategy aforementioned, with the commitment of working under their institutional leadership and orientation as the highest-ranking guiding entity in the country to integrate DRR into the education sector.
- € **Leadership of government to prioritize areas and work issues.** In Colombia, National Union for Disaster and Risk Management (UNGRD), the guiding entity in DRR issues, provided orientation and assistance on what areas should target DIPECHO projects within the DIPECHO 2013-2014 Action plan, for them to complement the actions and strategies of the government and to avoid duplication of efforts. This government leadership in DRR issues is framing the new International Cooperation Policy of UNGRD where the role and relations of each donor and actor of cooperation is defined.
- € **Strengthening Civil Protection in a fragile state.** Since the beginning of the DIPECHO programme in Haiti, one of the priorities of the project was the strengthening of the legal framework, the leadership and response capacity of Civil Protection. The January 2010 earthquake showed the importance of counting on a solid system of solid civil protection and reaction capacity. Currently, through the reconstruction project and the post-earthquake rehabilitation, ECHO and partners such as the Red Cross are strengthening the network of volunteers of civil protection throughout the entire territory with training and equipment so that they can respond to future events.
- € **Continuous strengthening of regional DRR bodies.** Since its beginnings, the DIPECHO Programme has sought alliances and strategies to strengthen the role of regional entities and bodies with DRR liability. Inter-government bodies such as CAPRADE in the Andes region, CEPREDENAC in Central America and CDEMA in the Caribbean have for years received direct and indirect support of regional projects and have been involved in increasingly more prominent roles in the processes of reflection, consultation and planning of the programme's actions. Likewise, humanitarian decisions of the action plans have always recommended and asked executing partners of DIPECHO projects to set synergies, coordination and strategic alliances to strengthen the leadership role of these guiding bodies. Currently there are several results of this continuous support over time, such as the development of policies and strategies, links between DIPECHO projects with long-term DRR processes and collaborations with institutionalization. These bodies also acknowledge the added value that the DIPECHO framework provides them to continue to develop and grow in DRR processes of each region. A concrete example of all the aforementioned is the prominence and participation of ECHO partners in the two Regional Disaster Risk Reduction Forums for Central America, held to date (December 2011 and June 2013) to measure the advancements and facilitate PCGIR implementation.

Outlook into the future

€ **Increased awareness of authorities.** In recent years, there have been significant advances in several countries where authorities have grown aware of the importance of adopting DRR approaches in their management processes, and, often, in strategic alliances with partners of the DIPECHO programme. However, there is still a significant part that has not yet been internalized hence their management and decisions do not favour DRR. This poses a challenge for key actors, who have to identify strategies and mechanisms that might result in greater changes in attitude and practices on the part of authorities.

4.2.4 Investment in local capacities strengthens prominences and leadership of Southern actors

One of the aspects that most partners in Latin America and the Caribbean acknowledge is the openness and willingness of ECHO to work on the development and reinforcement of capacities of local organizations and institutions. Since the beginning, actions are prioritized where local partners have a central role and integrate components of training and capacity building.

Thanks to this continuous investment, currently many organizations and institutions have grown and developed experience and know-how in terms of disaster risk reduction as the DIPECHO programme itself has evolved too.

This has enabled learning and exchange between countries and regions, thus contributing to mutual enrichment and strengthening south-south cooperation to increase the presence and prominence of governments and organizations of the region in forums and international meetings related to DRR.

“Back then, we suggested ECHO to get rid of the constraint that forced project managers to be foreigners (European); today, some years later, most managers are from the country or from the LAC region. We feel we have been listened to.”

ECHO Partner

Relevant aspects

- € The developed capacities in the organizations and local institutions contributes to reinforce south-south cooperation.
- € The adoption and appropriation of methodologies are also a contribution to the reinforcement of institutions and organizations.
- € Reinforced organizations and institutions represent a network of exchange and learning between countries and regions.
- € People trained in DRR represent an asset for the development of their countries.

Examples and evidence

- € **People trained in the programme hold positions of responsibility.** After several years of continuous work, the DIPECHO programme has trained many NGOs, governments and other professionals on DRR issues that have helped them develop their capacities in many countries. Many of these professionals have since held positions of responsibility in government entities showing their sensitivity and commitment

towards DRR from their positions, as in the case of Colombia, Paraguay, Honduras and Ecuador, where some of these professionals have come to hold maximum responsibility positions within national civil protection systems.

- € **Appropriation and mutual adaptation of approaches and models.** The work approach and formats used in the management of the DIPECHO projects cycle have been adopted and integrated into the management and planning processes of some institutions and organizations. An example is seen in some national Red Cross Societies that apply intervention elements to the DIPECHO programme and the drafting and management formats to other DRR projects once they have been adapted. Likewise, the DIPECHO programme has taken advantage of and adopted, for replication and promotion in different regions, methodologies and approaches of other organizations like in the case of famous Vulnerability and Capacity Analysis (VCA), initially developed and used by the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, which has been progressively adopted, in whole or in part, by other organizations and institutions.
- € **Training of DRR public servants and institutions.** The technical proficiency and commitment of a great part of public servants and technicians of immediate response guiding entities and institutions of all countries has been improving throughout the spaces for reflection and analysis, as well as the technical training offered for projects over the years at local level as well as national and regional level. Today, many public servants in government institutions having to do with DRR, acknowledge that they have been trained by DIPECHO projects over the years.
- € **Reinforcement of south-south cooperation.** The DIPECHO programme has also been growing in terms of construction of capacities in the countries, and although at the beginning most DIPECHO project managers were staff expatriated from outside LAC, since the DIPECHO 2006-2007 Action plan there have been professionals from the local countries holding management positions. Today, most staff and technicians in the projects are locals, and most of them have been growing as they gain experience from projects, starting off as volunteers or field technicians, and ending up in management positions. Some have also taken part in projects of other countries or regions, thus resulting in a dynamics of cross learning that has often extended to the executing organizations themselves, which have rotated their staff in order to create more south-south cooperation instances. Organizations such as Oxfam, CARE, Plan, FICR, Helpage and UN agencies such as UNISDR, OPS, UNDP, UNICEF and UNESCO, among others, are also fine examples.

Outlook into the future

- € **Consolidation of capacities of partners.** During several years of DIPECHO presence, many partners have been reinforcing their organizational capacities, but it is necessary that they are internally consolidated and that from different organizations continuity of policies, strategies and human capacity in DRR be guaranteed.
- € **Institutionalization of training processes.** Many of the efforts and achievements obtained in terms of the reinforcement of capacities and human resources in the countries do not always enjoy continuity once projects have ended. A pending issue in some contexts is still institutionalization and consolidation of learning spaces with greater centrality of governments, academia and other key actors.

4.2.5 Support to strategic sectors strengthens DRR institutionalism

Support to strategic sectors is a key element to advance in the integration and institutionalization of DRR in the public sector and the construction of long-lasting, sustainable change.

For several years, the DIPECHO programme has strengthened the Health and Education sectors, which are particularly relevant in terms of DRR work; the latter is one of the main actors to give humanitarian aid before any adverse event, and the latter is important because of the prominence education has in all spaces and levels in the perception of risk and therefore the beliefs, attitudes and practices of people. Therefore, from the beginning work and synergies with both sectors have been a priority in all action plans.

“In the last few years the healthcare and education sectors have been worked on, yielding results such as the application of school and hospital safety indexes.”

ECHO Partner

In the last few years it has also been emphasized to support strategic sectors such as the agricultural-productive one related to the livelihoods or the public works and infrastructure, also considered strategic in the processes of vulnerability reduction.

Relevant aspects

- € Support to DRR integration into different strategic sectors contributes significantly to the reinforcement of the public sectors and their institutions.
- € Integration of DRR at all levels of the education sector is a necessary and justified long-term investment.
- € DRR work in the education sector must emphasize primary education and infrastructure adjustment that prioritizes the reestablishment and continuity of access to education after a disaster.
- € The healthcare sector has a leadership role and defines trends in DRR processes at all levels.
- € Integrating a DRR approach in key sectors such as healthcare, education, agriculture and livelihoods or public works, among others, achieves a greater, longer-lasting impact.

Examples and evidence

- € **Greater institutionalization and sensitivity on DRR issues in the education sector.** Prioritization of DRR work in the education sector has always been a priority to the DIPECHO programme and has been included as an intervention sector of priority in all Action plans since 2003, with much more emphasis since the ‘DRR starts at school’ campaign launched in 2006-2007 by UNISDR, which caused a great part of executing partners to include in all their projects components linked to the global campaign. Currently, practically all projects, regional and national, include actions that are directly or indirectly related with education. This continuous, year-long investment has yielded results in a great range of instruments and tools to integrate DRR into the education sector, but has above all contributed to improve sensitivity of the guiding entities and education authorities in different countries, thus resulting in a better coordination and continuous work. Examples such as Ecuador, Chile, Argentina and Santa Lucia have already been mentioned in this document as good practices in this sense. In the last few years, the DIPECHO programme has doubtlessly been one of the main supporters in LAC of the importance of education in disaster risk reduction. <http://www.unisdr.org/2007/campaign/pdf/WDR-2006-2007-Spanish-fullversion.pdf>

- € **Continuous work of the governments of the region in favour of DRR in education.** By late 2012, ministers and delegates of education of 20 countries of Latin America and the Caribbean signed the 'Panama Declaration on disaster risk reduction in the education sector of Latin America and the Caribbean', via which education authorities commit to encouraging actions for risk reduction through education, and to guarantee the right to education in emergency and disaster situations. Representatives of UN agencies and organizations committed to education such as UNICEF, UNISDR, International Plan, UNESCO, Save the Children, RET, World Vision and OFDA/USAIF signed as honour witnesses. Although the declaration is the result of many years of work of different actors and donors, the governments and institutions themselves acknowledge the centrality of the aforementioned organizations, of which many have supported these processes in the framework of DIPECHO projects. http://portal.unesco.org/geography/es/ev.phpURL_ID=14806&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html, http://www.ineesite.org/uploads/files/resources/Declaracion_Panama_RRD_Sector_Educativo_firmada.pdf
- € **Institutionalization of the Safe Hospitals approach.** The healthcare sector has also been one of the priority sectors since the beginning of the DIPECHO programme because it is one of the main actors in preparedness and adverse event response processes. Since the beginning, several DIPECHO projects have integrated as partners the healthcare sectors, above all locally, as supporters in the development of response plans, training, equipment and situation diagnoses. In 2008-2009, EIRD launched the global campaign 'Safe Hospitals', and the DIPECHO programme included in the Action plans of different regions, clear guidelines for partners to integrate components related to the promotion and implementation of the campaign. Currently, hundreds of healthcare facilities of first and second level that have in the framework of DIPECHO projects developed diagnoses and in some cases corrective actions from the application of the Index of Hospital Security and the Guide for the assessment of healthcare establishments of medium and low complexity. In countries such as the Dominican Republic, Jamaica or Chile, a great degree of institutionalization and appropriation in the application of the proposed standards proposed by the aforementioned instruments has been achieved, and in countries such as Peru, Colombia and Ecuador, safe hospital policies have been developed after the support ECHO gave to PAHO to implement the safe hospital initiative. Finally, as for Central America, the geographical information system recently developed with the participation of Health Ministries allows mapping all top level healthcare facilities with their diagnoses. http://www.paho.org/disasters/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=964&Itemid=911
- € **Alliance with the agriculture sector to reinforce livelihoods.** In El Salvador, within the framework of the DIPECHO 2012-2013 action plan, collaboration alliances have been established for the exchange of information and experience between the executing partners of DIPECHO projects and the Union of Urban Agriculture of the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock through their 'Environmental strategy of adaptation and climate change mitigation of the agriculture, forest and aquaculture sector'. Such contacts were made regarding the actions of protection and recovery of livelihoods of the people affected by disasters, and all parties committed to identify and agree on actions of complementarily and synergy to achieve a better impact and better sustainability.

Outlook into the future

- € **Extending the institutionalization of sector tools.** Achievements in several countries in the institutionalization and formal adoption of tools such as ISH and ISE may be replicated and supported in other countries where such participation and appropriation have still not been achieved on the part of the corresponding authorities.
- € **Reinforcing new strategic sectors.** Just like investment and continuous support for the healthcare and education sector in the region have allowed for relevant advancements, there are other sectors where future efforts can also be made as in the case of social protection, agriculture or environment, among others, which are particularly relevant in terms of DRR.

4.2.6 Promotion of a rights, inclusion and equity-based approach generates change in the key actors

Progressively and with the contribution of partners and institutions committed to a rights, inclusion and equity-based approach, the DIPECHO programme has always sought to promote a rights-based approach with gender analysis and the integration of more vulnerable groups in risk situations such as kids and adolescents, handicapped people, elderly people, AIDS patients, sexual diversity groups and the terminally ill, among others.

For years, projects in different countries have integrated specific components to make these transversal elements more visible. Currently, a great part of the organizations and institutions count on instruments and approached to integrate the aforementioned approaches into their DRR actions, even though there is still a significant stretch of path to be covered regarding certain sectors and actors.

Relevant aspects

- € The rights approach in DRR acknowledges people at risk as subjects of law and therefore the reciprocal obligation of humanitarian actors and governments.
- € The inclusive approach must take into account the participation and needs of the most vulnerable.
- € The equity approach must consider the different impact a disaster has on men and women, adults, children and adolescents, as well as their roles and needs.
- € The organizations and institutions must adopt their policies and strategies to integrate an equity and rights-based approach.

Examples and evidence

- € **Integration of transversal aspects in training.** In Nicaragua, for several years executing actors of DIPECHO projects have worked closely with Civil Defense, providing support in the development of their training plans internally and in the communities. This continuous support has been improving the training curricula and has now integrated aspects of childhood and adolescence, gender approach and ethnic groups and other vulnerable groups, etc. Recently, the curriculum has been updated to better integrate all the aforementioned issues based on recent lessons learnt and has been approved as an official Civil Defense training plan to be applied nation-wide.

- € **Specific tools to integrate transversal aspects.** In the last few years, several DIPECHO projects have developed activities to integrate different transversal aspects in DRR and, as a result, different tools and methods have been created or improved. In Nicaragua, in the framework of a DIPECHO 2008-2009 Action plan implemented by ACSUR-LAS SEGOVIAS, an EDAN manual was developed with a gender approach that is being used as a reference by several organizations and some institutions. The Handicap International organization developed the 'Guidelines to work with handicapped people', supported in several of their DIPECHO projects in many countries. Currently, within the framework of the DIPECHO 2012-2013 Action plan in Central America, the regional project implemented by UNICEF-PLAN is supporting the promotion and creation of tools for the integration of Early Childhood Development in DRR, and COOPI in Guatemala has worked on a manual with CONRED for the inclusion of handicapped people. In South America, the CARE project in Guayaquil counts on a specific component in coordination with UNFPA for training and promotion of tools to work with sexual and reproductive rights in emergencies. In the Caribbean, in Jamaica, Helpage integrates elderly and handicapped people as active actors in the development of emergency plans.
- € **Indicators to measure integration of vulnerable groups.** The most recent version of the regional indicator matrix of preparedness at municipal level developed in Central America integrates a specific analysis area with several indicators to measure participation and consideration of needs of vulnerable groups and the integration of the gender approach in the preparedness and response processes at local level. This matrix was already applied in 2011 in more than 250 municipalities in Central America and helped to better know the integration level of some transversal issues in local processes of preparedness and for many organizations, institutions and people that work at such level to grow more aware of the importance of the issue and ways to integrate it into their everyday work.
- € **Promotion and training on humanitarian principles and standards.** Another important element of almost all projects implemented in all three regions has been the incorporation of actions of promotion, awareness and training at all levels on humanitarian principles and standards such as the Sphere project or the INEE, related to education. Over all these years, thousands of humanitarian workers and public servants have been trained in these issues thanks to the DIPECHO projects.
- € **Didactic tool on risk management based on indigenous culture.** In Paraguay, in the Chaco Central Paraguayo, the lack of local strategies and of knowledge on threats such as draught, fire and floods, which have worsened in the last few years, affects mainly the indigenous populations of the region and a great percentage of kids and adolescents. Face to this, work has been done on the development of didactic material that will integrate culture, customs and livelihoods of El Chaco Paraguayo, and how the disaster risk management can be articulated, integrating and rescuing values, practices and customs of the indigenous. The document has been declared of public interest by the Paraguayan government and the Ministry of Health has drafted a guide on how to use it.
- € **Organized communities to voice their rights.** In Brazil, communities formed to defend their rights in events of disaster; this way, they could defend their access to aid that the State provides during and after the emergencies. In 2011, the defense community committee of the Rosario neighbourhood, in Teresopolis, where CARE was implementing a DIPECHO project, managed to be heard by the City Hall and have social dwellings provided to them, and have apartments built for 290 families that had been affected by that year's floods. Also, in Guatemala, in 2011, in the framework of a DIPECHO project implemented by COOPI, a social audit manual was developed to be used by members of the Local Coordination for Disaster Risk Reduction (COLRED), as a tool to engage in dialogue regarding liability and planning at community level.

Outlook into the future

€**Encourage institutionalization of rights approaches.** A pending issue in most countries of the region is getting the public sector to integrate the rights, inclusion and equity approach in their normative frameworks, policies and strategies for disaster risk reduction.

Appropriation and use of tools on inclusion and equity. There are very good examples of methods and tools used to facilitate analysis and planning integrating elements of inclusion and equity; however, they are not well known or used enough by different actors with DRR responsibilities.

5. Glossary⁶

Key actors	All organizations, bodies and public and private institutions that in a given context are related to the disaster risk reduction work.
Capacity development	The process through which the population, organizations and society stimulate and develop systematically their capacities over time, in order to achieve their social and economic objectives through better knowledge, abilities, systems and institutions, among other things.
Sustainable development	Development that meets today's needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
Disaster	A serious interruption of the working of a community or society that causes a large amount of deaths and material losses and impacts, both economic and environmental, that exceed the affected community or society's capacity to face the situation through their own resources.
Country document	A written input mainly resulting from a process of research consultation and analysis regarding the DRR developed at different levels of a given country with the participation of several government and non-government sectors, funded and supported mainly by DG-ECHO within the framework of the execution of DIPECHO Action plans.
Mitigation	Decrease or limitation of adverse impacts of threats and disasters alike.
Preparedness	Knowledge and capacities developed by governments, professionals, response and recovery organizations, communities and people to foresee, respond and recover effectively from the impacts of events or probable, imminent or current conditions related to a threat.
Prevention	Absolute evasion of the adverse impacts of threats and related disasters.
Consultation process	A process of research, consultation and analysis regarding DRR divided into phases and developed at different levels of a given country with the participation of several government and non-government sectors, funded and supported mainly by DG-ECHO within the framework of the execution of DIPECHO Action plans. The results of the consultation process are compiled in the Country Document.
Recovery	The recuperation and betterment, when necessary, of facilities, livelihoods and life conditions of the communities affected by disasters, which includes efforts to reduce disaster risk factors.
Disaster Risk Reduction	The concept and practice of disaster risk reduction through systematic efforts directed at analyzing and managing causal factors of disasters, which includes the reduction of the degree of exposure to threats, decrease of vulnerability of the population and property, sensible management of soil and environment, and the improvement of preparedness to adverse effects.
Resilience	The capacity of a system, community or society exposed to threat to absorb, adapt and recover from its effects timely and efficiently, which involves preserving and restoring basic structures and functions.

⁶ For the present glossary we have used the terms published by UNEIRD in 2009, except for those terms not found in it, which we have then defined ourselves.

Response	The supply of emergency and public aid services during or immediately after the occurrence of a disaster, in order to save lives, reduce impacts on health, look after public security and meet the basic subsistence needs of the affected population.
Early Alert System (EAS)	The set of necessary capacities to generate and promote alert information that is timely and meaningful in order to allow people, communities and organizations at risk to prepare and act appropriately and beforehand to reduce the chance of loss or damage.
ECHO partner	ECHO partners are organizations and institutions with whom ECHO has signed a partnership contract so that they may receive its financial support to carry out humanitarian actions. ECHO partners may be United Nations bodies, NGOs based in the EU and international organizations such as the International Federation of Red Cross Societies and of Red Crescent Societies and the International Immigration Organization.
Vulnerability	The characteristics and circumstances of a community, system of good that make them sensitive to damage by a threat.

6. Acronyms

AECID	Agencia Española de Cooperación Internacional y Desarrollo
VCA	Vulnerability and Capacity Analysis
IDB	Interamerican Development Bank
CAPRADE	Comité Andino para la Prevención y Atención de Desastres
CDEMA	Agencia del Caribe para la Gestión de Emergencias y Desastres (Caribe)
CEPREDENAC	Centro de Coordinación para la Prevención de los Desastres Naturales en América Central COLRED Coordinadora Local para la Reducción de Desastres
CONRED	Coordinadora Nacional para la Reducción de Desastres COSUDE Agencia Suiza para el Desarrollo y la Cooperación CPM Mecanismo de Protección Civil (Comisión Europea) CRE Cruz Roja Española
CRID	Centro Regional de Información para Desastres
DFID	Department for International Development International (UK)
DG-ECHO	Directorate General of the European Community Humanitarian Office
DIPECHO	Disaster Preparedness European Community Humanitarian Office
DANA	Damage Assessment and Need Analysis
UNISDR	United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction
FAO	Organización de las Naciones Unidas para la Agricultura y la Alimentación (por sus siglas en inglés)
IFCR	International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
INEE	International Network for Emergency Education
INETER	Instituto Nicaragüense de Estudios Territoriales
INTUR	Instituto Nicaragüense de Turismo
INVUR	Instituto Nicaragüense de Vivienda Urbana y Rural
ISS	Index of School Safety
IHS	Index of Hospital Safety
JICA	Japanese International Cooperation Agency
LAC	Latin America and the Caribbean
HAF	Hyogo Action Framework
MARN	Ministerio de Medio Ambiente y Recursos Naturales (El Salvador)
MTI	Ministerio de Transporte e Infraestructura (Nicaragua)
NEMO	National Emergency Management Organisation (Sta. Lucía)
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (Oficina para la Coordinación de Asuntos Humanitarios)
MDO	Millennium Development Objectives
ODPEM	Office for Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Management (Jamaica)
WHO	World Health Organization
NGO	Non-governmental organization
UN	United Nations
PAHO	Pan American Health Organization
PCGIR	Política Centroamericana de Gestión Integral del Riesgo
WFP	World Food Programme

UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
PREVDA	Programa Regional de Reducción de la Vulnerabilidad y Degradación Ambiental RRD Reducción de Riesgo de Desastres
EAS	Early Alert System
SINAPRED	Sistema Nacional para la Prevención, Mitigación y Atención de Desastres
EU	European Union
UNGRD	Sistema Nacional para la Gestión del Riesgo de Desastres (Colombia)
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USAID	Office of Disaster Assistance of the United States Agency for International Development
SAT	Sistema de Alerta Temprana
SINAPRED	Sistema Nacional para la Prevención, Mitigación y Atención de Desastres
UE	Unión Europea
UNGRD	Sistema Nacional para la Gestión del Riesgo de Desastres (Colombia)
UNICEF	Fondo de las Naciones Unidas para la Infancia
USAID/OFDA	Oficina de Asistencia para Desastres de la Agencia para el Desarrollo Internacional de los Estados Unidos de América



Ayuda Humanitaria

