

# EVALUATION OF DIPECHO ACTION PLANS FOR THE CARIBBEAN

**Aguaconsult Ltd.**

## **Main Report**

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## *Executive summary*

### **Introduction**

1. Since 1999 DG ECHO has implemented six DIPECHO Action Plans (AP) in the Caribbean with a combined funding total of €16,875,00<sup>1</sup>, supporting 66 projects implemented by 21 different NGOs, UN agencies, academic institutions and government bodies.

2. The objectives of AP V and VI (running from 2006/07 and 2007/09 respectively) are similar and principally aim to reduce the impact of future disasters in the Caribbean region by preparing vulnerable populations in the areas most affected by recurrent natural hazards. More specific objectives are those that support local communities and institutions to prepare for, and mitigate the effects of, natural disasters by enhancing their capacities to cope, thereby increasing resilience and decreasing vulnerability.

### **Purpose and Methodology**

3. The overall purpose of this evaluation is to “*assess the appropriateness of DIPECHO Actions ..... its impact and sustainability in order to establish whether they have achieved their objectives and to produce recommendations for improving the effectiveness of future operations in the Caribbean in terms of disaster risk reduction*”.

4. The evaluation focuses primarily on projects implemented under AP VI. Action Plan V projects which are included in the evaluation are limited to those also implemented by AP VI partners in the same countries. It was agreed that the evaluation would take in operational performance, but have a focus on strategic issues, including the design of Action Plans, how DIPECHO, as one of several Commission Services, has applied LRRD and to what extent have DIPECHO’s partner advocacy and coordination mechanisms been successful, both internally and externally, in impacting EC cooperation in the region.

5. The evaluation team visited DG ECHO in Brussels and a sample of four countries in the region: Dominica, Dominican Republic, Haiti and Barbados. The team reviewed relevant documentation, conducted extensive interviews with EC staff, project partners and other national and regional stakeholders. Interviews at field level were complemented with focus group discussions, simulations and role-play exercises with target communities.

### **Main Findings**

6. Action Plans V and VI were found to have had significant impact on the lives of poor communities in vulnerable areas of the region. For example, during the four Hurricanes that hit the island of La Gonave during August and September 2008, only six

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<sup>1</sup> DIPECHO 1 budget (Decision ECHO/TPS/219/1998/01000) included not just Caribbean, but also Central America and Southeast Asia

deaths were reported in target communities, compared to more than 24 during events in 2006.

7. The inclusion of the criteria of working with those organisations that “*incorporated the concept of disaster preparedness into their institutional strategy as well as those who have clearly defined long-term strategies*”<sup>2</sup> has been taken seriously in the region and represents an important progression in DIPECHO AP design over time.

8. Most partners continue to voice the need to increase the length of projects rather than tailor their projects to the criteria. Those that have been most successful in finding a balance are the organisations that use DIPECHO to advance components of much more comprehensive development processes, funded by other donors.

9. Initiatives implemented at a local level were found to be an effective means of building community coping strategies and increasing resilience. In most cases, projects were also effectively linked to larger national DM (Disaster Management) structures. However, in some cases these national systems are very weak and linkages were made without any strategy aimed at strengthening them. This reduced the effectiveness of these community-based actions.

10. The projects were, for the most part, effective in bringing local and municipal government and NGO actors together.

11. The need for implementing community-based DRR programming in the Caribbean is obvious. In this sense DIPECHO clearly fills a niche that few other organisations have done, although new donors are becoming more active in addressing these themes. If DIPECHO is to run its course (exit) then the strategies and activities it promotes would need to be taken on by another EC Service. The evaluation team did not see any other EC Service being in a position to do this at the current time.

12. Field visits, especially those related to AP V, clearly demonstrated that a lack of articulated follow-up strategies jeopardises sustainability.

13. As well as having impact at community level, the DIPECHO APs were successful in capacity building of partners and their local counterparts in DRR. The project has helped several partners to develop their DRR policies and strategies for the region.

14. Whilst many of the recommendations from previous evaluations (2001 and 2004) have been addressed, there are a number of recurring themes that require further action, including issues pertaining to LRRD, improving coordination between DG ECHO and other EC services, replication of projects and building institutional capacity at national level.

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<sup>2</sup> This recommendation comes out of *The Evaluation of DIPECHO Action Plans in the Caribbean Region* published in December, 2004

15. The team observed little in the way of complementarity, coherence and coordination (CCC) across EC Services in the course of the fieldwork. While mechanisms exist for sharing information and planning, there are no formal structures. In the context of the Caribbean region it appears that the different EC instruments generally do not coordinate around the issue of DRR in a systematic way.

16. Results in the area of LRRD have been mixed during the AP V and VI. In general it appears that the partners are applying their own ‘form’ of LRRD rather than basing their efforts on the EC model. There is, however, an increasing recognition across Commission Services that LRRD is an important concept and one that needs to be taken more seriously. However, without any significant improvement in CCC across the EC service, there is unlikely to be an improvement in LRRD.

17. The link between preparedness activities and development varied depending on the nature of the partner organisation. Those with a development focus were more successful in making this link through integrating the projects into their longer-term community development programmes. It has been more of a challenge for humanitarian organisations simply because they may not have a longer-term development mandate.

18. DG ECHO only participates to a limited extent in regional initiatives such as the Comprehensive Disaster Management (CDM) initiative and is therefore potentially missing opportunities for promoting DRR among stakeholders.

19. The most significant conclusions, and the corresponding *strategic* and *operational* recommendations of the evaluation are summarised in the table as follows<sup>3</sup>:

Main Conclusions	Recommendations	Lessons Learned
<b>DIPECHO Projects and Partners</b>		
<p><b>C1:</b> In general, the DIPECHO projects were relevant to the needs of the most vulnerable target communities, impacting their lives through well designed interventions, which met the stated objectives of the projects themselves as well as those of DIPECHO. Most importantly they were successful, to varying degrees, in impacting the lives of people through strengthening the capacity of communities to address the risks they face.</p>	<p><b>R1a:</b> There is ongoing discussion as to the relevance of DIPECHO and the need to develop and implement an exit strategy, but the high need in the region and increasing impact from projects supports its continuation. The issue is more one of linking the programme to other elements of LRRD to ensure greater impact and sustainability. The DIPECHO programme should therefore continue as a means of supporting communities to reduce risk and increase resilience. [Strategic – DG ECHO Brussels]</p> <p><b>R1b:</b> DIPECHO should continue to place emphasis on innovative pilot DRR projects [Strategic – DG ECHO Brussels]</p> <p><b>R1c:</b> Micro-projects remain a highly effective means for motivating institutions and communities as well as directly addressing risk reduction and should be maintained in future Action Plans. [Operational - DG ECHO field offices]</p>	<p>More in depth activities in fewer communities is likely to ensure that quality is maintained and that the knowledge and skills gained are better institutionalised.</p> <p>Knowledge and skills are more likely to be retained if the project includes activities where communities can put these into</p>

<sup>3</sup> The numbering of conclusions and recommendations is consistent with those in the main body of the report

	<p><b>R1d:</b> Haiti and the Dominican Republic should remain geographic priorities for DIPECHO projects. Small island states should have equal access to projects, but based on meeting other key criteria such as levels of vulnerability and capacity of local partners. Regional and multi-country projects should also be prioritised.</p>	<p>practice such as simulation exercises.</p> <p>Coordination with government and local stakeholders is critical for legitimacy and sustainability</p>
<p><b>C2:</b> The efficiency, effectiveness and impact of some DIPECHO projects were reduced in part by weak project design and implementation strategies that were not adequately addressed during the proposal development and approval process.</p>	<p><b>R2a:</b> An assessment of the capacity of local partners should be included as part of the proposal. If it is deemed that there is low capacity, the partner should demonstrate how project activities will be properly implemented and include a local partner capacity building strategy. [Operational – DG ECHO field offices]</p> <p><b>R2c:</b> Selection of geographic regions for project implementation should be based on government priorities, risk and vulnerability. The ‘Country Document’ produced in the Dominican Republic should be assessed after AP VII and if found useful, similar processes should be implemented throughout the region. [Operational - DG ECHO DR office]</p> <p><b>R2d:</b> Project partners need to better account for DIPECHO’s timeframes and plan activities accordingly. The idea of doing less, better, and focusing on long-term sustainable impact rather than on the quantity of activities implemented is essential. This should be reflected in DIPECHO guidelines and DG ECHO support to partners during proposal development. [Operational - DG ECHO field offices]</p>	<p>It is critical to get commitment from local partners and other participating stakeholders prior to commencing the project. This helps to ensure everybody is clear about roles and responsibilities and avoids delays in a very short DIPECHO project timeframe</p> <p>Quality baseline data including participatory needs assessments and a historical understanding of other similar interventions are a critical component of building relevant and sustainable projects</p> <p>The use of tested methodologies and tools saves time and increases efficiency.</p> <p>Mitigation projects are probably the most motivating of all activities for communities. However, time is needed for adequate planning</p>
<p><b>DIPECHO Caribbean Action Plans</b></p>		
<p><b>C5:</b> The community-based preparedness focus of DIPECHO should be placed within a broader disaster risk reduction framework.</p>	<p><b>R5a:</b> Once DG ECHO has finalised the development of its DRR implementation policy, DRR should be integrated fully into DIPECHO strategy, priorities and APVII proposal guidance. This should be accompanied by a dissemination package for internal and external partners clearly outlining the policy and the relationship to DIPECHO and guidelines for implementation [Strategic and operational – DG ECHO Brussels].</p> <p><b>R5b:</b> DG ECHO should develop a realistic set of impact indicators for various DRR interventions and support their use by partners through training. [Operational –DG ECHO Brussels]</p>	
<p><b>C6:</b> Current thematic areas and Strategic Programming Imperatives are appropriate but could be expanded to reflect additional DRR related issues.</p>	<p><b>R6a:</b> More emphasis should be placed on <i>response preparedness</i> including pre-positioning of stocks in high-risk remote areas where partners or other DM organisations do not have a presence. This encourages the link between preparedness and response. [Strategic - DG ECHO Brussels and field offices]</p> <p><b>R6b:</b> <i>Climate change</i> should be included as a Strategic Programming Imperative to reflect its increasing importance in relation to risk reduction especially for small island states and to promote its</p>	

	<p>inclusion in project design and priorities. [Strategic - DG ECHO Brussels and field offices]</p> <p><b>R6c:</b> Community level work has demonstrated that the adoption of a <i>multi-hazard approach</i> to DRR has more impact than focusing on one hazard and should, therefore, be encouraged in project strategies. [Strategic - DG ECHO Brussels and field offices]</p>	<p>and execution.</p> <p>The volunteer nature of the community members input must be stressed in order to avoid misunderstanding and avoid creating conflict.</p>
<b>Sustainability</b>		
<p><b>C7:</b> Given diminishing donor support to many countries in the Caribbean as their economies strengthen, coupled with fewer DRR funding sources, DIPECHO has itself become a key ongoing source of finances. However, this does not imply that DIPECHO is, by default, responsible to provide funding for scaling up and replicability.</p>	<p><b>R7a:</b> Partners must place additional emphasis on the replication of project interventions following the end of funding cycles. While replication does not have to be carried out by the partner (i.e. it could be done by government, other civil society organisations or the communities themselves) a strategy for this must be included in project proposals [Operational – DG ECHO field offices].</p> <p><b>R7b:</b> DG ECHO should support partners to investigate potential sources of additional funding either within the EC, other intentional donors or from sources from within the target countries themselves. This implies greater coordination with other donors, both internal to the EC as well as others. [Strategic–DG ECHO field offices]</p>	
<p><b>C8:</b> Long term impact and sustainability of project activities has been mixed. In general, development organisations with a long-term commitment to project target communities, and who have integrated DRR into their overall development programmes, tend to achieve better results.</p>	<p><b>R8a:</b> All proposals should include detailed follow-up plans to explain measures that can ensure investments are sustainable beyond the end of DIPECHO funding cycles. [Operational - DG ECHO field offices]</p> <p><b>R8d:</b> While principally the responsibility of the partner, strategies and corresponding mechanisms need to be developed with support from DG ECHO for partners to work with other DRR stakeholders such as other EC Services, donors and government in order to provide financial and technical continuity to project communities [Strategic - DG ECHO field offices]</p>	
<b>Complementarity, Coordination and Coherence<sup>4</sup></b>		
<p><b>C10:</b> The DG ECHO initiative of bringing partners in the Dominican Republic together was very effective for sharing of experiences, methods and materials.</p>	<p><b>R10a:</b> DG ECHO should encourage similar opportunities and facilitate mechanisms; this is critical in a difficult environment such as Haiti. [Strategic/Operational–DG ECHO field offices]</p> <p><b>R10c:</b> Lesson learned and good practices from all projects, and in particular pilot projects, should be systematised and disseminated to all DRR stakeholders in the region including other EC services. [Operational – DG ECHO field offices]</p>	
<p><b>C11:</b> Coordination between EC Services in the area of DRR is limited. Little effort is being made</p>	<p><b>R11a:</b> While strategic and programmatic coherency and coordination is the responsibility of all the EC Services, DG ECHO should be more proactive in working with other EC Services in order to integrate</p>	

<sup>4</sup> Conclusions and recommendations for complementarity, coordination and coherence should be reviewed together with those for LRRD given the importance of the relationship between the two.

<p>by EC Services to coordinate strategies, plans and activities.</p>	<p>DRR issues and considerations in all planning. Priority should be given to improving relations with DG DEV and the Delegations (DG RELEX) [Strategic - DG ECHO in Brussels and through the field offices]  <b>R11b:</b> A comprehensive internal <i>advocacy strategy</i> and implementation plan needs to be developed by DG ECHO in order to enhance a better understanding of DIPECHO and the role of DRR and the planning process of all relevant EC Services, as well as external partners in the region.</p>	
<p><b>Linking Relief to Rehabilitation and Development</b></p>		
<p><b>C12:</b> LRRD is an important concept and initiative, but one which has received little operational attention from the EC in the region</p>	<p><b>R12a:</b> DRR is an important conceptual tool for LRRD. DG ECHO should ensure that all EC Services understand the term and advocate for its inclusion in all planning and programming. [Strategic/Operational – DG ECHO Brussels and the field offices]</p>	
<p><b>Links to National and Regional Initiatives</b></p>		
<p><b>C14:</b> While both DG ECHO and DIPECHO partners are active in supporting national DM strategies in the countries where they work, DG ECHO engagement at the regional level has been limited.</p>	<p><b>R14b:</b> DG ECHO should become more actively engaged in regional initiatives both because it is a principal DM stakeholder in the region and because of its responsibility to further a community based DRR agenda as a key component of reducing vulnerability. [Strategic–DG ECHO field offices]</p>	
<p><b>C15:</b> Given its importance as a humanitarian stakeholder and DIPECHO’s catalytic affect on other international donors, DG ECHO has an important role for furthering community based DRR with government, regional organisations, member states and other donors</p>	<p><b>R15a:</b> DG ECHO should become more engaged with other key donors and agencies such as DFID, CIDA, USAID the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) and the Association of Caribbean States (ACS) in coordinating DRR efforts</p>	

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE EVALUATION

### 1.1. DIPECHO Action Plans V and VI

20. Since 1999 DG ECHO has implemented six Action Plans (AP) in the Caribbean with a combined funding total of €16,875,00<sup>5</sup>, supporting 66 projects implemented by 21 different NGOs, UN agencies, academic institutions and government bodies. The objectives of AP V and VI are similar and principally aim to reduce the impact of future disasters in the Caribbean region by preparing vulnerable populations in the areas most affected by recurrent natural hazards. More specific objectives are those that support local communities and institutions to prepare for and to mitigate natural disasters by enhancing their capacities to cope, thereby increasing resilience and decreasing vulnerability. The programme focus of the two Action Plans was similar apart from the addition in AP VI of components regarding: 1) advocacy and public awareness raising; and 2) education.

### 1.2 European Commission Mandates on Disaster Risk Reduction

21. Disaster risk reduction (DRR) has been an increasing policy priority for the Commission since the nineties and is included in a number of Communications on Linking Relief, Rehabilitation and Development (2001); a Global Partnership for Sustainable Development (2002); and the EU Action Plan on Climate and Development (2004). The 2005 Hyogo Framework for Action provided further international focus and in February 2009 the Commission released a Communication regarding the EU strategy for supporting disaster risk reduction in developing countries. This further articulates the grounds for EU action on DRR, including the 2005 Consensus on Development and the 2007 European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid, both of which commit the EU to supporting DRR policy and action.

22. The Commission's Communications on climate change provide further grounds for its involvement in DRR (e.g. Climate Change in the context of development cooperation (2003)). This is especially true in the small island states (SIDS) of the Caribbean (e.g. Joint communiqué of CARIFORUM and EU (2008) and establishment of the Global Climate Change Alliance<sup>6</sup>).

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<sup>5</sup> DIPECHO 1 budget (Decision ECHO/TPS/219/1998/01000) included not just Caribbean, but also Central America and Southeast Asia

<sup>6</sup> Commission Communication: Building a Global Climate Change Alliance between the European Union and poor developing countries most vulnerable to climate change

### 1.3 Purpose and Objectives of the Evaluation

23. The regulatory basis for the evaluation can be found in Article 7 and Article 18 of Regulation (EC) 1257/96 concerning humanitarian aid and Article 27 of the Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) 1605/2002.<sup>7</sup>

24. The overall purpose of the evaluation as stated in the Terms of Reference is “*to assess the appropriateness of DIPECHO Actions, in accordance with DG ECHO’s mandate, its impact and sustainability in order to establish whether they have achieved their objectives and to produce recommendations for improving the effectiveness of future operations in the Caribbean in terms of disaster risk reduction.*”

25. As agreed during the briefing meeting with DG ECHO in Brussels the evaluation focuses on projects implemented under AP VI. Action Plan V projects which are included in the evaluation are limited to those also implemented by AP VI partners in the same countries. The evaluation addresses both operational and strategic components of DIPECHO; however, the focus is on strategic issues, specifically including:

- The design of Action Plans (relevance, impact, sustainability);
- How DIPECHO, as one of several Commission mechanisms, has applied LRRD and in particular with relation to EDF programmes in Haiti and the Dominican Republic;
- To what extent has DIPECHO’s partner advocacy and coordination mechanisms been successful, both internally and externally, in impacting EC cooperation in the region.

### 1.4 Methodology

26. The evaluation team visited a sample of four countries in the region: Dominica, Dominican Republic and Haiti and Barbados (see map at Annex C). Two projects were reviewed in Dominica and three in each of the Dominican Republic and Haiti. Barbados was visited to meet with regional DRR stakeholders. These countries were chosen as being representative of DIPECHO intervention projects at country and regional level. The Dominican Republic and Haiti were included because they received close to 50% of funding under both APs.

27. The evaluation team was made up of two core consultants and one additional consultant to support the work in Haiti. The methodologies used to gather information included:

- Documentation review: of EC/ECHO policy and strategy papers, guidelines, project appraisals, evaluations, funding decisions, and partner documentation;

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<sup>7</sup> Further details can be found on pp.11 of the evaluation Terms of Reference in Annex C

- Interviews with DG ECHO and other DG staff: in Brussels, Barbados, Dominican Republic and in Haiti. A full list of individuals interviewed is attached at Annex B;
- Interviews with national and regional stakeholders: including, Government agencies, project partners, regional organisations and other donors;
- Project field visits: including semi-structured interviews with project staff, local authorities and other stakeholders. In target communities, focus groups, simulations and role-play exercises also used;
- Project partner reviews (PPR): written and shared with each DIPECHO project partner, with their feedback included in the final PPR;
- Country summary reports: produced for Dominica, Dominican Republic and Haiti. The reports consolidate main findings, conclusions and analysis at the country level;
- DIPECHO partner and consultative meetings: the evaluation team participated in this prearranged session with all DIPECHO partners.

28. The evaluators faced some constraints during the evaluation. Firstly, access to community members was limited as a number of projects were already completed at the time of the evaluation. Secondly, up-to-date beneficiary and financial data was not always available as partners were still compiling their final reports. Evaluators therefore also used mid-project documentation and estimations based on information from partners. Finally, the limited amount of time for each project visit represented a constraint on the depth of information gathering.

## **2.0 EVALUATION OF THE PROJECTS**

### **2.1 Dominica**

29. Two projects in Dominica were reviewed. Firstly, the French Red Cross (FRC) who were working with the Dominica Red Cross (DRC) to reach 4,065 beneficiaries. The project focused on better equipping seven vulnerable communities to reduce the impact of disasters through organizing disaster preparedness committees, small mitigation projects and public awareness. And secondly, the Dominica segment of the regional PAHO project benefiting the entire population (approximately 70,000), by providing support to ensure the preparedness and safety of the only critical health facility on the island. The two projects are different in focus, but both feed into a very weak national disaster management system.

30. Both projects were relevant to communities, the partners' respective institutions, DIPECHO criteria, and institutional partners. The selection of communities and partners was made in collaboration with government and local partners. Communities were all located in high-risk areas.

31. The results of the projects in Dominica were mixed. There were, however, several successes that should support local authorities in their strategy to build safer communities. Key successes include:

- Hospital safety is improved. Repairs to the Princess Margaret Hospital will ensure service provision during disasters. Temporary shelters were improved and the target communities have improved services including water and sanitation.
- There is a clear understanding of the structural, non-structural and functional vulnerability of the hospital. Plans are in place to rectify identified weaknesses.
- Staff from the Ministries of Health, the National Disaster Office, the Department of Local Government, the Dominican Associations of Local Communities as well as members of targeted communities are all more aware and have tools and methodologies (manuals) that can be used to reduce risk.
- The simulation exercise organised by the FRC/DRC which enhanced cooperation between disaster management actors, as well as highlighting EC participation through DIPECHO.
- 100% of beneficiary targets were met in both projects. In the case of the FRC/DRC changes to the project resulted in a 45% increase of the number of beneficiaries from the original 2,800 to a final number of 4,065.

32. There are, however, some key areas that limit the success of the projects<sup>8</sup>.

- The lack of a comprehensive needs assessment before the project started meant FRC had to subsequently change the number of participating communities, beneficiaries and project activities. This negatively affected the project.
- More time was needed to ensure that learning was systematised and that beneficiaries were able to apply their new skills and knowledge. The focus on completing activities superseded quality of learning. The FRC/DRC project would have had more impact and met the 'pilot-project' nature of DIPECHO had they focused on doing less and doing it well.
- Both projects, while linked to longer-term processes, had no clear follow-up or exit strategy that will support the sustainability of the investments made. Neither is directly linked to development initiatives. There is a real risk that motivation will decrease and successes will be lost.
- Similarly, steps were not taken to ensure that institutional capacity gains would continue. It is unclear whether staff will continue to receive training or if plans will be updated at both the institutional and community levels after the closure of the projects. In the case of the FRC project institutional capacity building was severely constrained due to a lack of volunteers' participation in the project.
- Efficiency was quite high in terms of completing programmed tasks according to budget. However, the late changes made to the FRC/DRC project resulted in staff needing to focus more on completing the tasks, rather than quality and follow-up.

33. There are few potential partners in Dominica. Outside of government, the DRC is one of very few civil society organisations and the only one involved in DRR. No international NGOs have a permanent presence in the country and few have implemented projects. Synergy amongst diverse actors is irrelevant as there are none. However, there

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<sup>8</sup> Note that not all of these apply to both projects.

was cooperation between the two DIPECHO funded projects in that they shared a simulation exercise to test the impact of their respective interventions.

34. Culture must also be considered in the design of the project. In Dominica, volunteering is not common and there are few civil society groups. It can therefore be a challenge to motivate community members. Building a risk reduction culture takes time and in spite of high risk to several hazards, preparedness remains a low priority for communities.

## **2.2 Dominican Republic**

35. The three DIPECHO Action Plan IV supported projects (Intermón OXFAM, Asamblea de Cooperación por la Paz (ACPP) and Plan Internacional) all focused on: 1) community based disaster preparedness; 2) institutional strengthening and capacity building of local and municipal DM Committees; and 3) mitigation works related to temporary shelters and evacuation routes. In total, approximately 25,535 people in four urban and seven rural communities in four provinces of the country benefited from project activities.

36. The projects reviewed were similar in design and offered a good opportunity to assess several key issues pertinent to this evaluation including: impact of the projects in the target communities; DRR interventions as applied by development focused organisations within a context of LRRD; institutional cooperation between DIPECHO funded organisations in one country; and finally links between project strategies, formal DM structures and other DM stakeholders at the community and municipal levels

37. Two of the three APVI partners were new to DIPECHO and to the area of DRR at the community level. In essence, the project allowed the partners an opportunity to gain skills and knowledge through learning by doing. All implementing partners are also developing DRR policies and strategies as part of their overall planning processes.

38. The results of the Dominican Republic projects are impressive. Key successes include:

- DRR interventions are being linked to long-term development strategies and actions;
- Community-based organisations and community mobilisation has strengthened;
- Community-based disaster response teams formed, trained and equipped;
- Understanding of risks, vulnerabilities and preparedness actions on the part of community members has improved;
- Links between DRR stakeholders at the municipal levels (e.g. Civil Defence, Red Cross, Firefighters and municipal DM committee) initiated or strengthened;
- Community cohesion in physically, socially and economically highly vulnerable and multi-ethnic communities strengthened (the majority of the target communities included Dominicans as well as first and second-generation un-documented Haitians);

- The methodologies and materials utilised in all the projects were of high quality, effective and well received by the communities. They were also shared efficiently between the three partners (for example, many of the materials used by Plan were initially developed and tested by the IFRC in Central America with support from DIPECHO. These were then modified to meet the needs of project);
- In all cases the projects helped the DIPECHO and local partners to further develop and clarify their overall institutional DRR strategies and link to their overriding development objectives. This is consistent with the AP VI focus of working with organisations that “*incorporate the concept of disaster preparedness into their institutional strategy as well as those who have clearly defined long-term strategies.*” For example, Intermón Oxfam now has a full time risk management department and Plan now includes risk reduction in its overall global strategy;
- Mitigation projects were well thought out and executed and have addressed real needs.

39. The success of the projects was supported by actions and decisions made at the onset. For example, the projects were based on solid assessments, were implemented in high-risk communities severely affected by recent flooding and by local community based partners with long standing relationships with the target communities. Furthermore, DG ECHO piloted activities designed to facilitate cooperation between partners, including sharing of materials, systematisation of learning and the production of a ‘country document’.

40. However, there a number of important issues that, if considered more systematically, could have further increased the impact of the projects. Firstly, there is an assumption that because the partners have ongoing projects in the target communities follow-up will take place. There has been some thinking on next steps, but this needs to be formalised. Secondly, the Knowledge, Attitude and Practise (KAP) and Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment (VCA) were effective tools in improving learning and measuring impact, but provide only part of a comprehensive baseline. Other elements need to be included (inventories of infrastructure, cultural analysis, social and demographic data). Thirdly, use of the VCA seems to have been limited to natural hazard risk mapping (e.g. flooding) and mitigation projects. One of the strengths of the methodology is to identify the myriad of risks faced by the community (e.g. unsafe road crossings near schools, hanging power lines). And finally, the projects had ambitious activity schedules that impacted quality in some cases. For example, roles and responsibilities of the different elements of the community response teams were not always clear to their members.

41. An important consideration that should be noted is that while DIPECHO is not directly supporting national DM structures, it does support components of that system, namely at the community and municipal levels. In order to reduce risk at the community level it is crucial to strengthening the overall system or impact may be limited.

## 2.3 Haiti

42. The projects funded by DIPECHO's Action Plans V and VI in Haiti focused on: 1) community based disaster preparedness and public awareness; 2) formation and capacity building of local and commune level Disaster Management Committees; and 3) mitigation projects. OXFAM GB, French Red Cross and Concern projects were reviewed during the field visits. The total number of direct and indirect beneficiaries under AP VI was 83,513<sup>9</sup>.

43. Haiti faces important challenges in disaster risk reduction. The country is prone to a myriad of slow and rapid onset disasters, both natural and human created - including chronic levels of violence and social unrest - with the impact of one often exacerbating others. Vulnerability is high and natural disasters exacerbate vulnerabilities such as extreme poverty, deep inequality, a weak state, a lack of infrastructure and almost complete environmental degradation. This situation is further complicated by poor coping strategies at all levels, a culture of aid dependency and an absence of an effective government and civil society organisations.

44. It is critical to place the analysis of any intervention, whether funded by DG ECHO or any other donor, within this context. Haiti is not an easy place to work and its particular situation necessitates creative programmes to address these underlying factors.

45. The projects reviewed were similar in their objectives, but varied in approach. They offered the opportunity to assess several pertinent issues including: the value of direct versus indirect support to the state and of working independently or through local partners; project sustainability in the absence of strong government and civil society; the role and relevance of DRR as a stand alone community intervention within a context of extreme poverty and high need; and finally, the cumulative impact of consecutive DIPECHO funded projects

46. All three of the implementing partners reviewed had projects funded under both AP V and VI. In the case of two of the partners, both had implemented previous DIPECHO projects as well. The results of the projects are mixed. Key successes include:

- State structures were strengthened - All community disaster management committees formed through the Concern and Oxfam projects are part of Directorate for Civil Protection (DCP) structure
- Sixty-nine local and municipal Disaster Committees created and trained;
- Civil society strengthened where little existed previously - Disaster management committees formed by the FRC, were the only organised community group in many of the project's target communities
- Community understanding of risks, vulnerabilities and preparedness enhanced
- Mitigation projects, which often served multiple purposes, implemented

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<sup>9</sup> This is based on information provided in relevant documentation. There is some issue as to the differentiation of direct and indirect beneficiaries.

47. However, successes were limited due to weakness in project design, approach, or because not enough consideration was given to the context of the country. The following key areas were found to be key to addressing greater impact:

- While disasters are a very real and dangerous part of community life in Haiti, they remain a lower priority than issues such as livelihood, health, and infrastructure (as demonstrated through VCA). The value of implementing stand-alone DRR initiatives in isolation from broader development interventions can therefore be questioned. DRR projects did offer an opportunity for community mobilisation that can lead to addressing other issues, but this was not made explicit in project strategies;
- While direct support to state structures is strategically valid, it is not sustainable if the state itself does not have the capacity and resources to continue these initiatives.
- Project objectives and activities were not always effectively communicated to authorities
- The extent of project activities was very ambitious, which reduced effectiveness and ultimately impact. For example, the FRC project supported 21 local committees and created 3 new ones. The logistics of visiting so many communities, let alone training committees in each one, reduces the quality of the process and by extension project impact;
- The KAP study and VCA were good initiatives both in terms of learning and for measuring impact. However, as already discussed, other elements need to be included to ensure a comprehensive data set;
- Unlike the other two projects, Oxfam did not work through a local partner and at project end has no follow up plans with the committees. Although there is a promise of support from the Departmental (Provincial) level of the Civil Protection Committee (DPC) it is clear that they will not be able to provide real on-going support to the committees. This strategy may be efficient in terms of activity implementation but is less so in organisational strengthening and capacity building of the newly formed DPC committees;
- There was little evidence in the Oxfam and FRC projects of the cumulative impact of several consecutive DIPECHO funded projects (despite continuity in the use of methods and materials).
- The committees, at all levels, did not appear to be very operational in the sense that they could respond to disasters should they occur. For example, none of the members in any of the communities visited were able to describe how they would do a systematic damage assessment.

## 2.4 Sustainability

48. The lack of clearly articulated follow up strategies is putting project sustainability at risk. In almost all the projects it remains unclear as to who would actually do follow-up and with what resources. Stated intentions had not resulted in systemic changes to ensure continuity. For example, neither of FRC's partners in Dominica and Haiti have the resources for follow-up let alone new initiatives. In Haiti FRC supported or created 24

community and/or municipal disaster committees, which will require considerable resources to maintain<sup>10</sup>.

49. Many of the projects are supporting national, municipal and local DM structures, which as permanent bodies established by law, should enhance sustainability. For example, in Haiti, two of the three projects have followed the National Direction of Civil Protection's guidelines for certification and 36 committees have been recognized.

50. However, the evaluation team found that even with this level of integration, a lack of following up planning and institutional support within the project design was limiting sustainability. For example, whilst the DPC in Haiti recognizes the positive impact of DIPECHO projects on reinforcing national disaster management structures (especially at the municipal and community levels), they acknowledge not having the resources required to support the community committees created through these projects. This finding was reinforced by the lack of evidence in the Oxfam and FRC (Haiti) projects of the cumulative impact of several consecutive DIPECHO funded projects.

51. The field visits clearly demonstrated that the impacts of initiatives were more sustainable when incorporated into long-term community development. For example, all three projects in the Dominican Republic, as well as Concern in Haiti, had mainstreamed DRR into their development programming. However, it is still necessary to develop a well-defined follow-up strategy for ongoing institutional learning and skill development.

52. The evaluation found that strong local partners were also a key component for project sustainability. For example, a failure to institutionalise project processes into the Dominican Red Cross coupled with a general weak 'volunteer culture' in Dominica does not bode well for continuity. Conversely, all projects in the Dominican Republic and Concern in Haiti had strong local partners that have taken the successes of the DIPECHO projects and included DRR into their ongoing programming. The continuation of these projects is not dependent on any of the international DIPECHO partners.

53. The level of institutional or community ownership in projects was also found to be critical for sustainability. For example, the Princess Margaret hospital in Dominica invested their own funds in mitigation projects identified by the PAHO project. In addition there has been a request made by the Permanent Secretary of Health to apply a modified Health Safety Index (HSI) process to 53 health centres throughout the country. The PAHO HSI project is part of a long-term (2008-2012 strategy) that contemplates ongoing activities throughout this period and is reinforced by support from Caribbean regional health ministers. The inclusion of project activities on such political agendas increases potential sustainability and demonstrates the need for effective advocacy of this kind.

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<sup>10</sup> FRC in Haiti will continue to fund project activities for an additional six months. While this is a good initiative, project sustainability will be in no better position once this supplementary funding is exhausted.

## 2.5 Link between Relief, Rehabilitation and Development<sup>11</sup>

54. Examples of linking preparedness, relief and rehabilitation through financial mechanisms was observed by the team; for example, all partners funded through DIPECHO AP V and VI received emergency funds during either 2007 or 2008.<sup>12</sup>

55. Most development focused DIPECHO partners (Concern, ACPP, OXFAM GB, Plan, Intermón Oxfam) have ‘naturally’ built DRR into their ongoing long-term development strategies and policies. For example, Concern includes DRR in all their programming and has identified Haiti as a pilot country for implementing new policies and practices. Concern places emphasis on linking all their projects to overall communities’ development and contributing to strengthening civil society. The DIPECHO project is part of Concern’s overall five-year (2007-2012) strategy.

56. This trend is, in part, due to the internal realisation by such NGOs of the disruptive impact disasters can have on development programmes, rather than any response to EC LRRD communications or guidance. The evaluation team considers that the apparent disconnect between relief and development witnessed in the region in some projects, may also be due to a lack of guidance on the part of DG ECHO regarding LRRD.

57. OXFAM GB has made significant progress globally, given their dual humanitarian and development mandate, to integrate DRR into their longer-term development process. However, this was not evident in the projects visited by the evaluation team in Haiti. Linking the project to programming that addresses priority community concerns such as livelihoods may have provided a greater opportunity to link risk reduction to a larger community development process, thereby increasing its impact and sustainability.

58. In general, humanitarian organisations have found it more challenging to integrate development into their overall approaches than development organisations have to include DRR into theirs. For example, development is not a priority of Red Cross programming (although the linking of DM to development through a DRR framework is taking on increasing importance in the RCRC movement). The RC projects visited were focused specifically on preparedness activities, although there were some linkages to development, such as the protection of water sources in Haiti and in general community organising through their preparedness initiatives. In Dominica the relations created between the FRC project and the District Development Officers may also link project activities to longer-term development initiatives. However, this was not something highlighted either in the design or activities of the project.

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<sup>11</sup> The LRRD discussion presented is limited to projects and partners. A more detailed analysis of LRRD as a component of the APs can be found in sections 3.6 and 3.7

<sup>12</sup> Information through internal ECHO documentations

## 2.6 Lessons Learned

59. The implementing and local partners highlighted several key lessons learned during the field visits; these can be summarised as follows:

- More in depth activities in fewer communities is likely to ensure that quality is maintained and that the knowledge and skills gained are better institutionalised (e.g. mentoring). Too many activities in the short time span of DIPECHO projects does not encourage an in-depth understanding of risks and vulnerabilities or of the means to address them, nor does it promote sustainability
- Knowledge and skills are more likely to be retained if the project includes activities where communities can put these into practice. For example communities can practice mobilisation skills and event organisations through the implementation of community workdays or simulation exercises;
- Coordination with government and local stakeholders is critical for legitimacy and sustainability. All local level initiatives *must* link to the larger national disaster management system;
- It is critical to get commitment from local partners and other participating stakeholders prior to commencing the project; This helps to ensure everybody is clear on roles and responsibilities and avoids delays in a very short DIPECHO project timeframe
- Quality baseline data including participatory needs assessments and a historical understanding of other similar interventions are a critical component of building relevant and sustainable projects;
- The use of tested methodologies and tools saves time and increases efficiency. There is insufficient time to create new materials within DIPECHO project cycles.
- Mitigation projects are probably the most motivating of all activities for communities. However, time is needed for adequate planning and execution. If done too quickly they do not allow communities to assume ownership, learn project management and then apply this knowledge and skills to other projects and initiatives
- The volunteer nature of the community members input must be stressed in order to avoid misunderstanding and avoid creating conflict. This message needs constant repetition. In general there is a need to be highly aware of the potential to politicise the projects
- The use of culturally appropriate methods and materials for community awareness programmes and instruction was particularly effective (e.g. 'Rara' groups in Haiti).

## 2.7 Good practice

60. There was a plethora of good practices observed by the team across the different projects. Documenting these allows not only for sharing successes, but provides an opportunity for partners to take what has worked for others and then modify, adapt and apply these to their own programmatic context. The best practices, summarized in Annex F, include all areas evaluated and range from project design to mitigation projects. The categories of good practice can be described as follows:

- Operational aspects of DRR – preparedness and mitigation projects and interventions, which directly reduce vulnerability, such as the building of drainage canals around town markets as part of the OXFAM GB project in Haiti which served to ensure not only evacuation routes but protected livelihoods as well;
- Capacity building that impact both community level structures as well as higher-level institutions of the state such as the joint training of municipal disaster committees and local disaster committees using members as facilitators, as part of the ACPD project in the DR;
- Information sharing and dissemination such as the process facilitated by DG ECHO in the DR for partners to share and systematise methods and materials for wide dissemination;
- Project design such as the use of multiple household visits using personalized training methodologies (e.g. conversation, role play, song) as implemented in the IO project in the DR;
- Public awareness and education such as the well-planned ‘Awareness Day’ events implemented by the FRC in Haiti. These are events that helped to build community pride while educating about risk reduction. Activities made use of local knowledge to transfer key messages (e.g. drama, song, dance);
- Sustainability through DRR training of government District Development Officers in Dominica, to be included in their ongoing responsibilities as part of the FRC projects

### 3.0 EVALUATION OF THE DIPECHO ACTION PLANS V and VI

#### 3.1 Relevance

61. Both AP V and VI are relevant given the high-risk nature of the region and the focus on addressing needs of vulnerable people in the most high-risk communities. This was reinforced by the occurrence of severe flooding during the AP timeframes affecting all the project communities in Haiti and the Dominican Republic. DIPECHO is, therefore, relevant to communities. Moreover, DIPECHO remains relevant, even essential, in that it is one of very few funding sources for DRR initiatives in the region that targets the community level.

62. AP V and VI are also relevant to DG ECHO's mandates as well as the various policy documents and communications issued by the EC on preparedness and DRR. It can be argued that it is mainly through DIPECHO that most of these EC initiatives are implemented, demonstrating the relevance of the project not only in reducing vulnerability but also in mainstreaming disaster risk reduction throughout the EC.

63. The emphasis on supporting pilot projects that lead to replicability remains relevant. However, while there is much rhetoric around DIPECHO being based on a pilot project approach, it does not always seem to be a priority. There are examples of partners, such as the FRC in Haiti, implementing similar projects with funding from consecutive APs with the only major difference being location, which calls into question the piloting nature of the funding. Part of the 'problem' is that DIPECHO ends up funding projects that are not necessarily pilot in nature simply because it represents one of few funding sources for DRR in the region.

64. The inclusion of the criteria of working with those organisations that "*incorporated the concept of disaster preparedness into their institutional strategy as well as those who have clearly defined long-term strategies*"<sup>13</sup> represents an important progression in DIPECHO AP design and one which has been taken seriously in the region. This bodes well for increased project impact and sustainability.

65. The 14 Strategic Programming Imperatives, as well as the ten priority activity areas (AP VI) are all relevant for meeting the overall objectives of the programme. Most projects focused on several of the activity the areas and whilst research and dissemination was the least-well applied in practice, the initiative of creating a DRR 'country document,' designed to provide partners with the information needed to select geographic intervention areas based on clear criteria, is an important step to increasing relevance (see also under impact and effectiveness).

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<sup>13</sup> This recommendation comes out of *The Evaluation of DIPECHO Action Plans in the Caribbean Region* published in December, 2004

66. All the projects visited engaged in infrastructure support and/or small-scale mitigation projects. In almost all cases these served to increase motivation of community members as well as meet real needs. However, while disasters are a very real part of community life in Haiti, the relevance of stand-alone DRR projects in isolation of broader development interventions needs to be seriously examined in such a context. While DRR projects may offer an opportunity for community mobilisation it is far from clear that this justifies a stand-alone project rather than more multi-disciplinary approaches.

### 3.2 Efficiency

67. Most of the projects funded under the AP were based on solid assessments. The better assessments were carried out by the development-oriented partners (such as Intermón OXFAM, Plan International and Concern) given their long history with the target communities. The lowest efficiency was with those projects where limited assessment was made. In the case of one project (FRC in Dominica) this resulted in major changes to the original proposal.

68. In recognition of the importance of good baseline information for planning and for measuring impact DG ECHO introduced a requirement for all projects to carry out a KAP study. This was a good initiative, but while the studies provide very important information, they often do not represent complete baseline picture of the community.

69. The evaluation team observed that levels of efficiency increase according to the strength of the local partners both in terms of their relations to the target communities as well as their DRR capacities and skills. Strong local partners that have a history with communities and high levels of trust are able to engage the community more quickly in project activities.

70. One exception to this was Oxfam GB who actually implemented the community using their own structures and staff. Strong staff are critical and the presence of skilled expatriate staff helps, for the most part, to ensure quality implementation although this requirement does increase overall administrative costs substantially.

71. In Haiti there are relatively few partners for DG ECHO to work with that have a DRR focus making selection both an administrative and programmatic issue in that on the one hand, there are funds that should be spent in order to address real needs but there are not enough quality partners to choose from.

72. In many cases partners have not found a proper balance between the quantity of activities they propose and the DIPECHO timeframe. Some were ambitious in terms of the scale of activities. Most partners continue to voice the need to increase the length of projects rather than tailor their projects to the criteria. Those that have been most successful in finding a balance are the organisations that use DIPECHO to advance components of much more comprehensive development processes, funded by other donors.

73. DG ECHO has always been flexible in granting extensions when natural disasters occurred during the course of the project (e.g. during AP VI in both the Dominican Republic and Haiti). This flexibility helped to ensure not only the successful completion of the projects, but has a positive influence on impact given that communities can more readily relate project activities to their own lives when suffering from natural disasters directly.

74. The consultative nature in which the DG ECHO office works with partners in everything from establishing guidelines for the new AP decisions, to providing support to proposal writing to ongoing monitoring visits, is well appreciated and supports successful projects. Partners found the new mid-project format introduced by DG ECHO to be particularly useful.

75. It was not possible to assess overall project cost efficiency because final data was not available. However, analysis based on mid-term reports indicates the projects spent the funds where they said they would in an efficient and transparent manner.

76. Mitigation projects were generally very cost effective because much of the labour was voluntarily provided by community members. In several projects, however, community members were given a minimal stipend, either in cash or in kind, to ensure participation. This has created debate amongst partners and DG ECHO. On the one hand it reduces a sense of community ownership while on the other poverty levels are high and any work done implies payment. This is certainly the case in Haiti.

### **3.3 Effectiveness**

77. While there were some delays, partners were largely able to implement their planned activities in an effective manner. As mentioned previously, some projects included too many activities and therefore tended to compromise the quality and potential impact of interventions.

78. The projects were, in general, successful in building on existing community knowledge and in using project activities as a means for structuring and systematising this knowledge and skills into more effective preparedness and response mechanisms. However, this was not apparent in those project implemented by partners who had received consecutive funding. In Haiti neither the FRC nor Oxfam GB projects seemed to have had a cumulative impact. Communities visited by the team that were part of both action plans could not easily link what was done in AP V with activities in AP VI. In addition few community members who were active in AP V participated in activities of AP VI.

79. Initiatives implemented at the local level were an effective means of building community coping strategies and increasing resilience. In most cases, projects were also effectively linked to larger national DM structures (though not necessarily at the national level). However, in some cases the system itself was very weak and linkages were made without any support or strategy aimed at strengthening that system. This ultimately

reduced the effectiveness of these community-based actions. Large-scale and well organised public awareness campaigns such as those carried out by the FRC in Haiti were effective in terms of mobilising community members and educating community members.

80. There is an increasing awareness and recognition that school based programmes are one of the most effective means for reducing risk and investing in the creation of a 'risk reduction culture;' This was mentioned during several presentations at the partners meetings held in the Dominican Republic (DR). A good example is the ACPP project. School children demonstrated their knowledge during a simulation exercise carried out during the field visit as well as incorporating risk reduction messages into song they themselves wrote.

81. The projects were, for the most part, effective in bringing local and municipal government and NGO actors together. This was the case in all the communities in the Dominican Republic. In Dominica the FRC project was very successful in training District Development Officer in DRR, which they could use in their ongoing work. The materials produced also supported the government in replicating the work done although there were issues as to resource availability.

82. The DG ECHO regional team played a crucial role in facilitation and bringing together international and local partners for the purpose of planning and sharing methodologies, materials and experiences. These efforts increased the effectiveness of the tools, methodologies and strategies used by partners. Arguably it has also increased the relevance of their actions in communities.

### **3.4 Sustainability**

83. The need for implementing community-based DRR programming in the Caribbean is obvious. In this sense DIPECHO clearly fills a niche that few others have done, although new donors are becoming more active in addressing these themes. If DIPECHO is to run its course (exit) then the strategies and activities it promotes would need to be taken on by another EC Service or other donors. The evaluation team did not see any other EC Service able to do this at this time.

84. The issue of an exit strategy for DIPECHO was highlighted in the 2004 Evaluation of DIPECHO Plans in the Caribbean and was reiterated during several interviews with DG ECHO staff. To date no exit strategy has been developed.

85. Field visits, especially those related to AP V, clearly demonstrated that a lack of articulated follow-up strategies jeopardises sustainability. While DIPECHO proposals require the partner to include a sustainability or exit strategy, there is little evidence that any follow-up monitoring is done. This speaks directly to ensuring the long-term impact of investments.

86. The recently held partner and consultative meetings included participatory processes to improve DIPECHO both strategically and operationally; this evolution suggests that DIPECHO will remain in the region at least for the foreseeable future. In fact, the guidelines for DIPECHO VII are in their final stages of development.

87. Successive APs have become more detailed and explicit, making it easier for partners to understand DIPECHO criteria and requirements. Partners have also improved their capacity to build realistic logframes although there is still work to be done in this area.

### **3.5 Impact**

88. The V and VI Action Plans have had significant impact on the lives of poor communities in vulnerable areas of the region. For example, during the four Hurricanes that hit the island of La Gonave during August and September 2008, only six deaths were reported in target communities, compared to more than 24 during events in 2006. People on the island attribute this in large part, to the better prepared DPC committees that were formed under DIPECHO V and/or VI (in one of the communities visited at least 50 people were moved by the DPC to temporary shelters identified by the project).

89. While there are many factors involved in each disaster, it is reasonable to conclude that fewer lives have been lost as a result of the DIPECHO funded projects, although it is difficult if not impossible to provide direct evidence of such a correlation. The capacity of a DRR intervention to reduce structural risk and vulnerability is, by itself, hard to assess. There is such a prevailing need to address broader poverty related indicators (i.e. health, nutrition) that communities may be hard pressed to maintain their focus on disaster related initiatives.

90. Mitigation projects were effective in addressing real needs in the community as well as for motivating people. Those projects that met multiple needs and had an immediate impact on people's lives were the most successful. In many of the projects formal municipal DM structures have been directly strengthened or created and coordination and cooperation between DM stakeholders improved significantly.

91. An important indicator of impact is whether the knowledge and skills acquired by community disaster committee members has been adapted and used to address other community issues. For example, Local Risk Management Committee (LRMC) members from the communities that participated in the ACPP project in the DR have revitalised other community committees. In addition, the three target communities have begun to work together which did not happen before the project. In the community of Esperanza all members of the LRMC speak Creole. The normally marginalised Haitian members of the communities are active in the LRMC

92. Not all the results from the second KAP survey were available, but data already analysed indicates that community disaster committees and community members are now

more aware of disaster effects, risks, and vulnerabilities and of the steps needed to minimize impact of disasters. Ongoing awareness campaigns, the collective development of emergency plans and the planning and implementation of mitigation projects have all been particularly important and effective in this process. The KAP tool is a good start in harmonising indicators that can be used for measuring impact, but there remains a lack of applicable and realistic impact indicators.

93. As well as having impact at community level, the DIPECHO APs were successful in capacity building of partners and their local counterparts in DRR. For example, Intermón Oxfam used what had been learned in AP V to improve activities in AP VI. They also used trained community leaders from the former project for training in the latter. The project has helped Plan International to develop their DRR policy and strategy for the region.

94. In spite of the largely positive findings of the evaluation team, there is an underlying lack of systematic information demonstrating the cumulative impact of ten years of DIPECHO programming in the region (i.e. 'rigorous' proof of impact). The ability to demonstrate the impact of DIPECHO, is critical for several reasons: to assess whether there has been any sustainable reduction in vulnerability of affected populations, to ensure the continuation of DIPECHO within an increasing competitive EC funding environment; to demonstrate the value of DRR interventions to other EC services (e.g. to promote LRRD); to link DIPECHO to national and regional initiatives of other donors; and to gain a better understanding of the impact of multi-year funded projects.

95. The cumulative impact of projects implemented by some partners who have received consecutive cycles of DIPECHO funding is questionable. Some use DIPECHO as a 'one-shot per 15 month' funding tool for projects that, while important, do not necessarily link to long-term strategies.

### 3.6 Complementarity, Coordination and Coherence

96. There is a strong relationship between complementarity, coordination and coherence, and the implementation of LRRD. Within an EC context, improvements in one are dependent on improvements in the other. As such sections 3.6 and 3.7 should be read as two parts of one interrelated analysis.

97. The team observed little in the way of complementarity, coherence and coordination (CCC) across EC Services in the course of the fieldwork. While mechanisms exist for sharing information and planning<sup>14</sup>, there are no formal structures. In the context of the Caribbean region it appears that the different EC instruments generally do not coordinate in a systematic way, and when there is improved communication it is more

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<sup>14</sup> Mechanisms include: regular meetings with member states and EU services (steering committee), fora to discuss DRR, humanitarian committee, country team committee, annual operational reviews (DG Dev), mission reports (field) and consultative meetings (field)

often due to the interest of specific individuals. Rhetoric on CCC has not been followed up by concrete actions; this would appear to hold true within DG ECHO itself as well as between DG ECHO and other EC Services.

98. Few concrete strategies exist for promoting DIPECHO either within DG ECHO or within other EC services such as the DG DEV. or the EC Delegations For example there is a new project being developed by the Delegation in Barbados, which has a strong rescue and recovery component, but DG ECHO is not meaningfully involved. However, the recent Communication on the EU strategy for supporting DRR should go along way to providing a policy framework to improve this situation<sup>15</sup>.

99. Despite this general situation, the team did find that DRR was prominent in the use of non-expended funds during modifications made to the 9<sup>th</sup> EDF for the Dominican Republic at the mid-project review. Much of the impetus for this €6.5 million Euro allocation was due to an effective lobbying plan by the DG ECHO office. However, while they were successful in getting these themes onto the agenda, they were subsequently marginalised in the planning process. It was, in many ways, more a question of 'being in the right place at the right time' than the result of a structured strategy or because DRR is a priority. This apparent disconnect may also be due to the fact that DG ECHO works primarily with NGO partners, whereas DG DEV works almost exclusively through government in the region.

100. There appears to be little continuation of DRR as a priority programming area in the 10<sup>th</sup> EDF for the Dominican Republic. In the Country Strategy Paper and National Indicative Programme 2008-2013, there is only reference to what was done through EDF 9. While it is noted that future opportunities still exist to included DRR in programming through envelope B during the mid-project review (as occurred during the 9<sup>th</sup> EDF), it seems that DRR is neither a priority of the DG Dev, the Delegation in the Dominican Republic nor, most importantly, of the government. This demonstrates the need for a more aggressive programme, on the part of DG ECHO and DIPECHO partners, and indeed other EC services, to 'sell' the importance of DRR to all major decision making stakeholders, especially government.

101. In Haiti, the strengthening of DCP at the provincial and municipal levels is being supported through funds from the EDF. This process, along with overall DRR support to the government, is being coordinated with the World Bank, UNDP and IADB. There is a move on the part of the government to have each of the major donors become more sector specific (e.g. infrastructure, agriculture). The EC Delegation has identified the need for improved coordination amongst donors as well as within the EC. DRR is seen as an area where coordination can be improved in order to enhance impact.

102. In addition to the collaboration on contextual information and materials between DIPECHO partners (e.g. the Country Report and coordination over methodologies in the

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<sup>15</sup> EC Communication 'EU Strategy for Supporting Disaster Risk Reduction in Developing Countries' Brussels, 23 February 2009

Dominican Republic), there were also instances where sharing occurred between DIPECHO and EDF funded projects. For example, OXFAM in Haiti using materials developed under its DIPECHO funding in its EDF funded project. In the Dominican Republic, the Community Based Disaster Preparedness component of "Preparación y Prevención a Desastres" (PPD) project funded by the EDF also incorporates many of the methodologies and tools developed through DIPECHO projects. For example, the Dominican Red Cross uses Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment, Safe Schools and simulation exercises.

103. There was institutional and regional cooperation within and between DIPECHO-funded agencies in the production of materials and development of methodologies. For example, Plan International used materials adapted from their offices in Panama, which in turn were modified from IFRC produced materials as part of a regional DIPECHO project in Central America.

104. In the locations of the projects visited in Haiti there were very few other organisations working so duplication of services was not an issue. However, in La Gonave, Concern has a signed partnership agreement with World Vision, which includes the joint implementation of emergency responses and the creation of the Platform for Development of Gonâve with representation from community groups, faith based organizations and local authorities. The platform is chaired by the Mayor. Project information, surveys and lesson learned are shared to create synergies and avoid duplication.

105. In the English speaking Caribbean there was some coordination between selected member states as well as other donors. Coordination efforts with both DFID and CIDA have improved mostly due to changes in staff at the Delegation in Barbados. Both DFID and CIDA, who are increasingly taking on a bigger role in DRR, mentioned the need for DG ECHO to take on a higher profile in regional initiatives

106. The DG ECHO office also coordinates efforts with the Spanish Cooperation Office (AECID) especially in the Dominican Republic and Haiti

### **3.7 Linking Relief, Rehabilitation and Development**

107. Results in the area of LRRD have been mixed during the AP V and VI. In general it appears that the partners are applying their own 'form' of LRRD rather than basing their efforts on EC strategies. While LRRD is taking on a more important role in DIPECHO guidelines and the DG ECHO staff is 'pushing' an LRRD agenda, this has not translated into supporting partners in making this link.

108. There is an increasing recognition in the EC that LRRD is an important concept and one that needs to be taken more seriously. This is, in part, due to the increasing profile that DRR assumes within the EC more broadly.<sup>16</sup> However there are still significant

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<sup>16</sup> Examples of these include the Communication on an EU strategy for supporting disaster risk reduction in

challenges to operationalise LRRD including developing and institutionalising coordination mechanisms.

109. Promoting LRRD is not solely the work of DG ECHO. The apparent lack of progress is a responsibility shared by all EC Services in the Caribbean. None are actively working to better coordinate between EC Services as part of institutionalising LRRD. This further demonstrates the link between CCC and LRRD and how one affects the other.

110. While there are examples of DRR in the work funded by other EC Services (e.g. 9<sup>th</sup> EDF in the DR and Haiti, DG DEV support for climate change and EWS in the Caribbean and EC funding of CDERA, ), this is not the result of a systematic LRRD approach across the different EC Services.

111. While it is beyond the scope of this document to evaluate the EDF projects, the evaluation team is of the opinion that stronger coordination between different EC Services in the development, planning and monitoring of the programme would have resulted in greater impact. In the Dominican Republic, for example, the initiative appeared to be more a series of projects than a well integrated DRR programme. Given that the community based projects were, in part, extensions of DIPECHO projects funded under AP V, active participation of DG ECHO may have resulted in a more effective overall programme. This failure of this to occur is another example of how limited internal CCC within the EC constrains the effective implementation of LRRD in practice.

112. While linkage is a priority in AP guidelines<sup>17</sup> little progress has been made to support partners to understand the various EC funding options and how to gain access to them. Partners interviewed in the region voiced the opinion that the EC, apart from DG ECHO, was hard to penetrate. There is no indication that DIPECHO funding systematically leads to other EC funding instruments, although there are at least two examples of where DIPECHO-funded projects have gone on to be funded through the EDF (Spanish Red Cross and Oxfam GB).

113. The DG ECHO office in the Caribbean views preparedness as the first response action. In this sense there is good relationship between preparedness and relief. This is evident that in the last two years all current DIPECHO partners have also received DG ECHO emergency funds during times of disaster. In addition, DRR is becoming increasingly integrated into humanitarian response actions as evidenced in a recent mainstreaming evaluation, which included the Dominican Republic<sup>18</sup>.

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developing countries (February 2009)

<sup>17</sup> Strategic Programming Imperative 4 is titled “Complementarities with other co-operation instruments of the European Commission” with particular attention on programmes implemented under the EDF in the region

<sup>18</sup> ‘Evaluation of Disaster Risk Reduction Mainstreaming in DG ECHO’s Humanitarian Actions’ Aguaconsult Ltd. (June, 2008)

114. The link between preparedness activities and development varies depending on the nature of the partner organisation. Those with a development focus have been more successful in making this link through integrating the projects into their longer-term community development programmes. In essence, the DIPECHO project is one component of a larger development programme. This was the case for all the projects in the Dominican Republic as well as Concern in Haiti.

115. It has been more of a challenge for humanitarian organisations simply because they may not have a longer-term development mandate. However, all the organisations have attempted to link their programmatic approach and activities to development based on a DRR approach.<sup>19</sup>

### **3.8 Cross Cutting Issues**

116. All of the partners included gender issues in their projects focusing on women's participation, especially in decision-making roles, which was promoted in all projects. Between 29% and 35% of all committee members in all the projects were women. In the case of Oxfam, women's organisations have been integrated into all disaster committees and 100 of the 381 committee or brigade members trained are women. In Dominica, PAHO ensured that all training teams were gender balanced.

117. A cornerstone of the FRC project in Dominica was the creation of the community Disaster Management Committee (DMC), which is the responsibility of the Ministry of Community Development and Gender Affairs. The responsibility to ensure women participate in decision-making roles is taken seriously by the government.

118. In all countries working with children was a priority and provided an excellent opportunity for impact in creating a risk reduction culture, principally through planned school programmes. Children rights are a key component in all Plan International programming and their participation in the project was a priority.

119. The emergency and contingency plans resulting from the Hospital Safety Index placed priority on special populations such as elderly, mentally and physically disabled people.

120. Environmental issues were prominent in all projects. The FRC in Haiti, for example included environmental issues in weekly radio programming and radio spots. Oxfam promoted environmental management issues as a part of the community sensitisation campaign and through signboards placed in each community and all three organisations in Haiti carried out environmental assessments for all mitigation projects

121. The one area that surprisingly was not given high priority in either AP was climate change. This appears to be not so much because it is not considered important, but rather

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<sup>19</sup> It should be noted that DRR is defined differently by each of the partners DRR amongst partners

that the different partners are still determining corporate policy and strategies for climate change and its role in their DRR programming

### 3.9 Take up of Recommendations

#### *Take up of recommendation from previous evaluations of Caribbean Action Plans*

122. In the executive summary of the 2001 evaluation there are eight principle recommendations; in the 2004 evaluation 14 recommendations are identified and an additional 19 recommendations from ‘Guidelines for ECHO’s DPP strategy – a proposal.’ Many of these recommendations have been implemented; chief amongst these are:

- Project selection is based on a better assessment of risks, vulnerabilities and needs in each country. In addition technical appraisals of each proposal have improved.
- Dialogue and support provided by DG ECHO in the Caribbean to partners continues to improve.
- AP guidelines continue to improve, making it easier for partners to submit appropriate proposals.
- Baseline data, as part of submitted proposals, is improving but still requires further effort.
- Increased priority is being given to partners with longer-term DRR strategies and stronger links to development.
- Improved focus on proposals that form part of an ongoing programmes rather than simply projects.

123. However, there are a number of recurring themes from both these evaluations, as well as from this current exercise, which require further action (see a full summary of take-up of recommendations in Annex E). Key amongst those recommendations that have not so far been fully addressed include:

- Issues pertaining to LRRD – while examples exist of EC Services integrating relief and rehabilitation into development (e.g. DG DEV funding for EWS and climate change), this has not been systematic and through the participation of the different EC Services.
- Relations between DG ECHO and other EC Services – specifically the need for all EC Services to improve relations under the umbrella of LRRD.
- Coordination with other donors – all EC Services, and in particular DG ECHO, need to take a more proactive role in coordinating humanitarian actions with other donors.
- Role of advocacy – a clear understanding of DIPECHO both within the EC and with others is still limited.
- Role of institutional capacity building at national levels – the DG ECHO Caribbean office has taken the strategic decision to focus more on institutional capacity building at the municipal and local levels. All the evaluations to date have stressed the need to include national level capacity building as well in order to increase long-term impact and sustainability.

- Replication of projects – all the evaluations have highlighted the original objective of DIPECHO as funding pilot projects and insisting on replicability. This has not been done in an effective manner to date.
- Need to develop appropriate impact indicators – emphasis in all the evaluations points to the need to measure the impact of specific projects as well as 10 years of DIPECHO programming based on clearly understood and applied impact indicators. This has not as of yet occurred.

124. The fact that these themes present themselves in three consecutive evaluations suggests that the issues raised are, in fact, worthy of additional consideration including ensuring that adequate means are made available for implementing solutions. Some of the recommendations have not been acted upon although recognised as important, principally due to a heavy workloads of staff coupled with the fact they require significant input from a range of people and staff already is over-committed. An example would be the development of a comprehensive advocacy strategy and plan. Of course, as in the case of most evaluations, not all recommendations are accepted.

125. While many of the recommendations and lessons learned from previous evaluations and partner or consultative meetings have been incorporated into successive APs, not all partners are aware of these documents.

126. On a very specific note, the use of appropriate technology for early warning systems (EWS), as recommended in the 2004 DIPECHO evaluation, proved to be very important in ensuring the understanding, use and maintenance of the systems. The ‘piggy backing’ of these systems on already existing institutional structures was also an important tool for improving inter-institutional coordination.

### *Comparative Analysis of previous DIPECHO Evaluations*

127. The ToR for this evaluation called for a comparative analysis of previous evaluation reports of DIPECHO Action Plans, including those applied to other regions, to identify common themes.

128. Four of 11 evaluations<sup>20</sup>, including the two previous ones carried out in the Caribbean, were selected for this comparative analysis. The others are the Evaluation of the DIPECHO Action Plans in South East Asia 1998-2006 and the Evaluation of DIPECHO Action Plans in Central America (1998-2007).

129. Common themes relevant to the Caribbean include:

- DIPECHO should continue to support community-based disaster preparedness activities.
- DG ECHO should develop a strategy for knowledge management and dissemination to advocate amongst EU member states, with other donors, for the adoption and

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<sup>20</sup> See [www.ec.europa.eu/echo/policies/evaluation/thematic\\_en.htm](http://www.ec.europa.eu/echo/policies/evaluation/thematic_en.htm) for the complete list

institutionalization of a community-based approach to mainstreaming DRR into their agendas.

- DIPECHO Action Plans should provide clearer guidance to partners to improve the use of a comprehensive VCA/PRA approach (including an assessment of existing local and national institutional structures and capacities) to ensure prioritization of community needs.
- DIPECHO Action Plan's should promote the scaling up, replication and linkage of pilot DRR activities with local planning processes.
- Mitigation activities should continue to be supported. DIPECHO should give priority to activities wherein DRR financed by DIPECHO is a component of a partner's mid to long-term strategy in a country.
- DG ECHO should develop a realistic set of impact indicators for various DRR interventions and support partners through training.
- Provide LRRD training for partners.
- Continue to harmonise National Consultative Meeting processes on the basis of a regional meeting and strategy. Additional coordination meetings of all EC programmes within the region should be organized frequently to follow up on opportunities for increased linkages and synergies. (taken up in AP V and VI)

130. What is important to draw from this exercise is that many of the same themes that DIPECHO faces in the Caribbean are global in nature. This suggests that they are important and should be addressed by both the field offices and in Brussels in a systematic manner.

### 3.10 Links to National and Regional Initiatives

131. It is beyond the capacity of DG ECHO to respond to individual national DM programmes in all of the countries in the region. There is, therefore, an assumption that the partner's projects will serve to strengthen national DRR priorities. This is particularly important in the overall strategy employed in Haiti.

132. Almost all the structures supported through project activities were directly linked to government DM structures, which is vital in terms of ongoing impact and sustainability, although much depends on the strength of the individual country DM systems, most of which are quite weak. Supporting national systems is important given that regional initiatives are very difficult to operationalise, especially in the English speaking Caribbean. Individual states are very independent and like to be perceived as self-sufficient.<sup>21</sup>

133. Significant progress has been made by CDERA in addressing macro-level DM issues (legal frameworks, administrative architecture) at both the regional and country specific levels principally through the Enhanced Comprehensive Disaster Management

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<sup>21</sup> It is worth noting that no government in the Eastern Caribbean has declared DRR as a focal sector or established national platform to follow up on Hyogo commitments

(CDM) initiative<sup>22</sup>. The majority of work done by CDERA is through national disaster offices. There is an ever-increasing institutional commitment to DRR at the regional level and in some cases, national levels. However it is still far from responding to the very real risks and concrete needs of communities in the most vulnerable areas.

134. As such DIPECHO has been an important catalyst for motivating other international donors (DFID, CIDA, OFDA) to become more directly involved in DRR at different levels<sup>23</sup>. There is increasing cooperation between regional and international organisations and donors such as DFID, CIDA the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB), CDERA and the Association of Caribbean States (ACS).

135. The increasing profile of DRR has led to increased donor commitment to fund DRR initiatives as well as to working together with others to maximise impact. The support for the CDM programme is indicative of this willingness to coordinate. However, the EC has limited participation although there are structures in which their contribution would be important<sup>24</sup>. There has been some improvement of EC interest in the CDM due to a change in EC personnel.

136. DG ECHO has also had limited participation in the CDM process. This is of concern given that the CDM is one of the key forums for DM in CARICOM and that it represents a natural role for technical (including appropriate advocacy) participation of DG ECHO. There is ample space for involvement through all the output areas related to outcome 4 of the programme framework<sup>25</sup>, which focuses on “*enhancing community resilience in CDERA states/territories to mitigate and respond to the adverse effects of climate change and disasters*”. Participation of NGOs in the CDM is very low although the IFRC, a major partner of DG ECHO, co-chairs the Civil Society Committee of the Harmonisation Council.

137. Climate change will continue to take on increasing political importance, in the region amongst donors, regional organisations and the UN. In addition to the EU Action Plan on Climate and Development climate change is now a central theme for DFID and will be linked to all DRR interventions. Climate change is also a focal point for the CDM programme. It is expected that potentially large amounts of funding will become available for relevant programming in climate adaptation activities which can and should incorporate DRR specific activities.

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<sup>22</sup> The CDM is a CARICOM wide initiative designed to “strengthen regional, national and community level capacity for mitigation, management, and coordinated response to natural and technological hazards, and the affect of climate change.” More information can be found at the CDERA website [www.cdeera.com](http://www.cdeera.com)

<sup>23</sup> Examples include the CIDA Canada Caribbean Disaster Risk Management Fund and DFID Caribbean Catastrophic Risk Initiative

<sup>24</sup> An important component of the CDM is the harmonising of DM interventions. To this end, a Harmonisation Council with representation from a wide range of sectors was set up.

<sup>25</sup> Enhanced Comprehensive Disaster Management Programme Framework 2007-2012

## 4.0 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

138. The main conclusions and recommendations emerging from the DIPECHO Caribbean evaluation are presented below. They are presented along the same structure of the main document, with a focus on strategic issues as agreed in the briefing. Each recommendation is flagged as either 'strategic' or 'operational' and a suggestion is made as to the responsibility for follow-up.

### 4.1 DIPECHO projects and partners

**C1: In general, the DIPECHO projects were relevant to the needs of the most vulnerable target communities, impacting their lives through well designed interventions, which met the stated objectives of the projects themselves as well as those of DIPECHO. Most importantly they were successful, to varying degrees, in impacting the lives of people through strengthening the capacity of communities to address the risks they face.**

R1a: There is ongoing discussion as to the relevance of DIPECHO and the need to develop and implement an exit strategy, but the high need in the region and increasing impact from projects supports its continuation. The issue is more one of linking the programme to other elements of LRRD to ensure greater impact and sustainability. The DIPECHO programme should therefore continue as a means of supporting communities to reduce risk and increase resilience. [Strategic – DG ECHO Brussels]

R1b: DIPECHO should continue to place emphasis on innovative pilot DRR projects [Strategic – DG ECHO Brussels]

R1c: Micro-projects remain a highly effective means for motivating institutions and communities as well as directly addressing risk reduction and should be maintained in future Action Plans. [Operational - DG ECHO field offices]

R1d: Haiti and the Dominican Republic should remain geographic priorities for DIPECHO projects. Small island states should have equal access to projects, but based on meeting other key criteria such as levels of vulnerability and capacity of local partners. Regional and multi-country projects should also be prioritised.

**C2: The efficiency, effectiveness and impact of some DIPECHO projects were reduced in part by weak project design and implementation strategies that were not adequately addressed during the proposal development and approval process. Compounding this is a range of issues including:**

- Weak local partners either in terms of capacity or commitment.
- Weak assessments
- A lack of comprehensive baseline data
- Overly ambitious number of activities in projects focusing on implementation quantity rather than quality

R2a: An assessment of the capacity of local partners should be included as part of the proposal. If it is deemed that there is low capacity, the partner should demonstrate how project activities will be properly implemented and include a local partner capacity building strategy. [Operational – DG ECHO field offices]

R2b: A comprehensive baseline study should be carried out for each target community/region upon which plans can be developed and impact measured. The KAP and VCA should be complemented with additional information (e.g. infrastructure, production, demographics) in order to ensure a comprehensive baseline. This should be done as part of the proposal writing process (as an assessment tool) and included as an annex to the proposal not as a project activity. This will help ensure the right interventions are being proposed for the right places with the right target populations. [Operational - DG ECHO field offices]

R2c: Selection of geographic regions for project implementation should be based on government priorities, risk and vulnerability. The ‘Country Document’ produced in the Dominican Republic should be assessed after AP VII and if found useful, similar processes should be implemented throughout the region. [Operational - DG ECHO DR office]

R2d: Project partners need to better account for DIPECHO’s timeframes and plan activities accordingly. The idea of doing less, better, and focusing on long-term sustainable impact rather than on the quantity of activities implemented is essential. This should be reflected in DIPECHO guidelines and DG ECHO support to partners during proposal development. [Operational - DG ECHO field offices]

**C3: Project efficiency was found to be quite high, although there was lack of clarity and importance associated with cost effectiveness and definition of beneficiaries.**

R3a: Pre-defined measures or ranges of cost-effectiveness, relevant to the region, should be included in the guidelines in order to measure impact as well as to increase partner’s attention to cost efficiency. [Operational – DG ECHO Brussels]

R3b: Clarity is still needed when distinguishing between direct and indirect beneficiaries. Accurate numbers of beneficiaries in an area a prerequisite for establishing real costs and expenditures. [Operational – DG ECHO Brussels]

**C4: Government and/or Red Cross National Societies are often the only entity that can carry on disaster management activities in the long-term. If the capacity of local institutions and governments are not increased as part of a longer-term process, sustained impact is unlikely.**

R4a: DG ECHO should ensure that projects implemented in small island states support the development of government DM systems and institutional capacity building, in addition to community based work [Operational–DG ECHO field offices].

R4b: Projects should be, whenever possible, implemented through supporting local partners. While this is difficult in Haiti where civil society is weak, part of any strategy should be to strengthen civil society. This is simply good development and supports increasing impact and sustainability. [Strategic/Operational –DG ECHO Brussels and field offices]

R4c: All proposals should include, as part of their assessment, a mapping of institutions working in the geographic area of the project including and analysis of all stakeholders. [Operational – to be carried out/followed up by DG ECHO field offices]

## 4.2 DIPECHO Caribbean Action Plans

### **C5. The community-based preparedness focus of DIPECHO should be placed within a broader disaster risk reduction framework.**

R5a: Once DG ECHO has finalised the development of its DRR implementation policy, DRR should be integrated fully into DIPECHO strategy, priorities and APVII proposal guidance. This should be accompanied by a dissemination package for internal and external partners clearly outlining the policy and the relationship to DIPECHO and guidelines for implementation [Strategic and operational – DG ECHO Brussels].

R5b: DG ECHO should develop a realistic set of impact indicators for various DRR interventions and support their use by partners through training. [Operational –DG ECHO Brussels]<sup>26</sup>

### **C6: Current thematic areas and Strategic Programming Imperatives are appropriate but could be expanded to reflect additional DRR related issues.**

R6a: More emphasis should be placed on *response preparedness* including pre-positioning of stocks in high-risk remote areas where partners or other DM organisations do not have a presence. This encourages the link between preparedness and response. [Strategic - DG ECHO Brussels and field offices]

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<sup>26</sup> Work has already been done on creating community-based indicators. A good example of this is the ‘Characteristics of a Disaster-Resilient Community’ developed by John Twigg at the request of the DFID Disaster Risk Reduction Interagency Coordination Group. Information can be obtained through the ProVention website (<http://www.proventionconsortium.org/?pageid=90>)

R6b: *Climate change* should be included as a SPI to reflect its increasing importance in relation to risk reduction especially for SIDS and to promote its inclusion in project design and priorities. [Strategic - DG ECHO Brussels and field offices]

R6c: Community level work has demonstrated that the adoption of a *multi-hazard approach* to DRR has more impact than focusing on one hazard and should, therefore, be encouraged in project strategies. [Strategic - DG ECHO Brussels and field offices]

R6d: Increased emphasis should be placed on working with children and in particular through schools. Partners all highlighted the impact that working with school children has on longer-term process of building a risk reduction culture. [Strategic - DG ECHO Brussels and field offices]

R6e: An increased focus on sector specific themes such as health, water and sanitation and livelihoods supports a DRR approach through addressing vulnerabilities that go beyond disaster preparedness alone. [Strategic - DG ECHO Brussels and field offices]

R6f: More emphasis should be placed on the *advocacy* function of project designs within the APs. Project partners should be encouraged to collaborate on joint advocacy strategies. This should be accompanied by increased detail in the AP guidelines which clearly defines what advocacy entails – who is being lobbied, what is being lobbied for and who should do the lobbying. [Operational –DG ECHO Brussels and the field offices]

### 4.3 Sustainability

**C7: Given diminishing donor support to many countries in the Caribbean as their economies strengthen, coupled with fewer DRR funding sources, DIPECHO has itself become a key ongoing source of finances. However, this does not imply that DIPECHO is, by default, responsible to provide funding for scaling up and replicability.**

R7a: Partners must place additional emphasis on the replication of project interventions following the end of funding cycles. While replication does not have to be carried out by the partner (i.e. it could be done by government, other civil society organisations or the communities themselves) a strategy for this must be included in project proposals [Operational – DG ECHO field offices].

R7b: DG ECHO should support partners to investigate potential sources of additional funding either within the EC, other intentional donors or from sources from within the target countries themselves. This implies greater coordination with other donors, both internal to the EC as well as others. [Strategic–DG ECHO field offices]

**C8: Long term impact and sustainability of project activities has been mixed. In general, development organisations with a long-term commitment to project target**

**communities and who have integrated DRR into their overall development programmes tend to achieve better results.**

R8a: All proposals should include detailed follow-up plans to explain measures that can ensure investments are sustainable beyond the end of DIPECHO funding cycles. [Operational - DG ECHO field offices]

R8b: Partners that do not have a development mandate should work in alliance with either government or with civil society organisations with a permanent or long-term presence in the communities. This should be clearly demonstrated in project proposals and be monitored by DG ECHO. [Strategic – DG ECHO Brussels and field offices]

R8c: Evidence of sustainability and impact, could be best assessed in target communities affected by disasters after the completion of the projects. ‘Carrying out real-time’ evaluations during disasters would allow DG ECHO and their partners to assess whether project investments (structures, training) worked and were maintained over time. [Operational - DG ECHO field offices]

R8d: While principally the responsibility of the partner, strategies and corresponding mechanisms need to be developed with support from DG ECHO for partners to work with other DRR stakeholders such as other EC Services, donors and government in order to provide financial and technical continuity to project communities [Strategic - DG ECHO field offices]

#### **4.4 Complementarity, Coordination and Coherence<sup>27</sup>**

**C9: There is much more coherence and complementarity in projects implemented by partners who have a long term DRR strategy which, in turn, are integrated into a comprehensive development process or when projects are directly linked to government DM systems. Conversely there is less impact when DRR projects are stand-alone.**

R9a: All project activities related to creating DM structures (e.g. community disaster committees) must link to national DM systems with the intention of strengthening them. This should be clearly demonstrated in project proposals and be monitored by DG ECHO. [Operational–DG ECHO field offices]

R9b: Partners that do not have a development mandate should work in alliance with either government or with civil society organisations with a permanent or long-term presence in the communities. This should be clearly demonstrated in project proposals and be monitored by DG ECHO. [Strategic – DG ECHO Brussels and field offices]

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<sup>27</sup> Conclusions and recommendations for CCC and LRRD should be viewed together given the importance of the relationship between the two

R9c: Projects should be, whenever possible, implemented through supporting local partners. While this is difficult in Haiti where civil society is weak, part of any strategy should be to strengthen civil society. This is simply good development and supports increasing impact and sustainability. [Strategic/Operational –DG ECHO Brussels and field offices]

R9d: All proposals should include, as part of their assessment, a mapping of institutions working in the geographic area of the project including and analysis of all stakeholders. [Operational – to be carried out/followed up by DG ECHO field offices]

**C10: The DG ECHO initiative of bringing partners in the Dominican Republic together was very effective for sharing of experiences, methods and materials.**

R10a: DG ECHO should encourage similar opportunities and facilitate mechanisms; this is critical in a difficult environment such as Haiti. [Strategic/Operational–DG ECHO field offices]

R10b: DG ECHO should make available tools and methodologies found to be effective. DIPECHO projects are not pilot projects unless learning is systematized and evaluated for its value and disseminated. [Operational – to DG ECHO field offices]

R10c: Lesson learned and good practices from all projects, and in particular pilot projects, should be systematised and disseminated to all DRR stakeholders in the region, including other EC services. [Operational – DG ECHO field offices]

**C11: Coordination between EC Services in the area of DRR is limited. Little effort is being made by EC Services to coordinate strategies, plans and activities.**

R11a: While strategic and programmatic coherency and coordination is the responsibility of all the EC Services, DG ECHO must be more proactive in working with other components of the EC. Priority should be given to improving relations with DG DEV and the Delegations (DG RELEX) [Strategic - to be carried out/followed up by DG ECHO in Brussels and through the field offices]

R11b: A comprehensive internal advocacy strategy and implementation plan should be developed by DG ECHO in order to enhance understanding of DIPECHO and the role of DP/DRR and the planning process of all relevant EC Services, including in-house in Brussels. It is important that this process begin immediately given there will be a window of opportunity to influence decisions at the 2010 EDF mid-term review process.

Key to this plan is:

- The use of the Communication on an EU strategy for supporting disaster risk reduction in developing countries and the EU Action Plan on Climate and Development as a means of ‘opening the door’ with other EC Services
- Regular meetings and presentations should be scheduled
- Inviting other DGs to be part of the DIPECHO project appraisal process

- Cultivating relationships with DG DEV at the desk officer and field levels in order to ensure their participation in their planning process at the country level and encourage the inclusion of DRR themes into Country Strategy Papers and the use of the EDF. This could be achieved through facilitating dialogue according to common themes or specific sectors
- Facilitate coordination with Delegations in order to carry out joint advocacy to government and regional bodies to prioritise DRR in general and at the community level specifically
- DG ECHO in the Caribbean should organise DRR awareness and information campaigns within the EC as well as periodic training in relevant DRR themes. [Strategic– to be carried out/followed up by DG Brussels and DG ECHO field offices]

R11c: To facilitate the implementation of an internal advocacy strategy DG ECHO should request/encourage other EC Services to name a DG ECHO focal point to act as a liaison between themselves and DG ECHO. Coordination pertaining to DIPECHO as well as other DRR issues would go through this person. [Strategic– to be carried out/followed up by DG ECHO Brussels]

R11d: At present there is no documentation that demonstrates the cumulative impact of ten years of DIPECHO programming. As such, DG ECHO should commission such a study to assess the impact of projects implemented since the inception of DIPECHO in the region. [Strategic/Operational – DG ECHO Brussels and the field offices]

#### **4.5 Linking Relief to Rehabilitation and Development**

**C12: LRRD is an important concept and initiative but one which has received little operational attention from the EC in the region.**

R12a: DRR is an important conceptual tool for LRRD. DG ECHO should ensure that all EC Services understand the term and advocate for its inclusion in all planning and programming. [Strategic/Operational – DG ECHO Brussels and the field offices]

R12b: A clear DRR strategy, built on the DRR policy, should be used by DG ECHO as a catalyst for engaging with other EC Services ensuring that risk reduction gains made through DIPECHO are taken-over by development services. This should be integrated into the advocacy strategy mentioned above. [Strategic–DG ECHO Brussels and the field offices]

**C13: Many DIPECHO Partners have effectively undertaken LRRD, but not by using the model as understood by DG ECHO**

R13a: DG ECHO should work with partners to better understand what is meant by LRRD in the context of the EC. [Operational – DG ECHO field offices]

R13b: DG ECHO should disseminate information on other EC Services funding sources to partners and work with them and EC Services to find potential programme funding synergies. [Operational – DG ECHO Brussels and the field offices]

R13c: As argued throughout this evaluation, DIPECHO should not fund stand-alone initiatives but rather projects within either a larger programme or projects linked to government or other development organisations. Partners should be encouraged, through inclusion in the AP guidelines, to link their efforts more explicitly to poverty reduction. The need for this is most obvious in Haiti, where underlying development issues such as livelihoods, health and nutrition are paramount and a priority for community members. [Strategic – DG ECHO Brussels and the field offices]

R13d: In Haiti, all projects must be linked to the DCP (Civil Protection Directorate) and must be part of a larger development process. Humanitarian actions should address humanitarian indicators in a development – risk reduction framework. For example, there is an opportunity for LRRD (DG ECHO, DG DEV) when working in water shed/catchment management to strengthen DPC, address poverty reduction issues as well risk reduction. [Strategic – by DG ECHO Brussels and the field offices]

R13e: More emphasis should be placed on DRR initiatives that support specific sectors (health, WASH, livelihoods). In this way, not only are communities better prepared for disasters but also real everyday needs and vulnerabilities are addressed in an ongoing fashion. In this sense DIPECHO should be linked, as much as possible, to those sectors included in the Global Plan. [Strategic– to be carried out/followed up by DG ECHO Brussels and the field offices]

#### 4.6 Links to National and Regional Initiatives

**C14: While both DG ECHO and DIPECHO partners are active in supporting national DM strategies in the countries where they work, DG ECHO engagement at the regional level has been limited.**

R14a: DG ECHO should continue to support national initiatives such as those in the Dominican Republic and Haiti. While it is unrealistic for them to be active in all countries, they should provide support to partners who are engaged in either strengthening or creating national structures such as DRR platforms. [Operational–DG ECHO field offices]

R14b: DG ECHO should become more actively engaged in regional initiatives both because it is a principal DM stakeholder in the region and because of its responsibility to further a community based DRR agenda as a key component of reducing vulnerability. [Strategic–DG ECHO field offices]

R14c: DG ECHO should increase its participation in the ECDM initiative through structured representation on the Harmonisation Council as well as supporting partners to

become active in the council's Civil Society Committee, co-chaired by the IFRC. [Strategic/Operational–DG ECHO DR office]

R14d: DG ECHO should keep CDERA informed on DG ECHO and DIPECHO projects and should not only attend the annual CDM conference but take a leadership role especially in areas linked to DRR and community based interventions. [Operational – DG ECHO DR office]

R14e: Although CDERA does receive € 3.4 million from the EC for the ECDM, there is little participation from any of the DGs in the programme. DG ECHO should encourage other DGs the Delegation to participate in this important regional programme, which has strong representation by other international donor countries included EU member states. [Strategic–DG ECHO Brussels and the DR office]

R14f: In order to have informed participation in relations with other regional donors and organisations, as well as governments at all levels, it is vital that DG ECHO, including DIPECHO and other programme partners, develop a comprehensive advocacy strategy and implementation plan. An advocacy strategy should consider the following: [Strategic/Operational –DG ECHO Brussels and the field offices]

- Identify clearly what is to be advocated and at what level
- DG ECHO and partners should work together to lobby individual governments in order to make DRR a priority programming area. If governments perceive DRR as important then donors, including the EC, will respond
- Projects are very good advocacy instrument as they illustrate good practices and demonstrate the impact of interventions at the community level. They allow linking local successes to national and regional visions. However they remain merely tools of an comprehensive advocacy strategy
- An advocacy strategy should build upon the quality of the relationships between local partners and government authorities. This contributes to sustainability of preparedness actions and provides opportunity for advocacy as well as replication of good models of local disaster preparedness.
- Visibility and communication are important advocacy tools. Brussels and the DG ECHO field offices should solicit support from A5 and from regional information officers in the development of specific advocacy strategies aimed at appropriate constituencies.

R14g: It is important that other EC Services are involved in the development of any advocacy strategy for the region. DG ECHO is not political but it can technically support Delegations and member states in lobbying efforts with governments over DRR policy and programming. [Strategic–DG ECHO Brussels and the field offices]

**C15: Given its importance as a humanitarian stakeholder and DIPECHO's catalytic affect on other international donors, DG ECHO has an important role for furthering community based DRR with government, regional organisations, member states and other donors.**

R15a: DG ECHO should become more engaged with other key donors and agencies such as DFID, CIDA, USAID the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) and the Association of Caribbean States (ACS) in coordinating DRR efforts. It is critical that DG ECHO also encourages the active participation of the Delegations in these processes. An example of a relevant forum would be the Eastern Caribbean Donor Group for Disaster Response chaired by CDERA and UNDP. [Strategic - DG ECHO DR office]

## Glossary of terms

According to the UN International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR), which is the key coordinator for the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action the following definitions should be utilised by DG ECHO throughout (i.e. in all Decisions documentation, etc.):

**Disaster risk reduction:** the conceptual framework of elements considered with the possibilities to minimise vulnerabilities and disaster risks throughout a society, to avoid (prevention) or to limit (mitigation and preparedness) the adverse impacts of hazards, within the broad context of sustainable development.

DRR could be said to comprise of **preparedness, mitigation and prevention**, keeping in mind that in reality many actions include a mix of both mitigation and prevention:

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

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

**Prevention:** Activities conceived to ensure a permanent protection against a disaster. These include engineering, physical protection measures, legislative measures for the control of land use and codes of construction. These activities reduce the physical vulnerability and/or exposure to risks through infrastructures (e.g. dams, flood barriers, building of refuges) and sustainable development practices (e.g. no deforestation in upstream areas).

Another concept that is central to DRR is the concept of **resilience**. DRR is about enhancing the levels of resilience of disaster prone countries and societies with a focus on a long-term vision of building capacity and strengthening people and societies rather than crisis management.

**Resilience:** The capacity of a system, community or society potentially exposed to hazards to adapt, by resisting or changing in order to reach and maintain an acceptable level of functioning and structure. This is determined by the degree to which the social system is capable of organising itself to increase its capacity for learning from past disasters for better future protection and to improve risk reduction measures.

Whilst the use of the word 'mainstreaming' is not encouraged (to be replaced by integration wherever possible) for the purposes of this evaluation the following definition has been adopted:

**Mainstreaming** means expanding and enhancing DRR so that it becomes normal practice, fully institutionalised within an agency's relief and development agenda. It has three purposes:

- To make certain that the development programmes and projects that originate from or are funded by an agency are designed with evident consideration for potential disaster risks and to resist hazard impact;
- To make certain that all the development programmes and projects that originate from or are funded by an agency do not inadvertently increase vulnerability to disaster in all sectors: social, physical, economic and environmental;

- To make certain that all the disaster relief and rehabilitation programmes and projects that originate from or are funded by an agency are designed to contribute to developmental aims and reduce future disaster risk.

*List of abbreviations and acronyms*

AECID	La Agencia Española de Cooperación Internacional para el Desarrollo (AECID)
ACCP	Asamblea de Cooperación por la Paz
ACS	Association of Caribbean States
AIDCO	Europe Aid Cooperation Office
AP	Action Plans (of DIPECHO)
CARICOM	Caribbean Community
CARIFORUM	Caribbean Forum
CBDP	Community Based Disaster Preparedness
CD	Civil Defense (Dominican Republic)
CDB	Caribbean Development Bank
CDERA	Caribbean Disaster Emergency Response Agency
CDM	Enhanced Comprehensive Disaster Management Programme
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CSP	Country Strategy Paper
DEV (DG-DEV)	Directorate General for Development
DFID	Department of International Development (UK government)
DG (RELEX)	Directorate General for External Relations
DIPECHO	ECHO's Disaster Preparedness Programme
DM	Disaster management
DSNCRP	National Strategy Document for Growth and Poverty Reduction
DPC	Directorate for Civil Protection (Haiti)
DR	Dominican Republic
DRR	Disaster risk reduction
EC	European Commission
ECHO	Directorate-General for Humanitarian Aid
EDF	European Development Fund
EU	European Union
EWS	Early warning system
FRC	French Red Cross
HSI	Hospital safety index (a programme of PAHO)
IADB	Inter-American Development Bank
IDDI	Instituto Dominicano de Desarrollo Integral (Dominican Republic)
IFRC	International Federation of Red Cross Societies
IO	Intermón Oxfam
KAP	Knowledge, attitudes and practices
LRMC	Local risk management committees
LRRD	Linking Relief Rehabilitation and Development
NGO	Non Governmental Organisation
OFDA	Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (USA government)
PAHO	Pan American Health Organisation
PPR	Project partner review
RCRC	Red Cross Red Crescent

SIDS	Small island states
SPI	Strategic Programming Imperatives
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
VCA	Vulnerability and capacity assessment
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene for All