

VI OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE WORKING GROUPS

The observations and recommendations of the working groups focused on the proposed DIPECHO Programme Framework.

The participants were divided into five working groups which met on two separate occasions. The morning session focused on **observations and recommendations on the proposed DIPECHO Programme Framework**. The afternoon session addressed the role of **partners and the selection criteria for projects**. Also discussed was the role of ECHO in supporting the work of partners in the region. Following the working group discussions, each group presented the highlights of its discussion to the plenary.

Work Group Presentation on: « Review of ECHO's proposed strategy on the DIPECHO Programme Framework »

General observations and recommendations

All participants agreed that the new DIPECHO programme needs to be flexible and country-specific in order to correspond to needs and priorities expressed at local and national level but must have strong regional linkages to the regional level

It was further stressed that there is no universal panacea to address disaster-related problems in the different countries of the region

DIPECHO must be compatible with other global initiatives in an evolving context. The necessity was expressed that the Programme Framework must be "up to date", addressing macro factors and reflecting on present trends (such as the current economic crisis)

The Action plan, which will be based on the Programme Framework, should create a mechanism for generating effective partnerships, thus creating a synergy effect and supporting international co-ordination of actions in disaster preparedness.

Comments on the Diagnostic Study

- The participants agreed that Indonesia and Malaysia should be included in the diagnostic study and taken into account in the further planning process.
- Greater emphasis should be given to the impact of hazards on sustainable development.
- A more specific distinction between disaster preparedness and prevention should be made.
- It was noted that the analysis has been too focussed on natural disasters. There is a need to study and address other man-made disasters more intensively.

Principal Orientation and Objectives of DIPECHO

- Participants expressed the need for an explanation of the scope of the strategy document and the methodology employed in elaborating the proposed framework programme.
- The groups recommended that DIPECHO must be pro-active and should promote community-based approaches, flexibility, cultural sensitivity and sustainability. They further stressed the necessity for political commitment from national governments as well as from ECHO to realise these approaches.
- It was suggested from different partners that a more comprehensive view on disaster management in the region should be taken. There should be no separation of prevention, preparedness and mitigation as separate units to which ECHO will or will not be involved with.
- ECHO should emphasise on bridging gaps and completing particular activities (i.e., institutional development).
- Regional strengths should be mapped out and regional institutions identified as possible partners. Co-ordination within the region as well as between ECHO and national institutions must be improved.

Future Links

- In continuation of this consultation meeting, there should be national meetings in each of the target countries.
- The participants expressed their wish for more regular contacts and consultations in the future.
- To organise and maintain links between the different partners and institutions, a co-ordinator is needed for each country.

Training and Information Exchange

- The sharing of information and a proper information management was addressed repeatedly as one of the key priorities in the region
- South to South exchange programmes are required in order to learn from each others experiences
- Universal training standards should be developed and applied for the region as well as support be given in form of training material development (e.g. translation)
- All community-based approaches should be documented and experiences disseminated within the region

Work Group Presentation on: « The nature of projects and the role of partners in the DIPECHO programme »

The observations and recommendations of the second work group session, which took place in the afternoon, focused on the nature of projects and the role of partners in the DIPECHO programme.

In general, all participants expressed their full agreement with the types and directions of action proposed in the DIPECHO Framework document. After intensive group discussions, they came up with the following recommendations:

Nature of the Projects

- When talking about resources, they should not only be identified in terms of finances but also in commitment of the partners to the programme.
- Research on indigenous experiences in different countries needed to learn from and share the accumulated knowledge on disaster preparedness in the region
- Post-disaster reviews including an analysis of the “Lessons learned” should be carried out in the different countries and findings disseminated in the region.
- The exchange of information must be enhanced, e.g., through the creation of a documentation and training center for the region and probably on national level
- In order to strengthen the implementation of the action plan, the participants recommended a) to reduce bureaucratic barriers and b) to use existing networks, facilities and structures in the region.
- Demonstration projects are needed to proof the validity of regional approach as well as its viability

Support and funding should be given to projects addressing the following priorities:

1. Establishment and promotion of “Early warning systems” in the region:
Connection of existing early warning systems in the region and dissemination of their information both on regional and national level.
2. Training and education, which have been identified by the participants as being key components of all projects:
 - training courses should especially focus on needs and risk assessment, health emergency, documentation/history of disasters medicine
 - assistance must be given to standardise disaster management and training manuals
 - integration of schools (curricula) and universities in disaster preparedness programmes.

Role of partners

- In general, the working relationship between government and key national agencies and NGOs and international organisations must be more effective.
- A dynamic co-operation and planning process is needed which requires regular feedback from ECHO and its regional offices.
- The nature of DIPECHO activities must lead to the development of a sense of “ownership” by all potential actors/partners to generate (at all levels) sustainability of the programme
- ECHO was seen to have a “catalyst” role in promoting partnership between countries in South East Asian and Bangladesh
- Regional meetings for national policy makers (political commitment) as well as multi-sectoral meetings on national level have to bring together all partners to define priorities, assess indigenous knowledge and preserve/utilise cultural diversity

VIII APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Agenda

Appendix 2: List of Participants

APPENDIX 1

REGIONAL CONSULTATION MEETING ON DISASTER PREPAREDNESS IN SOUTH EAST ASIA AND BANGLADESH

Bangkok, 17 March 1998

PROGRAMME

8:00 - 9:00	Registration and Coffee
9:00 - 9:30	Welcome and Opening Statements <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mr. Michel Caillouët, Ambassador - Head of EC Delegation - Bangkok « <i>The European Union's Presence in South East Asia</i> »• Mr. Jean-Claude Heyraud, ECHO - Brussels « <i>ECHO's Regional Approach to Disaster Preparedness</i> »• Prof. Debarati Guha-Sapir, CRED- University of Louvain, Brussels « <i>Relief, Disasters and Development</i> »
9:30 - 9:45	Presentation of Diagnostic Study and general context (Mr. Nick Russell)
9:45 - 10:15	Presentation of DIPECHO Framework Programme (Ms. Patricia Pennetier, ECHO Bangkok)
10:15 - 10:45	Discussion
10:45 - 11:00	Coffee Break
11:00 - 12:30	Working Groups <i>Topic: Observations and Recommendations on DIPECHO</i>
12:30 - 2:00	Lunch
2:00 - 2:45	Presentation of Working Groups to plenary and discussion
3:00 - 4:00	Working Groups <i>Topic: The nature of projects and the role of partners in the DIPECHO programme</i>
4:00 - 4:15	Coffee Break
4:15 - 5:00	Presentation of the Working Group
5:00 - 5:30	General Conclusions
7:30	Reception

APPENDIX 2

DIPECHO Regional Consultation Meeting on Disaster Preparedness in South East Asia and Bangladesh March 17 1998, Bangkok/Thailand

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