

# EUROPEAN COMMUNITY HUMANITARIAN OFFICE



## DISASTER PREPAREDNESS



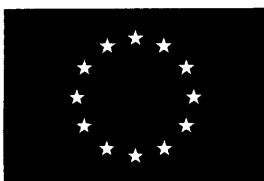


# Disaster Preparedness



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# The ECHO Disaster Preparedness Programme

## FOREWORD

*In recent years, the loss of human life and material resources due to natural or man-made disasters has been growing at an alarming rate. In the last decade alone, millions of people have been killed and hundreds of millions of others displaced. This trend can be attributed to a number of factors, including rapid population growth and inequities in resource distribution.*

*Environmental degradation, too, is increasing vulnerability to drought and famine. Chemical, industrial and technological accidents have become additional threats as countries develop, often without adequate safeguards. A rise in ethnic tensions has also led to more civil strife, food shortages and displaced populations.*

*The magnitude and complexity of relief operations has forced a re-assessment by many key international organisations involved in humanitarian relief. These reviews have underlined the importance of viewing relief, disaster preparedness and development as part of the same continuum. It has become increasingly apparent that a relatively small investment in disaster preparedness can save thousands of lives and vital economic assets, as well as reduce the cost of overall relief assistance to disaster-stricken countries.*

*With this objective in mind, the European Commission has established the Action Programme for Disaster Preparedness for enacting outside the European Union. The Programme covers human resource development, the strengthening of management structures for disaster preparedness on the national and international levels, and the promotion of community-based, low-cost technology projects. The Programme will co-ordinate the Commission's existing disaster mitigation activities as well as complement the disaster preparedness work of other international agencies and organisations.*

*In this way, the European Union, through its Humanitarian Office (ECHO), hopes to contribute positively to the important field of disaster preparedness, mitigation and prevention.*



**Emma Bonino**

Commissioner of the European Union



# DISASTER PREPAREDNESS



■ Raised sites serve as refuges during seasonal flooding in Bangladesh  
(Photo: Jean Mohr, IFRC)

■ Earthquake-resistant "Quincha" housing in Peru  
(Photo: T. Schilderman, ITDG)



## A Profile

# THE ECHO MISSION

■ Distribution of relief in Azerbaijan  
(Photo: F. Beullens, ECHO)



### ■ Co-ordination and support

ECHO, the European Community Humanitarian Office, was established in 1992. Its main goal is to co-ordinate the European Community's humanitarian aid programme, its funding of emergency and disaster relief, and its support for disaster preparedness projects.

Now one of the world's largest humanitarian aid donors, ECHO last year provided aid valued at more than 604 million ECU - a figure that excludes the direct aid initiatives of member states.

ECHO's work in 1994 covered the victims of disasters or continuing crises in some 50 countries. Among these were the former Yugoslavia, the former USSR, Burundi, Northern Iraq, Somalia, Rwanda, the Occupied Territories (Palestine/Israel), Sudan, Liberia, Cuba, Angola and Zaire.

The Office offers its assistance, without charge, to victims in any non-European Union nation struck by a natural disaster, such as drought, earthquakes and flooding, or by a man-made crisis such as war and environmental catastrophes. Aid is channelled directly to victims, regardless of race, religion or political belief.

### ■ Emergency Relief

ECHO's emergency relief work covers four broad categories: general humanitarian aid, emergency humanitarian aid, emergency food aid and aid to refugees and displaced persons.

While ECHO has an operational capability, most of its funding is directed through the United Nations, the International Committee and Federation of the Red Cross and other private, voluntary agencies.

The Office has entered into Framework Partnership Agreements with more than 100 non-governmental organisations in an effort to ensure effective and prompt reaction to emergencies.

ECHO also organises seminars and workshops, encouraging debate and reflection on humanitarian aid issues. In addition to this, its specialised staff carries out evaluation surveys of relief operations.



## ■ Disaster Preparedness

Disasters can be broadly defined as extreme events, whether of natural or human origin, that overwhelm vulnerable populations. Disaster preparedness measures include three principal elements:

- a) prevention, where possible
- b) mitigation
- c) preparedness itself, in order to assist the people to deal adequately with the consequences of a catastrophe.

The overall direction and quality of ECHO's Disaster Preparedness Programme will be overseen by a group of experts and national policy makers. This group will be named the Preparedness Technical Advisory Committee (Prep-Tag). Prep-Tag will not only give advice on the direction and progress made by the Programme, but also serve as an expert consultative body on specific questions and issues. Members will have experience that includes knowledge of both humanitarian and developmental issues.

## ■ More Information?

ECHO publishes an annual report as well as a quarterly newsletter, and has also produced brochures and audio-visuals.

Anyone who would like more information on ECHO's work should contact the Office's Information Section in Brussels. (Tel: 32.2.295.44.00 – Fax: 32.2.295.45.72)

For specific information on the Disaster Preparedness Programme, contact the following numbers:

Tel: 32.2.295.46.15 or 32.2.296.94.86 – Fax: 32.2.295.45.51

## Preparedness

# DISASTERS

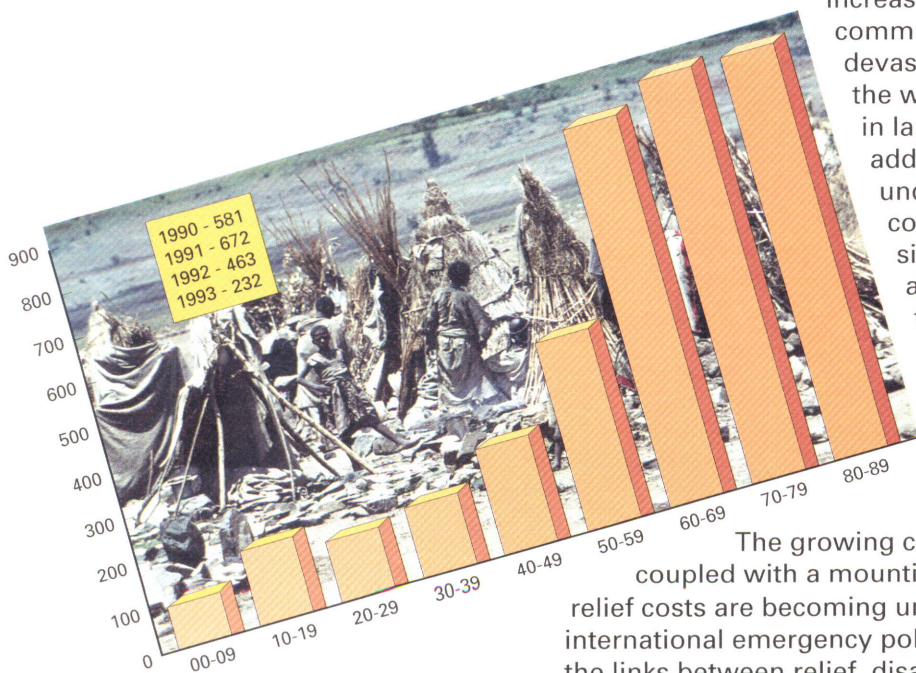
### ■ A Worldwide Trend

Since 1960, more than 8,000 serious disasters requiring massive international assistance have been registered worldwide.

In the last 25 years, millions of people have died and many more have been left homeless and destitute, due to both natural and man-made disasters. Women and children have been bearing the greatest burden of these catastrophes. Over time, the rates of both human and material losses are showing signs of a steady increase. Each disaster is claiming greater losses than the previous event. While this might indicate that the world has become more prone to violent natural events, the most likely explanation is that communities in developing countries have simply become more vulnerable.

Population growth, increasing urbanisation, environmental degradation and poor planning, in addition to sometimes misguided development policies, have all contributed to

increasing the vulnerability of under-privileged communities. Together with the increasing devastation caused by natural disasters, the world has also been witnessing a rise in large-scale and protracted civil conflicts, adding to the burden of poverty and under-development. The international community is learning to its cost that simple emergency relief is no longer an adequate answer. The set-backs that disasters cause for development are substantial. This implies that development planning in disaster-prone areas needs to include preparedness measures to counteract the effects of catastrophes.



■ Reported disasters around the world by decade (1900 -1989)  
(Source: CRED)

The growing concern about emergency relief coupled with a mounting awareness that ever-increasing relief costs are becoming unsustainable has meant that international emergency policy reviews are now emphasising the links between relief, disaster preparedness and development. The philosophy of reducing vulnerability and raising the state of preparedness is gaining ground among the major humanitarian agencies. It is within this context that ECHO's disaster preparedness programme was conceived.



■ A natural disaster compounded by civil conflict: war-related famine follows drought in Eritrea  
(Photo: CRED)



## ■ The Response

Today, most international and national donors have re-focused relief activities to include preparedness as an important component. This move has been taken with a view to greater effectiveness, better targeting of vulnerable groups and the improved impact of disaster relief on local development.

A resolution adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1991 resulted in the re-organisation of the UN Disaster Relief Office as a response to the need for relief, rehabilitation and development to be treated as an integrated whole. The Department of Humanitarian Affairs was created and the UN programme International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction (IDNDR) was brought under its wing.

At the same time, development agencies in several countries have begun taking into account the risks posed by disasters to their long-term programmes.

USAID, for example, has allocated greater resources to its Prevention, Mitigation and Preparedness programme. Within the European Union there have also been initiatives by member states. In the United Kingdom, the Overseas Development Agency has set aside substantial funds for preparedness work. In Germany too, preparedness and prevention are reflected in the priorities of the Ministry of Development Co-operation.

In short, development and relief programmes are today coming closer together in an effort to reduce the vulnerability of communities repeatedly subjected to natural or man-made disasters. Preparedness is increasingly seen as integral to the process of development itself.

## ■ The Results

While the opportunity costs of disaster preparedness programmes are difficult to quantify, there is growing evidence that the mitigating effects of such programmes can be dramatic in terms of lives, costs and longer-term implications.

One such example of the positive effects of disaster preparedness programmes was the reduced impact of the 1991 cyclone in



Bangladesh. While the cyclone of 1974 caused the deaths of almost 500,000 people and left several million destitute, the more serious cyclone of 1991 had a lower death toll of 150,000 people. Part of this lowered impact can be attributed to the existence and improved use of cyclone shelters, an extended radio communications network and the assistance of trained local volunteers.

In India too, the increasing social and economic damage caused by flooding has been mitigated in specific areas by relatively low-cost preparedness projects, including flood plain management and community-based programmes for rapid response.

## ■ The Organisations

A number of international organisations, including the International Federation of the Red Cross and various United Nations agencies such as WHO/PAHO and UNEP, as well as regional bodies, have been working in disaster preparedness for some years, as have national organisations.

Various services of the European Commission itself, as well as the member states, have also been involved in a range of projects. These have included support for systems that monitor natural hazards in the Asean countries, studies on populations displaced by war and civil conflicts in Central America, development programmes and preparedness projects in both Bangladesh and India. Landslide studies in Northwest China, seismic monitoring in Tanzania and food security and early warning in Southeast Somalia are among other projects.

In addition, ECHO and a number of member states are closely involved in the UN IDNDR programme. The German IDNDR Committee, for example, is developing partnerships with countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America, the aim being to assist with the scientific, technical and humanitarian aspects of natural disaster prevention.

■ *Right: the burden of relief – lack of preparedness in disaster management*  
(Source: CRED)



# The ECHO Disaster Preparedness Programme

## THE APPROACH

### ■ The ECHO Philosophy

ECHO's concern in disaster preparedness is to reduce the vulnerability of those people most at risk from disaster and to ensure that action taken is sustainable and beneficial to the communities it serves. Given, however, the scope of "preparedness" projects and limited resources, ECHO cannot cover the entire field. Three sub-programmes, considered the key to sustainable action, have therefore been selected. They are:

- 1) Human Resource Development
- 2) Strengthening Managerial and Institutional Capacities
- 3) Community-Based, Low-Cost Technology projects for disaster preparedness.

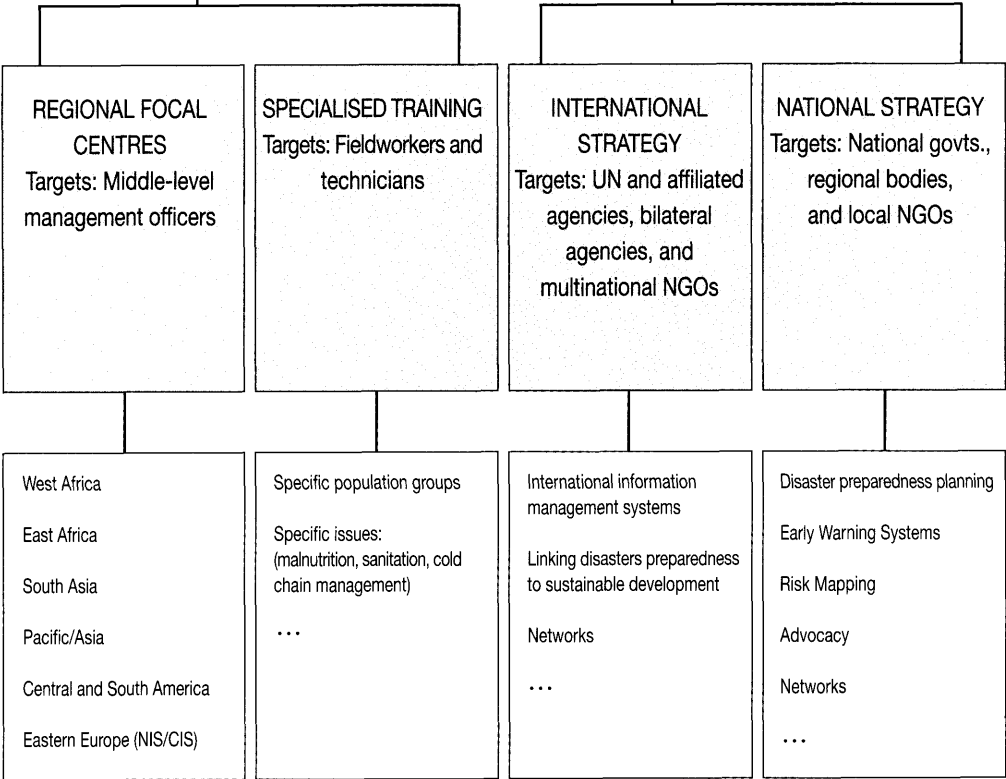
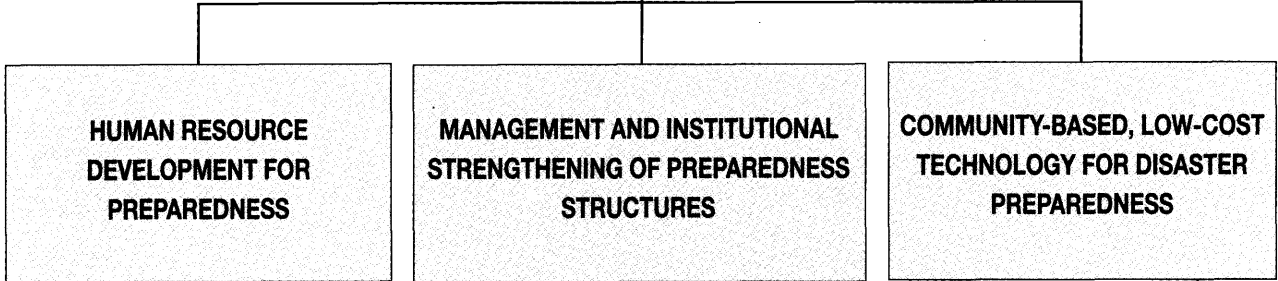
These themes have been chosen for specific reasons. First, the effectiveness of external relief assistance largely depends on good disaster preparedness, and this must essentially have a local base. Second, building local capacities and self-reliance, and the strengthening of international structures are the most cost-effective and sustainable approaches to disaster management.

This programme aims at filling a specific niche within internationally recognised priority areas, a niche that is not always covered by other international organisations or by programmes initiated by member states of the European Union.

ECHO's role in disaster preparedness is designed to co-ordinate disaster preparedness work undertaken by other European Commission services; to represent the European Union and to co-operate with and complement the activities of other international agencies.

The Office supports or co-finances disaster preparedness activities, undertaken by European Union states and other donor governments, that fall within the scope of its Programme. On another level, the Office supports both governmental and non-governmental organisations undertaking projects including low-cost community schemes, local training activities, the development of training aids and inter-agency networking. Details of ECHO's three disaster preparedness sub-programmes follow.

# THE DISASTER PREPAREDNESS PROGRAMME



Drought resistant cultivation techniques (Namibia)

Radio-based early warning systems (Bangladesh)

Mud-slide control with local resources

Flood-plain management

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# 1

## Human Resource Development for Disaster Preparedness

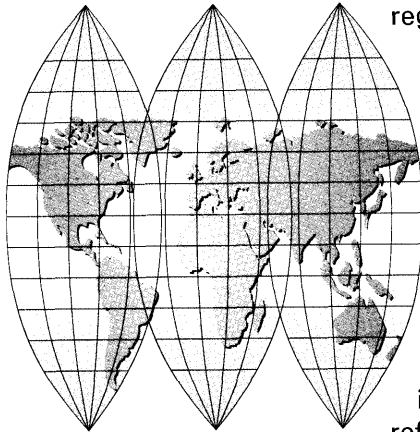


*Development of human resources is recognised by most humanitarian agencies as being a key element for sustainable preparedness. ECHO's contribution in this field will cover training programmes ranging from inventory management all the way through to public health, nutrition and other specialised fields.*

*This sub-programme will be implemented through two strategies. On the one hand, ECHO will act directly at a regional level through regionally based Focal Centres. On the other, it will support independent, one-off workshops on specialised topics. Each strategy is briefly described below.*

### ■ Regional Focal Centres

The programme intends to establish or strengthen disaster preparedness training programmes in six disaster-prone regions of the world - West Africa, East Africa, South Asia, Pacific/Asia, Central & South America and Eastern Europe/NIS.



These Focal Centres will build upon existing institutions that already have the logistical and organisational capabilities necessary to enable them to operate as partners in channelling ECHO's disaster preparedness training initiatives. The training undertaken by ECHO Focal Centres will concentrate on issues common to several countries in the region or issues that have cross-border implications. Such issues could include, for example, refugee questions, or the effects of flooding across frontiers. The target group for training at Focal Centres will be middle-management personnel from both the public and private sectors.

Focal centres will receive appropriate technical support from ECHO, but will be responsible for all local arrangements relating to the implementation of training courses and cycles. They will effectively be the implementing partners in the field for ECHO.

In addition to focusing on local needs and using the knowledge and experience of people from the region, these centres will also be able to draw on expertise from ECHO's European contact network.



In the initial phase, generic course structures will be developed. These will be adaptable to each group according to need. Handbooks are also planned. These will summarise basic preparedness procedures as well as principles and organisations. They will be compiled by region and will be updated regularly to ensure continuing relevance.

The Focal Centres will remain subject to direct action from ECHO, and will not be dependent on project submissions.

### ■ Independent Special Training

In addition to the Focal Centres, the human resource sub-programme includes independent training courses as a complement to the Focal Centre programmes. These courses or workshops will be one-off events addressing specific technical subjects such as environmental sanitation, malnutrition and cold-chain management, and will be aimed at field workers and technicians rather than managers.



■ Preparedness training at district level in Mexico  
(Photo: L de Toledo, IFRC)

# 2

## Management and Institutional Strengthening of Preparedness Structures



*Management and Institutional Strengthening is another key area identified by the UN IDNDR programme and developed in May 1994 at the Yokohama World Conference. Many inefficiencies in the relief process can be blamed on "ad-hocism" and a lack of proper institutional structures.*

*At disaster sites, local communities inevitably perform most immediate relief work. Strengthening of local structures, therefore, can only increase their efficiency and sustain their relief activities. On another level, experience has shown that international agencies also require institutional strengthening to improve their capacity to co-ordinate and direct international relief efficiency.*

*The strategy of ECHO's work in this field is two-fold. First, the aim is to strengthen regional and national institutions that are, or should be, responsible for disaster preparedness plans, early warning systems and physical and socio-economic risk-mapping in high-risk countries. Second, the intention is to strengthen international preparedness for disasters by the development of essential management information systems for use by the international community.*

### ■ Strengthening national and regional institutions



The aim of this strategy is to work with certain key, disaster-prone countries. In close co-operation with experienced field organisations and governments, a useful management input is sought in order to strengthen local, regional and national preparedness plans, early warning systems and risk-mapping. Activities include complementing strong structures and building up weaker ones. They do not exclude, for instance, financing equipment and materials.

Nations falling within the scope of this programme are those with a high disaster vulnerability, those that have expressed interest in co-operation on disaster preparedness, and those that lack sufficient disaster preparedness coverage from other agencies.

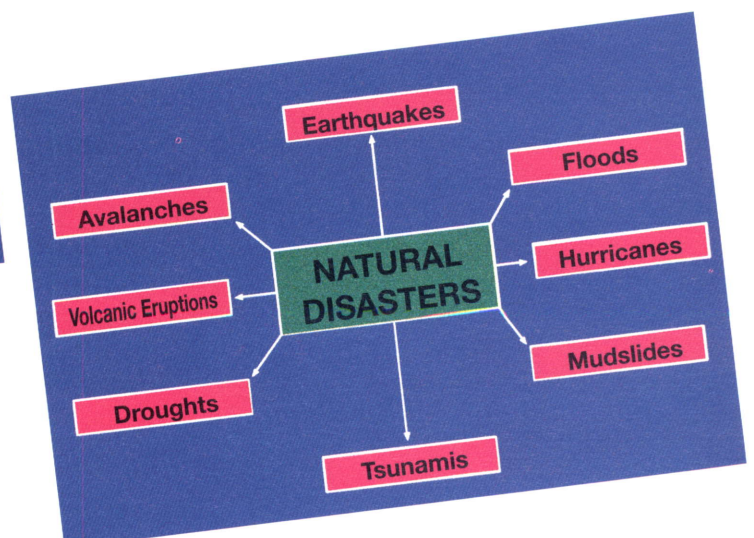
■ *Preparing for cyclones: community-based early warning systems in Bangladesh*  
(Photo: L de Toledo, IFRC)



## ■ Strengthening International Preparedness Management Information Systems

ECHO is currently co-operating with the UN Department of Humanitarian Affairs to develop a global information system. The purpose of this system is to bring together the main international organisations involved in disaster response and preparedness, and:

- 1) Establish common and compatible data definition and software standards
- 2) Develop databases to cover gaps in essential information for decision-making regarding response and preparedness
- 3) Provide networks to exchange and enable access to disaster data collected for different institutional purposes.



■ Disaster types: manmade and natural  
(Photo: PAHO/WHO)

# 3

## Community-Based Low-Cost Technology Projects

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Severe resource constraints in most disaster-prone developing countries mean that low-cost options for disaster preparedness are the most feasible. The scope of this part of ECHO's programme extends to worthwhile, cost-effective initiatives with a local community basis. Projects under this heading should address low-cost applications of disaster mitigation technology. These projects may be initiated by ECHO, by other European Commission services or by outside organisations or agencies.



Opposite: a new cyclone shelter in Bangladesh  
(Photo: N Cooper, ITDG)

Left: rebuilding after an earthquake in Iran: safety measures are incorporated  
(Photo: Y. Aysan, IFRC)



## ECHO Support

### HOW TO APPLY

ECHO's Preparedness Programme can support, through funds or technical assistance, projects related to the activity areas described above, in regions outside the European Union. Internationally recognised institutions or organisations, both governmental and non-governmental, are eligible for support.

In general, priority is given to projects that are part of an on-going programme or local structure. Integration with development activities is desirable. Other priority projects include those co-financed by member states of the European Union or other donor agencies, and that have input from local partners or institutions.

Selection for support by ECHO is subject not only to projects meeting the Programme criteria, but also to resource availability within the Programme. Submission of a proposal does not in any way imply automatic funding from ECHO. Each proposal will be considered according to the criteria stated below, in competition with other applicants and with regard to available funds.

While funding for disaster preparedness projects is clearly limited, ECHO is dedicated to supporting and co-financing projects that are viable and sustainable in the long-term and that can show real benefits to vulnerable communities.

#### ■ Proposals Should:

- 1) Be focused clearly on a disaster preparedness, mitigation or prevention priority in the country concerned and should be fully compatible with national development policies.
- 2) Be consistent with ECHO's disaster preparedness policies as outlined in this publication.
- 3) Have well-defined, quantified objectives and realistic implementation strategies supported by adequate activities.
- 4) Demonstrate sustainability and a "multiplier effect" or lasting benefit for the target community.
- 5) Employ appropriate and cost-effective methods and technologies with a high level of community involvement.
- 6) Develop managerial expertise at both local and national levels, including government and non-governmental organisations and communities.
- 7) Demonstrate feasibility and viability of the project as a whole.
- 8) Stipulate monitoring activities and supervision of the project process.



## ■ Submitting An Application

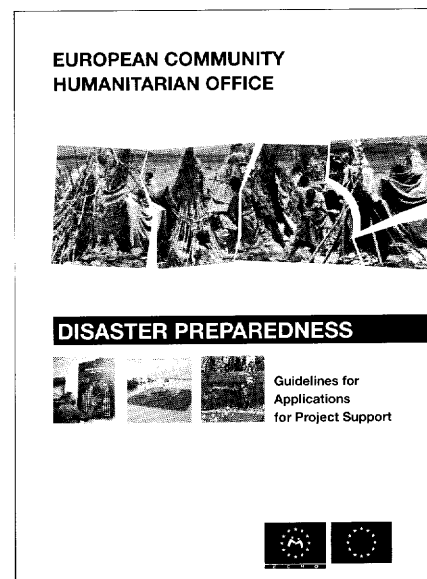
All applications should follow the terms laid out in the Guidelines for Applications. These are available on request from the Delegation of the European Commission in your region and can also be obtained directly from ECHO/3 (see address below).

All correspondence, including proposals, should be sent by mail or through a Delegation of the European Commission. Faxes will not be acknowledged.

The evaluation and selection procedure is also outlined in the Guidelines for Applications. Please note that the Programme is not committed in any way whatsoever to funding a project until a final decision is made and the partner is informed. Please note too, that in Sub-programme A: Human Resource Development for Disaster Preparedness, applications are not sought for Focal Centres.

To obtain a copy of the Guidelines for Applications, please write to:

ECHO/3,  
Disaster Preparedness Programme,  
200 Rue de la Loi,  
B-1049 Brussels,  
Belgium.



## ■ Acknowledgements

- Centre for Research into the Epidemiology of Disasters (CRED)
- International Federation of the Red Cross (IFRC)
- Intermediate Technology Development Group (ITDG)
- Pan American Health Organisation (PAHO)
- *Cover photos: courtesy of CRED and IFRC*



### ***The European Community Humanitarian Office***

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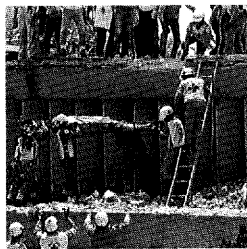
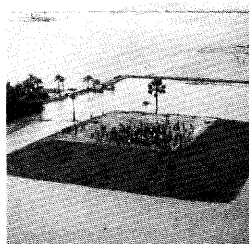
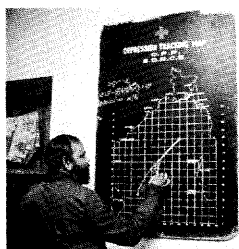
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# EUROPEAN COMMUNITY HUMANITARIAN OFFICE



## DISASTER PREPAREDNESS



**Guidelines for  
Applications  
for Project Support**



# 1

## Disaster Preparedness Project Support Guidelines for Applications

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*Applications to the European Community Humanitarian Office for support for disaster preparedness projects must include the following information:*

### **General**

- Name of the organisation applying
- Address
- Past experience in the relevant field
- Whether the organisation applying holds a Partnership Agreement with ECHO

### **Project**

- Name of project
- Name of co-ordinator
- Geographical impact area
- Estimated start date of the project and estimated duration
- Brief description of the project
- Executive summary (background and key objectives)
- Implementation strategies
- Major activities
- Target groups
  
- Other organisations involved (Specify division of responsibility)
- Stand-alone project or inter-linked (Specify if inter-linked)
- Whether the project is linked with any other ongoing project financed by the European Commission
- How the project fits with ECHO's programme objectives
- How the project matches national development policies
  
- Long-term sustainability
- Whether the project will continue when ECHO financing ceases (Specify transfer of responsibility for infrastructure, organisation, funding and estimate the need for continued funding)
  
- An evaluation of any possible negative side-effects, particularly on target groups, their situation and their environment
- How the project will be monitored?

### **Preliminary Budget**

Your proposal should include a costs and funding statement as detailed below. Please express all amounts in ECU (the currency of the European Commission). (Note: Should your proposal be selected for further examination, a detailed financial statement will be required)



**Costs**

Expatriate and local staff .....  
Travel and per diems .....  
Office supplies, printing, telecommunications .....  
Transport .....  
Goods and equipment .....  
Training and workshop course expenses .....  
Special logistical equipment .....  
Subcontracted services .....  
Administrative (max 2% of total) .....

**Total Project Costs** .....

<b>Financial Support</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>% of total</b>
Own Contribution .....		
Other Organisations - Specify: .....		
 Sub-total .....		
Requested from ECHO .....		
<b>Total</b> .....		

# 2

## Submitting Your Proposal

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**Your proposal should not exceed more than five single pages of A4 and should be typewritten.**

Send this by mail to the address below, or deliver it to a Delegation of the European Commission for forwarding to ECHO. Please do not send the application form or messages by fax. Faxes will not be acknowledged.

The mailing address is: ECHO/3,  
Disaster Preparedness Programme,  
G1 2/305,  
200 Rue de la Loi,  
B-1049 Brussels,  
Belgium.

# 3

## The Evaluation and Selection Process

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Evaluation of projects for funding will have regard to the criteria listed in this guide and will be carried out by ECHO assisted by appointed independent experts.

The selection process will include four steps. First, there will be a confidential evaluation of the proposals by experts. Initial grading of the proposals will follow. ECHO's relevant advisory or management committee will then consider the proposals. Finally, the Commission will select proposals for funding and will communicate the results of both the evaluation and the selection to the project co-ordinator.

# 4

## Contract Procedures

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Soon after a project has been selected for funding, ECHO will ask the applicant to provide a more detailed financial statement as well as an appropriate project description for inclusion in the contract.

ECHO may require changes to proposal documents based on the evaluation. Participants of selected projects might be required to travel to Brussels to negotiate aspects of the contract.

ECHO will not contribute to any costs before the formal commencement of a project on the date specified in the contract.

### **Form of Contract**

ECHO will prepare a contract setting out the conditions of European Commission support for the relevant project.

The contract and its annexes are binding and no alteration may be made without the prior written consent of the European Commission.

The contract will state that technical and financial reports must be presented to ECHO at stipulated times, together with forecasts of expenditure to justify each payment of funds.

All financial references will be expressed in ECU.

Projects receiving European Commission funding must acknowledge this fact in all publications and other media, such as films, produced by them.

# 5

## Payments and Reporting

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After the contract is signed, part of the ECHO contribution may be advanced to help meet start-up costs. The remaining amount will be paid after satisfactory reports on completion of the project. Amounts will be discussed during contract negotiations.

All ECHO contributions will be paid in ECU.

Please note that ECHO is not committed in any way whatsoever to the funding of a project until a final decision is made by the European Commission and the partner is informed.



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