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Commission



Disaster Preparedness

A Compendium of Experiences

August 2020

DG ECHO

Humanitarian
Aid and Civil
Protection

Foreword

The core of our mission is to save and preserve lives. One of the ways to do so effectively is to empower people and communities as well as governments, when feasible, to be better prepared on how to respond and protect themselves in the face of crises. Preparedness for response is a critical element for resilience. And the earlier and the more local a response is, the more effectively it can save lives.

DG ECHO has supported capacity building in preparedness for response for over two decades through dedicated actions and funding. As the sample of so many different experiences in this compendium demonstrates, the variety of our work has been significant - from strengthening mechanisms to alert the population if a cyclone is approaching, to promoting people's awareness on hygiene measures to prevent the spread of communicable diseases or strengthening the capacity of local authorities to assist people in displacement due to a disaster or conflict.

Through the years, our work has continuously adjusted to the evolving nature of the crises and the needs they generate, preparing to respond to natural hazards but also to violence stemming out of conflict or social tensions. Moreover, as climate change is increasing the severity and frequency of extreme weather events, DG ECHO is increasingly promoting ways of working that help anticipate these events - thus allowing to act earlier, before a disaster happens save more lives and increase resilience.

We have learned and achieved a lot in our long engagement in preparedness, since the start of the Disaster Preparedness (DIPECHO) programme in 1996 until now. We want to build on this experience to increase the coherence, effectiveness and timeliness of our work in preparedness. We want to better address emerging risks from climate, fragility and conflict and fully embed preparedness in our humanitarian mandate. It is in this spirit that DG ECHO is currently renewing its approach to preparedness that will consolidate in a new guidance as of 2021.

Let me conclude by saying that we could not save lives without our partners. Our gratitude goes to them for tirelessly working to put all this in practice and propose innovative solutions. We look forward to continuing our cooperation for a world that is better prepared and hence, more resilient.

Ms Paraskevi Michou
Director General
DG ECHO



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Distribution of non food items kits to Ethiopian Aylum Seekers.

Use of a Crisis Modifier to assist Ethiopian Asylum seekers in Moyale Kenya

Summary: *Enabling the delivery of effective and timely assistance in the aftermath of the displacement of approximately 10,000 Ethiopian asylum seekers arrived in Moyale – Kenya, fleeing political/ethnic violence as on 10th March 2018.*

Achievements

Effective and timely assistance to asylum seekers in the aftermath of the displacement.

Key messages

Preparedness for response and early action is a strong element of DG ECHO's contribution to Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), resilience, humanitarian-development nexus/LRRD¹ programming and to Sendai Priority 4². As one of the possible pre-financing mechanisms, the Crisis Modifier (CM) enhances the flexibility and responsiveness of partners implementing humanitarian operations. The comparative advantage of the CM is the rapidity of intervention.

Brief description of the initiative

Organisation

British Red Cross (BRC) and Kenya Red Cross Society (KRCS).

Timing

March 2018

Budget

€50,000 for the CM within a total budget of €1,800,000 for a cash transfer project. The impact of the CM was disproportionately high compared to the small amount invested.

Beneficiaries

10,000 Ethiopian asylum seekers.

1 LRRD – Linking Relief, Recovery and Development.

2 Sendai Priority 4. Enhancing disaster preparedness for effective response and to “Build Back Better” in recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction.

DP Priority

Supporting national and local capacities for early response mechanisms (in ongoing crises or situations of fragility).

Rationale

During the first half of 2018, the British Red Cross (BRC) and the Kenya Red Cross Society (KRCS) provided unconditional cash transfers to drought-affected households in Northern Kenya.

In anticipation of possible new emergencies occurring during the implementation of the response, BRC/KRCS introduced a Crisis Modifier (CM) as a separate result of the project with the title “KRCS responds to sudden onset emergencies or triggers of slow onset emergencies, effectively and within 48 hours”.

On 10th March 2018, in surrounding villages and in the Ethiopian side of Moyale town, political violence caused a sudden influx of about 10,000 asylum seekers who sought protection across the border, some in the Kenyan side of Moyale, hosted by relatives, some in camps.

The CM was immediately activated by BRC/KRCS to provide initial life-saving assistance to Ethiopian asylum seekers.

Expected results/changes

Despite a relatively small amount invested (in this specific case €50,000 vs a total budget of €1,800,000), the CM had a tremendous impact in the aftermath of a crisis in terms of responsiveness and time complementarity with other responses, as outlined below:

- Within 24 hours of the displacement (11th - 12th March): BRC/KRCS started distributing 1,000 Non Food Items kits using their own prepositioned stocks;
- 11th- 12th March: KRCS surge and health personnel were deployed to support local health facilities. In the following days, KRCS expanded the assistance to complement the efforts of other partners in WASH, counselling services, communication and family reunification;
- 12th - 13th March: A multi-sector Inter-Agency Rapid Assessment highlighted food as the most urgent priority;
- 17th March: BRC/KRCS locally-procured food and started providing two-week food rations to 1,656 asylum-seeker households;
- 2nd April: WFP took over the food assistance and made its first two-week food distribution.

Sustainability

Not applicable.

Main contribution to risk reduction, resilience and anticipation

Benefits and lessons

Early response: The objective of the CM was “to provide initial lifesaving multipurpose response in the aftermath of a rapid onset crisis (natural disasters, conflict-induced displacement)” and to improve responsiveness when a crisis within a crisis happens.

In the case of Moyale, the CM was extremely functional in providing initial Emergency Shelter – Non-Food Items (ES – NFI) and covering the time gap for the food assistance sector before the take-over by WFP.

Pre-financing: The CM gave BRC/KRCS the financial confidence to mobilise resources without hesitation while developing a Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF). The CM budget was used to offset part of the costs of ES-NFI, of surge staff and of the food assistance. Other contributions and the DREF covered costs which were not catered for under the CM.

Rapid decision-making: The uncomplicated nature of the decision-making process is paramount for early response; BRC/KRCS appreciated that it only took “a couple of phone calls and e-mails with the ECHO country Office to get the go-ahead”. The pre-financing and the rapid decision-making gave the CM an incomparable advantage over other funding mechanisms.

Anticipation & Preparedness: In the Project Proposal, BRC/KRCS developed the CM based on a strong multi-risk analysis, most-probable and worst-case scenarios and preparedness (surge staff, volunteers and prepositioned stocks).

Complementarity: The purpose of the CM was not to cover all the needs but rather to be complementary with other responders to “fill the time gap while waiting for additional resources”.

Why DG ECHO?

In the Eastern and Southern Africa Region, DG ECHO partners are more systematically adopting the CM, when relevant. It is a pre-financing mechanism which can be relevant in numerous situations and which should be increasingly adopted by other humanitarian donors.

Challenges

BRC/KRCS highlighted that the main limitation was the fact that the budget allocated to the CM was only enough for one intervention and could not contribute to the response to the floods that took place a few weeks after the displacement in Moyale.





*A well made fit for use during the EU response to cyclone Idai in Mozambique
© European Union 2019/Christian Jepsen*

Use of computerised Early Warning System in Mozambique

Summary: *One of the main challenges in Disaster Preparedness is sending alerts in a timely, understandable, unambiguous and accountable way. In Mozambique, DG ECHO's Disaster Preparedness partners have been supporting the INGC (Instituto Nacional de Gestão de Calamidades - National Disaster Management Institute) in the development of a computerised early warning system (EWS) called SIGIC (Sistema Integrado da Gestão da Informação) using DATAWINNERS, which is a platform including an informatics database with automatized generation of alerts and feed-back via SMS messages, making it a low-cost and innovative solution for community members who have access to cell phones.*

Achievements

The support provided by DG ECHO partners to the INGC has helped to develop and roll out a computerized EWS. Addressing the gaps in the system at national and local levels has strengthened the INGC's preparedness capacity. During the Idai and Kenneth cyclones in 2019, the communities that received warnings via DATAWINNERS were able to organise evacuation and even mobilise some equipment. As a result, they were less affected than others. Given the success of the project, opportunities to replicate it at the regional level are being explored.

Key messages

- Using technologies and an innovative approach to Early Warning Systems helps communities respond faster and considerably reduces loss of life and property;
- It is a low-cost and innovative solution for community members who have access to cell phones to receive and send alert messages;
- This INGC-led Early Warning System is part of more comprehensive preparedness and response capacity building support that also includes awareness-raising about risks, and preparation of contingency plans.



Angelica's and her daughter Ivanilda's house was entirely destroyed by cyclone Idai. © European Union 2019/Christian Jepsen

Brief description of the initiative

Organisation

SPANISH RED CROSS & CRUX VERMELHA DE MOZAMBIQUE
CARE-COSACA

Timing

1/7/2018 – 30/6/2020

Budget

€1,000,000

Beneficiaries

INGC (National Disasters Management Institute) as well as local communities in specific regions.

DP Priority

Supporting national and local DP systems.
Institutional partnership with national and local Civil Protection (CP) actors.

Rationale

The DATAWINNERS SIGIC system was launched after the 2015 floods in Mozambique when the warning system was unreliable and communities received late, fragmented warnings (if any

warnings at all). With regard to the flooding of the Likungu river, communities received the alert only a couple of hours before the flood despite the fact that information had been available two days earlier about a probable flood due to heavy rains in the upper watershed. This late warning meant a higher risk of casualties and damage.

Expected results/changes

SIGIC is a low-cost early warning system that allows INGC to share alerts in real time, from the national to the local level. It is a completely integrated mobile data collection and communication service. It uses SMS messages sent from INGC-CENOE (Centro Nacional Operativo de Emergencias - INGC's Emergency Operational Centre) to all the mobile phone numbers in the relevant Districts.

Alerts are created by INGC based on information from Mozambique National Institute of Meteorology, Regional Water Resource Management Authorities, Districts and Provinces. The SIGIC system allows INGC to transmit alerts in a timely, traceable/accountable and standardized way. Once the alert is received in the concerned localities, the District Authorities are in charge of spreading the message to the whole community.

In addition to the core function of sending alerts, the system has two other purposes:



*EU humanitarian aid has supported drone equipment and training to Mozambican national disaster management staff.
© European Union 2019 /Anouk Delafortrie*

- When a disaster takes place, District Authorities send codified information about the casualties and damage in the locality;
- Providing a general public information service on different topics like weather forecasts, agriculture calendars and climate adaptation, land titles, family planning and public health.

After a promising start in 2016, the roll-out of the SIGIC system was slow and DG ECHO's disaster preparedness partners provided INGC with support at national and district levels, focusing on: i) finalising the SOPs for the transmission of alerts; ii) identifying triggers of different hazards at local and national levels; iii) establishing lists of alert recipients (telephone numbers of District officials, teachers, community and religious leaders); iv) standardising alert messages, language, and length (260 characters); v) training of INGC and District staff; and vi) conducting simulations.

DG ECHO's partners have also been strengthening links and working methods between the INGC, the Meteorological Department and the Regional Water Resources Authorities. DG ECHO's partners supported the three agencies to improve data interpretation, communication and coordination mechanisms. INGC is responsible for the SIGIC system.

Sustainability

In view of the system's low maintenance requirements, its ownership by the authorities and its positive impact for community evacuation during the Idai and Kenneth cyclones, the project's sustainability can be considered high at this stage. Replicating the model in other regions of the country will further increase its sustainability at national level.

Main contribution to risk reduction, resilience and anticipation

Benefits and lessons

Strengthening early warning: The adoption of a standardized system for the transmission of alerts has been instrumental in improving preparedness and establishing a more functional early warning system. The use of a simple, low-cost system that does not require any particular IT expertise is a strength.

Accountability: Protocol adherence is a major issue that is related to the accountability of early warning. The SIGIC system only allows alerts to be sent by INGC's Emergency Operations Centre (CENOE) after the analysis of hydro-meteorological data; this avoids having alerts from multiple sources and ensures accountability, which is often a constraint when the transmission system uses open social media.

Standardisation of messages. The flow of information to and from national, district and community levels is more standardised and respects SOPs. This is an open-ended process, with the aim of continuously improving the clarity and relevance of messages.

Why DG ECHO?

DG ECHO's added-value is in creating a link between a community-level early-warning system and the strengthening of the national preparedness and response system.

Challenges

The main limitation of this initiative is the fact that SIGIC does not generate the alerts. The reliability of the alerts depends on the capacity of multiple institutions (Meteorological Dept., Water Resource Agencies, INGC) to access and interpret hydro-meteorological information and translate this into early warnings.

The roll-out of the SIGIC system remains an open-ended process. Given the size of the country and the incomplete network coverage, significant, long-term investments will be required to achieve full coverage and test the tool throughout the country.

Links to documentation:

- <https://www.datawinners.com/en/what-is-datawinners/>





*Training given to the mothers to learn how to screen malnutrition in Niger.
© 2018 European Union/Ollivier Girard*

Improved early warning and rapid response systems in most at risk regions of Niger

Summary: *To support the integration of effective and sustainable local early warning systems (EWS) into the National Food Crisis Prevention and Mitigation Mechanism in order to: facilitate rapid responses that target population at risk of facing severe food insecurity and malnutrition; and reinforce food security surveillance mechanisms within the humanitarian community.*

Achievements

The project started in June 2018. The articulation between early warning and early response components is currently under working progress.

Key messages

- Early action is critical to avoid the deterioration of situation of food insecurity, particularly in context of cyclical and slow onset crises. To this end, the existence of local active multi-risk surveillance mechanisms is key to ensure appropriate monitoring and alert as well as the transmission of critical information to the local population for undertaking any timely livelihoods management adaptation actions;

- To sustain effective response, contingency plans clearly identifying roles and responsibilities at all levels are necessary and they need to be owned by both the decentralized governmental institutions and local population to ensure harmonized and coordinated action;
- Reinforcing the capacity of existing surveillance and coordination mechanisms helps ensure ownership of local government and population and the sustainability of the action.

Brief description of the initiative

Organisation

Oxfam (partners: Save the Children)

Timing

June 2018 - ongoing (26 months)

Budget

€1,270,164

Beneficiaries

80 organisations and over thousand individuals

DP Priority

- Linking Relief, Rehabilitation and Development (LRRD) strategies and Nexus – Enhanced Disaster Preparedness as part of recovery and reconstruction strategies that are supported by DG DEVCO/DG NEAR;
- Supporting National DP systems, strengthening contingency planning and surge models in key national services – health (incl. epidemics), food security and nutrition, shock responsive safety nets (in recurrent and predictable crises);
- Supporting national and local capacities for early response mechanisms (in ongoing crises or situations of fragility).

Rationale

Niger is regularly affected by crises of different kinds. However, both state bodies and humanitarian actors do not have yet the capacity for a timely response to shocks, evolving in line with the increasing impact of slow onset disasters. Acute crises take place in a context already marked by extreme poverty, severe and recurrent food insecurity and malnutrition. Drought, price inflation, floods as well as on-going armed conflicts have a negative impact on households' livelihoods, eroding their resilience and their ability to meet their basic needs for survival.

Particularly with regard to slow onset disasters although basic response plans are in place, there is a need to reinforce the link between decentralised Early Warning Systems (EWS) and response mechanisms within the existing systems. Additionally, there is a need to improve communication/the flow of information about risks, especially at the local level, and establish triggers and mechanisms to activate early and coordinated responses when disasters can be anticipated or suddenly occur.

Expected results/changes

The main results expected from this project are the following :

- 48 local EWSs in 5 at-risk regions connected to the national EWS that share information about risks with communities, covering 1,000,000 people or more;
- Improved protection against the most serious risks for the populations of 48 communities thanks to local contingency plans;
- To establish a food security, nutrition and health surveillance system that is coordinated among organisations involved in the food security sector;
- A monthly bulletin on food security, nutrition and health shared with thematic groups and relevant state bodies;
- To document best practices and ways of sustaining an effective local EWS based on lesson learning exercises;
- To establish dedicated funding for rapid response.

Sustainability

All the project activities are embedded within the existing institutional mechanism (the National Food Crisis Prevention and Mitigation Mechanism and its branches).

Strong partnership with the European Union Delegation (EU DEL). Both humanitarian and development actors are committed to addressing food and nutrition insecurity and forced displacements through effective short and long-term responses. Several EU funding instruments support these priorities: 11th European Development Fund (EDF), EU Trust Fund (EU TF) for Africa, EU Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace (ICSP).

Potential linkages exist with the World Bank (WB) International Development Association (IDA) funded project on social protection, the shock responsive component of the national social protection program (ASP) and the development of the national social register for social protection.

Main contribution to risk reduction, resilience and anticipation**Benefits and lessons**

Nothing to report yet.

Why DG ECHO?

DG ECHO, and now the EU, is a leading donor in the response to the food and nutrition crises in Niger. DG ECHO has an excellent record of successful partnerships with NGOs and UN agencies and of supporting the national mechanism to increase its capacity to implement responses on its own. DG ECHO partners are ideally positioned to technically support the EWS at the decentralized level and foster ownership by state bodies. While EU DEL can support long-term development programs, DG ECHO is better placed to offer very specific, humanitarian-related, technical assistance to improve emergency preparedness and adapted response mechanisms.

Challenges

Some of the target areas experience high level of insecurity due to the on-going armed conflicts.

Lessons learnt from other regions shows that adequate implementation of early warning / early action concept and its adaptation to slow onset disasters requires a change in the current response approach by all stakeholders, from the national system to the humanitarian stakeholders.





An NGO staff prepares the flour distribution as part of a health / nutrition program by ACF financed by ECHO on June 26, 2019 in Nakaylé 3, Mauritania. ©EU-ECHO/Xaume Olleros

Early Warning System and social safety net for a rapid response in Mauritania

Summary: Support Mauritania towards the operationalization of a robust Early Warning System (EWS) and contribute to an Adaptive Social Protection (ASP) system.

Achievements

- Production of a “Multi-year Capacity Support Plan” with the ultimate objective of having a fully functioning early warning, preparedness and response planning mechanism for food security and nutrition;
- Advancing the revision of the existing legal framework for early warning, preparedness and response planning to shocks affecting food security and nutrition.

Key messages

The DP/DRR strategy initiated in 2018 aims at supporting the setup of a strong and reliable government-led national scheme, linking early warning, preparedness, planning and response to shocks affecting food security and nutrition in Mauritania. The approach focuses not only on establishing the institutional framework required to operate the scheme, but also on the development of ex ante tools and procedures that can be

used to enhance the relevance, reactivity and consistency of Government and partners’ interventions. This includes the deployment of community sentinel sites to ensure real-time monitoring of livelihoods, food security and nutrition.

Brief description of the initiative

Organisation

WFP, ACF and Oxfam.

Timing

36 months starting in 01/06/2018

Budget

The global regional program amounts to €5,156,176

Beneficiaries

National Registry, Food Security Commission, Mauritanian population.



Vatimetou Mint Mohammed holds her baby while she receives flour for her household as part of a health / nutrition program by ACF financed by ECHO on June 26, 2019 in Nakaylé 3 village, Mauritania. ©EU-ECHO/Xaume Olleros

DP Priority

- Linking Relief, Rehabilitation and Development (LRRD) strategies and Nexus – Enhanced Disaster Preparedness as part of recovery and reconstruction strategies that are supported by DG DEVCO/DG NEAR;
- Supporting National DP systems, strengthening contingency planning and surge models in key national services – health (incl. epidemic), food security and nutrition, shock responsive safety nets. (in Recurrent and predictable crises);
- Supporting National and local capacities for early response mechanisms (in Ongoing crises or situations of fragility).

Rationale

Despite being highly exposed to droughts and other risks, Mauritania is one of the few countries in the Sahel that does not have an institutional mechanism in place to tackle shocks affecting food security and nutrition. Emergency responses continue to be financed, planned and delivered in an ad hoc way, causing delays and generating inefficiencies in the allocation of resources.

Expected results/changes

The initiative is designed to strengthen national institutions' capacities as well as tools and processes for early warning, preparedness and response planning to shocks affecting food security and nutrition. It provides a common framework to enhance the relevance, reactivity and consistency of partners' interventions. At local level, early warning systems are developed and tested for Community Sentinel Sites and pastoral monitoring mechanisms are designed and gradually piloted. The objective is to ensure that information produced locally can be consolidated, flow upwards, and be given due consideration to inform national responses to shocks affecting food security and nutrition.

Sustainability

Supporting Mauritania towards a robust Early Warning System (EWS) and contributing to an Adaptive Social

Protection (ASP) system could potentially reduce dependency on humanitarian funds.

Main contribution to risk reduction, resilience and anticipation

Benefits and lessons

Major steps have been taken since 2018 to establish the necessary foundations for the scheme. These need to be sustained in 2021 and beyond to ensure its full operationalization and the scale-up at national level.

Why DG ECHO?

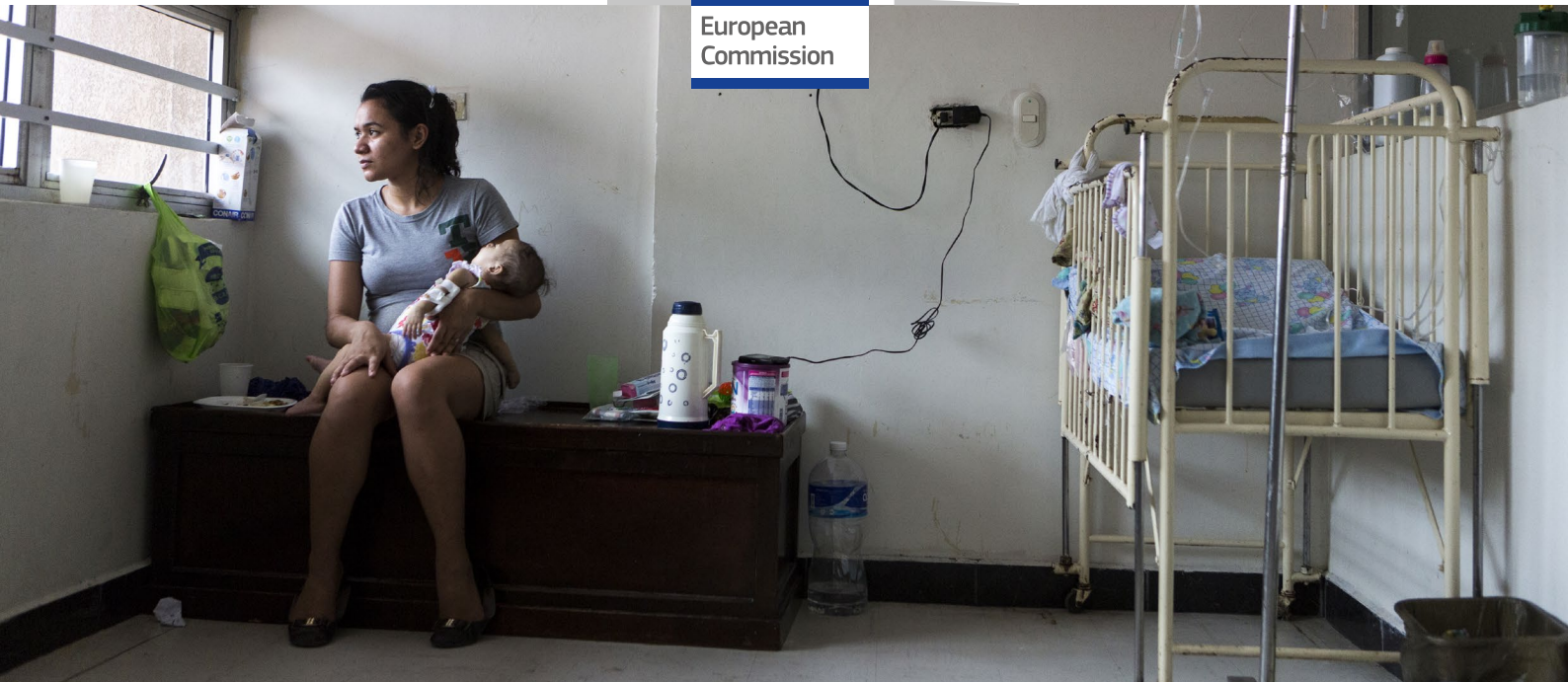
This effort is seen as a key and concrete investment in the nexus and is thereby actively supported by both humanitarian and development actors in Mauritania, including the World Bank. On their side, DG ECHO and its partners have a strong anchor with key national institutions involved in food security and nutrition. DG ECHO is hence ideally positioned to support this effort.

Challenges

The success of the approach depends very much on political willingness and commitments, institutional arrangements and robust tools such as i) EWS and trigger threshold, ii) a national response plan and iii) financing mechanisms. Furthermore, it requires adequate operators on the ground.



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Access to the maternity ward needs to be guaranteed, even in emergency situations ©ECHO/MGarcía

Strengthening access to safe and resilient health services in violence and disaster prone areas in Honduras and El Salvador

Summary: *Improve emergency care delivery capacity in areas affected by rampant violence through improved diagnosis of the impact of violence on health services and hospital demand and the strengthening of functional and non-structural components of hospital safety.*

Achievements

- The development and implementation of intervention plans aimed at improving the functional and non-structural components of hospital safety;
- The creation or revamping of Hospital Emergency Committees and their activation;
- The installation and upgrade of security and access control systems in critical areas of the hospitals, such as emergencies, surgery, triage, waiting rooms, among others;
- The training of medical and nursing staff in the management of polytrauma patients (ATLS - SVAC) and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR);
- The development of a situational analysis of social violence and its impacts on health personnel and access to health services for the local population;

- The establishment of guidelines for the delivery of psychosocial support to patients in crisis and handling of critical situations due to violent acts in hospital areas;
- The implementation of a mass communication campaign to promote respect of health personnel, their vehicles and facilities in Honduras.

Key messages

- Keep functional health services integrating risk linked with Other situation of Violence (OSV);
- Promote the respect of health workers: hospital should be a safe space;
- Promote and establish a safe access to health facilities, particularly in emergency situations.

Brief description of the initiative

Organisation

PAHO

Timing

20 months (15/04/2016 - 14/12/2017)

Budget

Final report incurred costs: €525,865.44 (Contribution from ECHO €450,000.00)

Beneficiaries

- **El Salvador:** 3 Hospitals in Municipalities of Mejicanos, San Salvador and Soyapango in violence and disaster prone areas;
- **Honduras:** 3 Hospitals in Municipality of El Progreso, San Pedro Sula and Tegucigalpa, in violence and disaster prone areas;
- Ministries of Health of Honduras & El Salvador.

DP Priority

Mainstream multi-hazard dimension including post-crisis displacement and epidemic violence in DP. Support Disaster Risk Management systems, developing emergency and contingency plans to integrate pervasive violence and forced displacement in DP, with emphasis on ongoing crises or situations of fragility.

Rationale

Violence generates risks for patients and health staff. There is a clear need to ensure that staff can provide health assistance to the population with a high level of security. Access to health services is key in emergency situations and this issue is urgently needed to be integrated in the safe hospital assessment.

Expected results/changes

The action achieved the following results/changes:

- Improved access to and quality of health services and to better response to the health consequences caused by a violent environment;
- Establishment of operational and strategic tools as well as targeted rapid corrective measure to raise awareness and better protect individuals within the facility of the hospital or their access to its services;
- Conduct of training of hospital personnel and staffing specific physical and psychological health issues linked to violent trauma;
- The overall average increase in safety improvements for all 6 hospitals was 10.2%. 5 out of the 6 targeted hospitals improved their safety level above 5% baseline target.

Sustainability

With the use of Rapid Assessment Preparation tool (RAP) staff members can continuously sustain safety in hospitals that directly impacts health services, which means that staff can provide health assistance to the population with the

highest level of security and commitment.

As it is also complementary to the safe hospital initiative which has been a success in the LAC region a scaling-up process can be expected to strengthen mechanisms to safely access health facilities located in violent zones.

Main contribution to risk reduction, resilience and anticipation

Benefits and lessons

A better understanding and analysis of the increased risks and needs faced by health services, personnel and communities due to acute social violence is necessary.

To raise awareness about the impact of violence of healthcare delivery with political actors and facilitated positive inter-institutional cooperation on those sensitive issues is critical.

The Action led by PAHO generated a series of critical tools and methodologies developed in close collaboration with the national and local health authorities.

Why DG ECHO?

DG ECHO was one the few donors acknowledging the humanitarian needs caused by violence in Central America region (a non-conflict scenario) and pushing for innovative solution, in this case related to access to health and protection of health staff. This is one of the greatest added value of DG ECHO as donor due to its flexibility and capacity to explore new areas and innovative proposals hand in hand with strategic partners.

Challenges

- The selection of health facilities and other participating institutions;
- Uncertainty of whether authorities at national and local levels and selected health facilities continue to support the proposed intervention and activities;
- Security context such as possible negotiations with organized gangs to open humanitarian spaces at community level and facilitate implementation of activities.

Links to documentation:

- https://www.paho.org/disasters/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=3650:safe-hospitals-new-page&Itemid=1292&lang=en





Supporting drought resilience in Cuba. © WFP/Yursys Miranda

Strengthening national and local drought management capacity in order to reduce the impact of drought on water provision and food and nutrition security in Cuba (“Pon tu Ficha”)

Summary: *To enhance resilience to drought at the national level by strengthening the technical capacity of relevant stakeholders in hydrometeorology in the municipalities considered most at risk of drought in Cuba’s eastern provinces and by promoting the inclusive management of drought.*

Achievements

The project changed the perception that nothing can be done. The tools, procedures and solutions developed in the first stage of the project have allowed the local authorities and the key stakeholders involved in food production and water management to:

- Shift the focus of drought management from crisis management to risk management by reducing vulnerabilities and initiating responses in a timely manner;
- Provide early warning for droughts and have more time for the preparations and response.

The results of the project prompted a change in perception among stakeholders who no longer feel that “nothing can be done”:

- The project allowed the vulnerability of the agro-food sector to be analysed for the first time;
- The system strengthened by the project proved its efficiency

and relevance during the drought period of 2018 in Santiago and Guantánamo: producers had access to key information about how the drought and local food production was evolving and were therefore able to make changes that mitigated the impacts on food production and animals’ survival;

- The appropriation and endorsement of the project results at the institutional and national levels were impressive.

Key messages

- The impact of drought can be reduced through a shift in focus: drought management should be risk management rather than crisis management;
- Drought management should begin before a crisis takes place by reducing vulnerabilities and responses should be initiated in a timely manner.

Brief description of the initiative

Organisation

WFP-UNDP

Timing

01/05/2016-30/04/2018

Budget

Total: €513,494.54 (ECHO's contribution: €350,000)

Beneficiaries

95,845 individuals. These included 104 specialists from surveillance institutions, drought monitoring networks, risk assessment groups and statistical offices, 166 water management specialists and 71,712 people receiving water through the public water supply.

281 organisations benefitted from the project. These included the following:

- 60 local government offices;
- 200 agricultural cooperatives;
- 5 provincial meteorological centres;
- 5 risk assessment groups;
- 5 provincial statistical offices;
- 6 important parts of the public water distribution network in Santiago de Cuba (basins, wells, and water treatment plants).

DP Priority

Supporting national DP systems, strengthening contingency planning and surge models in key national services – health (incl. epidemics), food security and nutrition, and shock responsive safety nets (in recurrent and predictable crises).

Rationale

The gaps in drought preparedness and response posed a serious threat to food security, nutrition and the public water supply. There was a need to:

- Strengthen capacities in order to establish an integrated drought management system that would reduce drought impact on food security and nutrition in the eastern provinces, and on the public water supply in the city of Santiago de Cuba (the second-largest city in Cuba);
- Increase the effectiveness of the drought early-warning system at all levels;
- Define parameters to improve the estimation of how drought will affect food security and nutrition at the municipal level, enable local governments, farmers and other stakeholders to manage risk reduction and, in the event of a drought, implement more effective actions based on specific forecasts;
- Improve capacities for hydrometrical and water quality control in Santiago.

Expected results/changes

Twenty municipalities in Cuba's eastern provinces have improved technical capacity in comprehensive drought management in order to reduce its impact on food security.

Sustainability

The partners and beneficiaries involved in the project (local and national institutions as well as local producers) will continue to use the project's drought management tools, procedures and methodologies.

Main contribution to risk reduction, resilience and anticipation

Benefits and lessons

The following tools were developed:

- A methodology for estimating the drought vulnerability of local food production;
- a procedure for hydro-meteorological drought monitoring that describes the role of monitoring institutions at the national and provincial levels;
- a communication procedure for the effective dissemination of data from monitoring institutions to ensure that important information about droughts reaches the majority of local actors in a timely manner;
- a methodology for drought response that takes both existing vulnerabilities and the specific characteristics of the event into account;
- "Pon tu Ficha" has been an example of good practice in Cuba and its tools will be applied throughout the country by the Government, which will ensure that the project is sustainable. Also, complementary projects have been funded by AECID, such as "Suma tu Gota".

Why DG ECHO?

ECHO is among the very few donors providing funding for disaster preparedness projects. Funding of such projects is essential if we want to have a long-term impact to improve resilience.

Challenges

The main challenge faced during the implementation was the purchasing process. This was negatively affected by the exchange rate, which changed between the beginning of the project and the point when the purchasing actually took place. This meant that it was not possible to purchase the quantity of equipment that had initially been planned.





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In Sana'a, Abdulrahman's team is pulling out the waste from the sanitation system, thanks to vehicles and pipes. © UNICEF Yemen/2019/ Ahmed Haleem

Integrating Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) into the WASH Emergency Humanitarian response in Yemen

Summary: *Integrating DRR considerations into the Humanitarian WASH response in Yemen through the introduction of a risk-informed programming approach in relation to water-related diseases, such as Cholera and Acute Watery Diarrhea (AWD).*

Achievements

- As per information received from UNICEF in December 2019, the Case Fatality Rate (CFR) has already decreased from 0.14% to 0.13%;
- So far, 232,650 individuals have been reached by the water quality and hygiene promotion activities of the intervention;
- 50 committees out of the planned 80 have been trained and equipped with maintenance tools. This has been done in parallel to "risk proofing" of water and sanitation systems (small-scale infrastructure works, small installations for preparedness, emergency response facilities, and non-structural vulnerability reduction measures, such as safe practice in hospitals - e.g. maintenance, siting of equipment, etc.);
- To date, a total of eleven water supply systems in Socotra and Lahj governorates have benefited from this intervention;

- Lessons learnt exercise presented to donors on November 17th, 2019.

Key messages

- Cholera epidemics require a rapid cycle of early detection, verification and response. The national surveillance system in Yemen does not have the capacity to support real-time monitoring. A country needs to have the capacity to detect the existence of an outbreak and to carry out laboratory tests to confirm the nature of the disease in order to be able to limit its spread. In emergencies, surveillance must focus on early outbreak detection, rapid response and containment. The adoption of a preventative approach and the improvement of water quality have increased community resilience to disease



Soon, Hani, Hamed and their friends will be able to play football in the street, thanks to the repair of the sanitation system in their neighborhood. © UNICEF Yemen 2019/ Mahmoud Fadhel

outbreaks, while the National Water Resources Authority (NWRA) teams are available when a response is needed. NWRA teams monitor the bacteriological and chemical quality of water and take remedial actions, if needed. This intervention has benefited a total of 232,650 people living in three governorates;

- In order to prevent further negative impacts, communities living in districts with sustained cholera transmission need to have a high level of preparedness. Hygiene promotion and the provision of essential WASH supplies are strengthening community resilience. This needs to be coupled with cholera case management at the household level. This has been jointly done with the Rapid Response Teams covering 11 targeted governorates;
- It is crucial to adopt a systematic approach to proper cholera prevention at the community level in large geographic areas. Local water committees are playing a crucial role in this respect. Their capacity needs to be strengthened to effectively manage water and sanitation systems and develop coping strategies to adopt when natural disasters occur. A training module on Community Based Management of water and sanitation systems has been developed by the General Authority of Water Supply System (GARWSP). It focuses on technical aspects of water and sanitation systems, and on issues related to the governance and financial management of rural systems.

Training is being provided on the preventive and reactive measures required during and after natural disasters.

Brief description of the initiative

Organisation

UNICEF

Timing

September 2018 – on-going (2 years)

Budget

€3,600,618 (DG ECHO contribution: €2,000,000)

Beneficiaries

100,000

DP Priority

Supporting National DP systems, strengthening contingency planning and surge models in key national services.

Rationale

Due to the lack of access to safe water, basic sanitation and hygiene facilities, an estimated 16 million Yemenis,

including 8.2 million children, are in acute need of immediate WASH services. This has a dire impact on the health of most Yemenis and leaves them fragile and vulnerable to diseases, such as Cholera and Acute Watery Diarrhea (AWD). The cholera/AWD outbreak has reached an unprecedented level, with a total of 1,115,378 suspected cholera cases and 2,310 associated deaths between the first wave in April 2017 and July 2018. Children under 5 years old represent 28.8% of total suspected cases. As a third wave was expected, a strategy was urgently needed to decrease or eliminate the risk posed by Cholera/AWD for the local population.

The project design was based on the need to rapidly promote community-based preparedness and risk reduction interventions, and to establish proper information-sharing links with existing UN community-based rapid response and assessment teams. Surveillance and early warning systems have been adapted to the peri-urban communities where most vulnerable and at-risk people live.

Expected results/changes

ECHO support to emergency preparedness for epidemics is based on:

- 1) Community-based surveillance and early warning systems (EWS). These EWS are linked with the activation of Rapid Response Teams currently in place at district levels supported by WHO. The epidemic EWS activities started in 2018. The project is expected to reach an increased number of communities, consolidate stakeholder capacities and strengthen links between stakeholders;
- 2) Involvement of technical directorates from line ministries. Government staff are participating in the cholera task force meetings and the WASH and Health clusters;
- 3) Capacity building of WASH committees and local communities at field level;
- 4) Protection of assets and critical facilities;
- 5) A lessons learnt exercise to provide sustainable solutions to prepare for new cholera outbreaks (this was conducted on November 17th, 2019, in ECHO Amman office with participation of several donors).

Based on the above-mentioned strategy, it is expected that mortality related to cholera/AWD will be reduced by 50% by the end of the project. This will be achieved by providing 300,000 Yemenis with access to adequate WASH services, raising awareness about hygiene practices, and strengthening community resilience to Cholera/AWD. This will involve establishing and building the capacity of WASH committees, providing/improving access to safe water, providing maintenance tool kits, enhancing information, education and communication (IEC) on DRR and protecting 30 water sources and/or sanitation networks from floods and cyclones. In terms of improving information, education and communication on DRR, the project will have a particular focus on training community focal points on early detection and information sharing. This will be integrated into the existing EWS and will ensure that affected areas are

contained in a timely manner and rapid response teams are triggered. It will also help to trigger rapid response and preparedness interventions beyond the geographic area covered by the project. According to information received from UNICEF in December 2019, CFR has already decreased from 0.14% to 0.13%.

Sustainability

This project's strategy is to move away from extremely expensive and non-sustainable WASH interventions, such as water trucking, and improve early warning and response by increasing local community engagement to improve the flow of information.

Main contribution to risk reduction, resilience and anticipation

Benefits and lessons

- Disaster Preparedness interventions should include a multi-hazard approach in contexts where there is a mixture of manmade and natural disasters, with their related constraints. One of the lessons that has been learned has prompted UNICEF to relocate water supply networks to higher levels, away from valleys. This has significantly reduced "pipe drifting" (the disconnection or



Workers are installing new sanitation pipes in Dar Saad district in Aden within the sanitation project implementation supported by UNICEF and the European Union. ©UNICEF Yemen 2019/ Mahmoud Fadhel



Zakaria and his friends playing in the streets of Dar Sad district in Aden, Yemen, before the implementation of the QIP project.
©UNICEF Yemen/2019/Mohmoud Al-Falasteni

dislocation of pipes due to flooding) and ensured that there is uninterrupted access to safe water for beneficiaries living in these areas. Similarly, for water sources located downstream of wadis, pipelines were installed as much as possible on the banks of the wadis and pipes were not welded (fittings used) which prevents pipes from being disconnected when there is flooding;

- Sustainable WASH solutions are equally necessary in conflict contexts. In order to ensure that interventions are timely and communities are able to cope with disasters, spare parts and consumable materials should be prepositioned with GARWSP;
- Given the poor access to communities and the lack of government services, effective social mobilization for cholera is paramount (household hygiene, usage of IEC materials and provision of support for the Oral Cholera Vaccine campaign);
- Community involvement in the cholera response has to be done in an integrated manner. This could be included in a mini package of DRR activities and potentially integrated into UNICEF WASH programmes. As this was one of the recommendations of the lessons learnt exercise, UNICEF is currently designing such a package;
- Innovative solutions should be considered even in emergency and complex crisis contexts (risk-proofing, pre-emptive training and placing on standby of Rapid Response Teams, and linking activities with ongoing Quick Impact Projects);

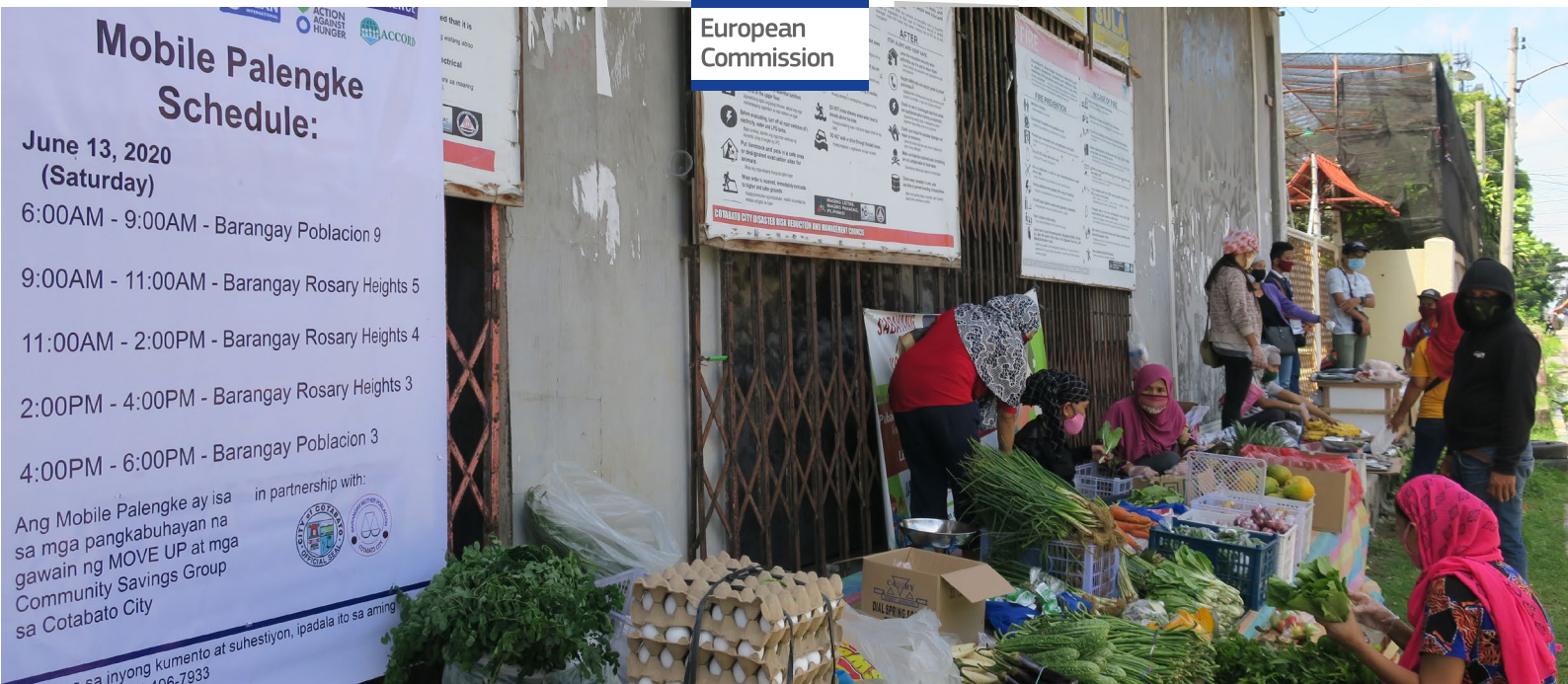
- There are difficulties in linking emergency response and development strategy (Nexus) due to the ongoing conflict. However, DG ECHO's strategy should go beyond a pure emergency response.

Why DG ECHO?

After a two-year cholera outbreak in Yemen during which DG ECHO contributed significantly to the response, DG ECHO wanted to address the risks of future outbreaks by investing more on prevention and preparedness in the war context.

Challenges

The war context, regular and unexpected population movement, administrative blockages and impediments, and partners' absorption capacity within the ever-changing context.



CSGs mobile market in Cotabato City. ©ECHO

Moving Urban Poor Communities Toward Resilience, or Move Up Project, Philippines

Summary: *The project aims to empower communities so that they become more resilient to both natural and human-induced disasters, such as earthquakes, typhoons, floods, and fires. It also aims to influence the policy and programs of local and national governments toward the inclusion of strategies on resilient livelihoods and alternative temporary shelters (ATS), and to advocate for an increase in local government investment in these strategies.*

Achievements

These are the main achievements so far - the project is still ongoing.

A menu of options of alternative temporary shelter models/designs were developed, from which communities and local governments can select the most appropriate for their context. These designs are locally-designed, and use locally-available materials. Some of these models, particularly partitions for large spaces such as basketball courts, and easily installable tents have been deployed in the aftermath of various fire incidents in Metro Manila. Displaced community members who were able to use installed ATS said that they were able to rest well, and reported a feeling of safety and privacy which were absent prior to the use of the ATS.

In partnership with the local governments, the earthquake contingency plans of the five cities of Caloocan, Malabon, Navotas, Quezon, and Valenzuela, were improved, as were the contingency plans of barangays, particularly regarding camp coordination and camp management.

As part of the resilient livelihoods strategy, community savings groups (CSG) were formed, and developed a culture of saving among the urban poor. The CSGs were strengthened through mentoring and capacity-building, including trainings on leadership and management. Using their savings, the members were able to establish livelihood activities allowing them to diversify their income sources. As organized groups, they are also able to access livelihood funding opportunities from local and national government agencies. Some groups that existed before the project were also able to strengthen their livelihoods,

increase their production and sales, and significantly reduce or eliminate reliance on loans with high interest rates. Urban poor families were also able to benefit from risk transfer mechanisms through the CSGs and through private micro-insurance policies. CSGs are also being created in communities not covered by the project.

The project influenced local government's ways of working and helped them establish ways to collaborate. In the past, it was rare for different city departments to work together. The establishment of a project working group in each city has provided a platform for them to cooperate with each other, and with the project.

Partner local governments, both at the barangay and city levels, have incorporated ATS and resilient livelihood strategies in their plans, programs and budgets. For example, under the Quezon City comprehensive development plan, Php 5 million was allocated to implement resilient livelihood activities using the MOVE UP strategies. Valenzuela City has begun allocating Php 1 million each year for micro-insurance for the urban poor. In Malabon City, the City Government purchased ATS materials worth Php 0.5 million and developed a mobile storage system so that the materials can be deployed anywhere in the city. In addition, one of its barangays that is not covered by the project allocated Php 2 million for ATS. In the draft guidelines of the Provision of Transitional Shelters for Orphaned, Unaccompanied, and Separated Children, under the Comprehensive Emergency Program for Children, ATS models developed by the project are among the recommended options.

Key messages

There are significant needs in terms of livelihoods and shelter, and these are also among the sectors most affected by disasters. They therefore need to be strengthened and protected from disasters using the MOVE UP strategies on ATS and resilient livelihoods.

Collaboration between the national government, local governments, and the private sector is essential to find innovative solutions to problems caused by natural and man-made disasters.

Brief description of the initiative

Organisation

A consortium composed of Action Against Hunger (ACF), PLAN International, CARE Nederland, and Assistance and Cooperation for Community Resilience and Development (ACCORD)

Timing

Move up 1 - 15/02/2016 - 14/10/2017

Move up 2 - 15/08/2017 - 14/05/2019

Move up 3 - 10/07/2018 - 30/06/2020

Budget

Move Up 1 - €850,000

Move up 2 - €700,000

Move up 3 - €1 Million



Emergency cash assistance for COVID-19 for urban poor households. ©ECHO

Beneficiaries

Beneficiaries of the project are individuals from urban poor communities, including youth, adult and older men and women, who are constantly affected by disasters. Among these are persons with disabilities, as well as pregnant and lactating women. Local government staff and officials also benefit from the project.

MOVE UP 1 reached a total of 30,875 individuals and 25 organisations and MOVE UP 2 an estimated 16,800 individuals and 155 organisations. The target number of beneficiaries for MOVE UP 3 is 96,500 individuals and 206 organisations.

DP Priority

Urban preparedness with an emphasis on mega cities. Supporting National DP systems, strengthening contingency planning and surge models in key national services – health (incl. epidemics), food security and nutrition, shock responsive safety nets (in recurrent and predictable crises).

Rationale

While the Philippines is amongst the better-performing countries in Asia when it comes to disaster preparedness in its cyclone-prone regions, the same cannot be said for urban areas. With a population of over 20 million people, its capital Manila is highly exposed to a variety of natural hazards, and the poorest communities are systematically those worse affected by these recurring climatic events. Cities outside the capital also face the same threats. These urban centres not only have large urban poor populations, they also house key government offices, private establishments and industries that support entire provinces and regions. In Mindanao, additionally, there is armed conflict and certain cities host IDPs from neighboring towns. It is therefore crucial to strengthen the resilience of these cities.

Expected results/changes

The project includes three interventions: 1. the design and employment of alternative temporary shelters (ATS), 2. the provision of mechanisms and strategies for resilient and sustainable livelihoods and, 3. the institutionalisation of resilience initiatives through evidence-based advocacy. It will also help identify alternative transitional sites that could be used in the event of evacuations.

The project and partner local governments have approached the private sector – particularly establishments such as malls, groceries, and hotels – to find large enough spaces that could be used in emergencies. ACF is also in touch with insurance companies to explore ways of boosting slum-dwellers' resilience. For example, they are looking into the feasibility of cities securing some sort of micro-insurance scheme for their poorest populations, using some of the unused DRR funds they have. Though people living in Manila's 'danger zones' will still have to be relocated to new areas, the project will influence how these relocation sites are developed.

Sustainability

MOVE UP activities are implemented through participatory and inclusive approaches. This ensures that community members' and local authorities' capacities are strengthened during the implementation of the project and that they are able to continue applying the same strategies once the project is over. Trainers, community facilitators and champions are identified and developed. The project has also consciously involved the local authorities from the start of the implementation to ensure that there is ownership of the project on their part. Jointly, the different stakeholders involved identify the Government policies and programs into which the MOVE UP strategies can be incorporated.

The national advocacy of the third phase aims to incorporate MOVE UP strategies into subnational and national level policies, based on experiences in the field, to contribute to an enabling environment for implementing urban resilience strategies.

Main contribution to risk reduction, resilience and anticipation

Benefits and lessons

Urban poor community members have benefited from improved conditions in evacuation camps, in areas where ATS models are deployed, and camp management mechanisms and contingency plan protocols are enhanced. Members of established community savings groups continue to be able to save, and have access to these pooled savings for loans that they use as capital for livelihood activities. These livelihood activities provide opportunities for CSG members, mostly women, to have income-earning activities and develop their knowledge and skills as individuals. The participation of urban poor community members in various project activities has encouraged them to take a more active role in community activities, including those involving urban resilience building.

With the project focusing on establishing resilience mechanisms for the urban poor, it has been able to catalyse discussion among local authorities and other stakeholders on their plight, and spark dialogue on how this could be addressed.

Why DG ECHO?

Crisis management in urban context is a priority in DG ECHO's disaster preparedness policy, in line with international agendas and framework as the New Urban Agenda. Additionally, thanks to DG ECHO's multiannual experience in financing disaster risk reduction programmes, a series of lessons learnt on shelter had been collected. This project provided the opportunity to adapt them and apply them to urban contexts, thus generating new knowledge on the subject. DG ECHO's support has facilitated the design and piloting of urban resilience mechanisms in highly-urbanized cities in the Philippines.



Portable handwashing station turnover Misamis. ©ECHO

Challenges

- There are many activities competing for the time of urban poor families. Livelihood activities take up most of their time and participation in various activities may mean time away from their income earning activities. The project tries to implement activities in such a way that allocating time is manageable for the participants, and their participation in activities does not add to their burden, especially for women. Efforts are also made to help them understand the importance of taking part in resilience building activities;
- The view held by local governments that urban poor families are used to evacuating and enduring dismal living conditions in evacuation camps, and that if the situation in camps is improved, they will choose not to return to their own homes. Work is carried out to convince the local authorities that safe and sufficient shelter during emergencies is a basic right, that the government has the primary responsibility to provide it, and that improving conditions in evacuation camps is possible;
- There is generally little understanding and appreciation of savings and risk transfer, even for the non-urban poor. Financial literacy sessions aim to show how even low-income families can save, especially by taking part in CSGs. The experiences of established CSGs are shared with new ones and it is also clarified that though maintaining the

CSGs is an end in itself, it is also a tool to allow its members to undertake new livelihood activities, and to strengthen and protect their current livelihoods;

- It is a constant challenge to make urban resilience gains sustainable. Changes in political leadership can cause setbacks. Building the capacity of the urban poor population themselves, and integrating urban resilience strategies into the plans and programs of the local government help to increase sustainability.

Links to documentation:

- <https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1067076>
- <https://tribune.net.ph/index.php/2019/04/12/disaster-insurance-essential-for-urban-poor/>
- <https://www.facebook.com/ActionAgainstHungerPH/photos/a-consortium-of-international-ngos-composed-of-action-against-hunger-plan-intern/586053818243392/>
- <https://twitter.com/planphilippines/status/1116266583851065344>



Rohingya children in a feeding centre. ©EU-ECHO

Strengthening local humanitarian preparedness and response to conflict-affected populations in Rakhine, Kachin and Northern Shan States

Summary: *Develop national and local competencies for early action and locally-owned Rapid/Emergency Response Mechanisms (ERMs).*

Achievements

The current project builds on OXFAM's previous experience of setting up an ERM in Kachin. One of the key achievements is the locally-managed governance structure developed by OXFAM to manage the ERM (identifying triggers, assessing proposals, deciding how funds are to be distributed, etc.) as well as the fast disbursement of funds (which occurs within the first three days of an event). In a joint review of different rapid response mechanisms (including OCHA's Myanmar Humanitarian Fund - MHF - and DFID's Rapid Response Fund - RRF), the ERM's governance structure and its quick reactivity were found to be its key strengths, enabling partners to meet immediate emergency needs through a localised decision-making process, before slightly longer-term resilience support from MHF and RRF can kick in. The feedback from local organisations is very positive. In 2018, during the locally-led piloting of the Kachin ERM, successful partners/responders reached 11,817 conflict-affected beneficiaries in eight townships via the four activations.

Key messages

Local ownership and management of an Emergency Response Mechanism increases its relevance.

Brief description of the initiative

Organisation

OXFAM

Timing

12 months (start date: 1/4/2019 and end date: 31/3/2020)

Budget

€580,000

Beneficiaries

Approximately 8,500 individuals



The start of the rainy season will make life even more difficult for the Rohingya IDPs. © Evangelos Petratos, Rakhine, Myanmar/Burma June 2014

DP Priority

Linking Relief, Rehabilitation and Development (LRRD) strategies and Nexus – Enhanced disaster preparedness as part of recovery and reconstruction strategies that are supported by DG DEVCO/DG NEAR.

Supporting national and local capacities for early response mechanisms (in ongoing crises or situations of fragility).

Rationale

The 2019 Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) has identified approximately 216,000 people in need of humanitarian assistance and the majority are protracted Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs). 40 % of these IDPs are currently in non-government-controlled areas where access is extremely limited. In addition to protracted IDP caseloads, frequent fighting between the Myanmar Army and Ethnic Armed Groups, as well as between Ethnic Armed Groups themselves, has resulted in multiple short-term displacements. Despite a unilateral ceasefire agreement announced by the Myanmar Army in 2019, fighting in Northern Shan during the first quarter of 2019 led to temporary displacement.

Local organisations have better access/ are in an easier position to reach the most vulnerable communities where humanitarian access is very limited or in very remote sites where they are the first responders. This existing local operational platform at township and state level needs to be strengthened.

Expected results/changes

The ERM mechanism provides an effective “bridge” to cater for needs arising from short-term displacements.

The expected result is to equip local humanitarian responders in Kachin and Northern Shan States with the skills, capacities and resources that enable them to respond to small-scale displacement caused by conflict or disasters triggered by natural hazards. The project collaborates with 9 local organisations (Karuna Mission Social Solidarity/KMSS, Metta Development Foundation, Nyein (Shalom) Foundation, Wunpawng NinghtoiWPN, Kachin Development Group/KDG, Kachin Relief and Development Committee/KRDC, Kachin Baptist Convention/KBC, Bridging Rural Integrated Development and Grassroots Empowerment/BRIDGE and Kachin Women Association/KWA). Depending on the needs, these local organisations can activate the ERM up to four times in each state, for a maximum of EURO 30,000 each time.

Sustainability

The project is run in parallel with the DG DEVCO-funded Durable Peace Programme (DPP), implemented via the same consortium of local civil society organisations (CSOs) managed by OXFAM. The DPP supports women and men, as active citizens, to have greater awareness of their rights and responsibilities, at the same time as increased capacity and motivation to participate in key peace and development processes.

Main contribution to risk reduction, resilience and anticipation

Benefits and lessons

When working with vulnerable people it is necessary to both ensure that their basic needs are met and promote self-reliance in order to ensure that they can engage meaningfully with peace and governance issues.

Why DG ECHO?

The conflicts in Kachin and Northern Shan are rated 10 in the 2019 Forgotten Crisis Index. There is huge need and insufficient funding.

DG ECHO has been working in Kachin and Northern Shan States since the conflict began in June 2011. Due to limited humanitarian access and remoteness, local partners have been playing a key role in reaching the most vulnerable communities.

Since 2017, in line with the new risk, resilience and preparedness strategy for Asia, as well as the operational context in Myanmar (where access for international partners is severely constrained), there is a need to progressively re-focus Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) programming in order to localise preparedness for response and early action. The objectives of the OXFAM project in Kachin are to continue to meet urgent food needs and provide cash assistance to conflict-affected IDPs while simultaneously promoting livelihoods, gender equity, and greater participation in peace-process negotiations. As such, DG ECHO should invest in localised ERMs.

Challenges

The local humanitarian networks in Northern Shan State (NSS) are not as developed as in Kachin. Oxfam’s relationships with local CSOs are not as well established and the context in NSS is more challenging. However, context-appropriate lessons learned from the Kachin ERM after action review process will be incorporated into the design and implementation of the NSS ERM and used to inform potential localised responses in Rakhine as well.



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School drills.

Preparing for an Education in Emergency response in Bhutan

Summary: Facilitate the rollout of the Disaster Management and Contingency plan of the Ministry of Education at national, district (Dzongkhag) and school levels, covering all of Bhutan's 20 districts and supporting the development and testing of District Education Contingency plans.

Achievements

Development of the Disaster Management and Contingency Plan (DMCP) of the Ministry of Education 'to ensure safety, plan for educational continuity during disasters, and strengthen risk reduction and resilience through education.' The plan was endorsed by the government in June 2016 and it is the first disaster management and contingency plan development in Bhutan by a sectoral line ministry.

Development of the "teacher training handbook" training of teachers acting as school Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) focal points and mock drills.

Development of the DRR curriculum framework endorsed by the Royal Education Council Curriculum Board for the training of future teachers.

Key messages

It is possible to achieve significant results in Disaster Risk Reduction with limited funds. Sustainability of these results depends on the level of ownership by the country.

Brief description of the initiative

Organisation

Save the Children Bhutan in partnership with the government.

Timing

2011-2018

Budget

€1,570,000

Beneficiaries

Students, teachers, the Ministry of Education, the Department of Disaster Management, Monastic institutions, the District Development office and communities.

DP Priority

Supporting National DP systems, strengthening contingency planning and surge models in key national services.

Rationale

Bhutan is exposed to a diversity of hazards, including floods, landslides, earthquakes, glacial lake outbursts, and droughts. Bhutan is strongly committed to advancing disaster risk management (DRM) and improving climate resilience. A holistic DRM framework was established in 2006 and is guided by an ex-ante, proactive approach.

Schools are densely populated places, with many small children, who are one of the most vulnerable groups in society. It has been consistently proven that during disasters schools and school children are among the most affected. To reduce this vulnerability, it is important to have a School Disaster Management Plan. If better prepared for disasters, schools can also play a lead role in the community response to disasters. As community hubs, and as an integral part of society, schools have a responsibility towards the immediate neighbouring community.

The 2013 Disaster Management Act of Bhutan requires the Ministry of Education (MoE) to 'develop and endorse a Disaster Management and Contingency Plan and ensure that local level education functionaries and schools fulfil their disaster management responsibilities'. However, the majority of line ministries have not, to date, developed a disaster management and contingency plan.

Expected results/changes

Schools and the related institutions in Bhutan have the capacity, knowledge and skills to ensure the safety of learners and education personnel, to plan for educational continuity in the face of identified hazards and to safeguard education sector investments and strengthen disaster resilience through education.

Sustainability

The DG ECHO DRR actions in Bhutan were unique in the sense that the implementing partners of the actions were government line agencies. As the activities were agreed with the government counterparts, there was a high sense of ownership and most of them are already integrated in the government system, such as the Disaster Management plans and policies, the teacher training handbook, school DRR focal teacher training and mock drills.

Government counterparts have allocated a significant amount of resources to implement the DRR plans developed during DG ECHO's projects. For example, €260,000 have been allocated by Paro district to implement its District Disaster Management and Contingency Plan.

Similarly, the development of the DRR curriculum framework during this project, and its endorsement by the Royal

Education Council Curriculum Board ensures that future students will be much more aware of the country's hazards, risks and vulnerability and will thereby learn to mitigate these risks, and as a result will promote a culture of safety.

Main contribution to risk reduction, resilience and anticipation

Benefits and lessons

School-based DRR projects supported by DG ECHO have been instrumental in operationalising the Royal Government of Bhutan's Disaster Management Act (2013). Through this and other previous actions, the Ministry of Education has been able to develop its Disaster Management and Contingency Plan, which was the first of its kind in Bhutan. The project also provided the District government, Municipalities and schools with support in developing their disaster management and contingency plan, as required by the Act.

The project worked closely with government agencies, transferring and strengthening DRR knowledge, skills and capacities. As a result, the Department of Disaster Management, the central agency for implementing DRR activities in the country, helped other Ministries, district governments and municipal authorities to develop their DMCPs.

The project provided the Royal Education Council with support in developing its DRR curriculum framework. The curriculum framework will be a key input to the revision of the national curriculum and is already being used by various streams, such as Geography and Social Studies, as a reference for integrating DRM during their curriculum and textbook revisions.

A good lesson from Bhutan is the involvement of government agencies in project design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, which has contributed to the sustainability of the activities.

Why DG ECHO?

Disaster Preparedness was not an area in which other donors wanted to devote money, hence DG ECHO's decision to provide financial resources and technical expertise to Bhutan.

Challenges

Though working with the government as an implementing partner contributes to the sustainability of the project activities, government processes often take a considerable amount of time and, therefore, the challenge is to complete the activities within the project timeframe.





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*In this mock-drill, the team takes care of people they have rescued from drowning.
© EJC/ECHO/Veejay Villafranca*

Strengthening the capacity of ASEAN Member States to design and implement risk-informed and shock-responsive social protection

Summary: *To support the development of policies and operational options for ASEAN member states to strengthen the shock-responsiveness of their social protection systems, where relevant and appropriate. This will ultimately help to reduce the vulnerability of at-risk populations, strengthen their capacity to cope with and recover from shocks and enhance households' resilience.*

Achievements

- Strong commitment from social welfare and disaster risk management (DRM) agencies has been achieved through a participatory process in selected ASEAN Member States (AMS), the ASEAN Secretariat, the ASEAN Committee for Disaster Management (ACDM) and the Senior Official for Social Development (SOMSWD) while enhancing coordination and shared views among UN agencies;
- Options papers have been developed in Cambodia, the Philippines, Vietnam and Myanmar to scale up/adapt Social Protection to be risk-informed and shock-responsive (RISR-SP) after a review of the country's Social Protection and Disaster Risk Management systems and extensive consultations with government/local government and relevant stakeholders;
- A regional literature review concerning RISR social protection systems in ASEAN Member States has been completed, while additional country studies in Laos and Thailand were finalized;
- Early Warning Systems have been analyzed in Cambodia, the Philippines and Myanmar to develop a trigger system and Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for decision-making on using Social Protection to respond to shocks;
- ASEAN developed and adopted its Guidelines for Disaster Responsive Social Protection;
- Joint advocacy with the Asian Development Bank on Risk-Informed and Shock-responsive Social Protection at the 2018 Asian Ministerial Conference for Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) held in Ulaanbaatar in July 2018. An event was organized to share the results of the project and the experiences of other Asian countries. Recommendations were included in the Conference report.



The European Commission contributed to the relief efforts via its partnership with the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent (IFRC), who in turn distribute funds to flood-affected societies. In this photo, villagers carry water hygiene kits distributed with the help of EU funds. © EU/ECHO/Pierre Prakash

Key messages

As was evident from various examples in the countries involved, and notably the Philippines and Thailand, there are significant gains to be made in terms of efficiency, impact and sustainability in working with social protection systems and approaches when responding to crises.

The maturity of the national social protection system in many countries in the region and the legal framework that regulates access to it at the ASEAN level, and in many ASEAN Member States, is an opportunity to strengthen shock-responsive and risk-informed social protection systems.

This is work in progress. A number of actions are required to help implement the road maps defined by the project. This will force DG ECHO and its partners to:

- Take into account the lessons learned from years of DRR investment. While the progress made in forecast science needs to be taken on board, there is also a solid basis of Early Warning and Information Systems and Community Planning to build on;
- Expand the conversation to a larger number of stakeholders and break the silos between disciplines (e.g. climate science and vulnerability analysis or social protection and risk reduction, etc.) and, between stakeholders and organisational mandates;
- Use the comparative advantages of the various stakeholders involved (e.g. German Red Cross and FbF coordination efforts,

FAO and ASEAN policy dialogue, WFP and NGO partners on Risks Data and triggering, UNICEF and broader social protection considerations and risk financing options, etc.);

- Avoid duplication of effort and create synergies;
- Use the opportunity of a strong and binding ASEAN DRR work program, to make the change happen and encourage cross-country learnings.

Brief description of the initiative

Organisation

The partners in the Project are the ASEAN Member States, the national Governments of the case study countries (i.e. the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) and the national governments of Myanmar, the Philippines and Vietnam) together with the regional and country offices of the Food and Agriculture Office (FAO), the International Labour Organization of the United Nations (ILO), the United Nations International Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nation's World Food Programme (WFP) and the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDRR).

Timing

01/05/2017 – 31/03/2019 (23 months)

Budget

€700,000

Beneficiaries

860 Government officials and other stakeholders working on social protection and disaster risk management in ASEAN Member States.

DP Priority

Supporting National DP systems, strengthening contingency planning and surge models in key national services – health (incl. epidemics), food security and nutrition, shock-responsive safety nets (in recurrent and predictable crises).

Rationale

There is increasing recognition globally of the role of social protection (SP) in disaster risk management (DRM). Social protection programmes can enhance the effectiveness of disaster response as well as enable vulnerable households to enhance their assets, diversify livelihoods, prepare for disasters and recover faster, thus making them more resilient. To do this, the programmes need to be informed by risk variables, equipped with flexible delivery modalities, have access to and be implemented in close coordination with programs focusing on sustainable livelihoods, financial inclusion and early warning systems.

ASEAN is already ahead of the game in its efforts to reinforce the complementarity of SP and DRM. As part of the implementation of the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER) and the ASEAN Regional Framework and Action Plan to implement the ASEAN declaration on “Strengthening Social Protection”, ASEAN Member States (AMSs) are mandated to develop a protocol on shock-responsive social protection as well as an ASEAN regional guideline on RISR-SP.

Thanks to the involvement of DG ECHO, UN agencies have joined hands in supporting AMSs in this effort. Additionally, support is being provided to assess the readiness of social protection systems in ASEAN member states to deliver on resilience outcomes in collaboration with the Asian Development Bank and the Government of Canada. This support aims to make the systems risk-informed and shock-responsive and includes the development of ASEAN Guidelines on this topic. At the country level, selected ASEAN Member States (Cambodia, Myanmar, the Philippines, and Vietnam) are currently developing operational and design options to scale up potential social protection instruments to support more effective in-country DRM. This should produce interesting findings and important learning that would benefit other countries in the region and globally.

Expected results/changes

- ASEAN Member States have improved understanding of how risk-informed and shock-responsive social protection can support vulnerability reduction, disaster response and recovery and resilience building;

- Increased coordination and capacity of Social Protection (SP), DRM and other concerned sectors in ASEAN Member States to identify specific national requirements and reach consensus on collaborative actions to make SP risk-informed and shock-responsive;
- Country-specific roadmaps and financing options have been developed to further support Shock responsive social protection (SRSP) efforts;
- Increased appetite for political dialogue among Member States about the paradigm shift in disaster management, preparedness and response, and a commitment to take action in this respect;
- Harmonized approach among all UN agencies in the region working on social protection for disaster risk management, in alignment with ASEAN and AMS guidelines.

Sustainability

Bringing together social protection and humanitarian response in crisis situations is in itself a way to increase efficiency and sustainability:

- Working with social protection approaches or existing systems, such as beneficiary lists or payment mechanisms, can enable the rapid delivery of assistance to people most in need;
- Working with existing programmes avoids the need to establish parallel administrative systems and potentially reduces the overlap between agencies responding to a crisis;
- Working with social protection systems or approaches can enable a smoother transition from providing regular assistance to doing so during a crisis, and vice versa. In such cases, national governments can take responsibility for meeting the needs of citizens and refugees, and a medium-term transfer and exit strategy can be established for humanitarian aid;
- The effectiveness and efficiency created by combining social protection and humanitarian approaches can promote greater value for money.

Main contribution to risk reduction, resilience and anticipation**Benefits and lessons**

- Coordination: Most ASEAN Member States have DRM plans, policies, and frameworks (enabling factors). However, DRM implementation and mainstreaming are limited (constraining factor);
- Delivery: There are mobile networks, formal banking, and systems for transferring cash electronically in selected Member States (enabling factor), but there is continued reluctance to transfer cash directly to beneficiaries; inflexible delivery systems; and targeting mechanisms that are not designed to capture the effects of sudden crises (constraining factors);
- There is an ongoing debate about the development of information systems in many countries. However, data integration, low coverage, and challenges to data quality are constraining factors;

- Financing: Most Member States have budget provisions for DRM activities (enabling factor). However, there are no predefined commitments to channel resources through social protection after a disaster (constraining factor).

Why DG ECHO?

DG ECHO's Disaster Preparedness strategy in South East Asia contributes to the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 Priority 4 and the priorities set up by the AADMER work programmes 2016-2020.

While building on the lessons learned from over 20 years of DRR programming (DIPECHO), DG ECHO is looking at further shifting towards preparedness for response and early action. The core focus of its funding goes to: i) the integration of contingencies and preparedness arrangements into locally-owned service provision and social protection so that systems are risk-informed and shock-responsive; ii) forecast-based early actions; iii) urban preparedness, with an emphasis on mega cities; and iv) national and local early response mechanisms.

DG ECHO's funding in South East Asia aims to help improve regional response systems and national capacities, ensure that these are responsive and inclusive to community priorities and fill gaps when these first responders are overwhelmed.

Challenges

However, there are challenges hampering these much needed integrated policies and actions.

While several ASEAN Member States have developed national schemes with a good level of coverage and strong administrative systems, fully-fledged national social protection systems are less developed. The lack of coordination mechanisms between line ministries that implement social protection and DRR is another challenge that prevents the effective use of social protection for disaster response, recovery and resilience building, and vice versa.

Social protection instruments need to link to other services to support people in fragile settings (e.g Mindanao in The Philippines or Rakhine in Myanmar). Transitioning from humanitarian assistance to national social protection programmes needs to be further explored in these contexts.

Links to documentation:

- <https://socialprotection.org/strengthening-capacity-design-and-implement-risk-informed-and-shock-responsive-social-protection>
- <http://www.fao.org/asiapacific/events/detail-events/en/c/1499/>
- <https://socialprotection.org/discover/blog/strengthening-capacity-risk-informed-and-shock-responsive-social-protection-asean>
- <https://twitter.com/asean/status/1015137320436051968>
- <http://www.fao.org/cambodia/news/detail-events/en/c/1114336/>





European
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Special attention is paid to those who remain displaced, and female-headed households with many dependents, as their capacity to recover from the shock is lower than regular families. © 2019 European Union/Mallika Panorat

Start Network Crisis Anticipation Window

Enabling forecast-based action for humanitarian NGOs

Summary: *The Start Fund Anticipation Window seeks to mitigate harm and loss for communities at risk of crisis. It does so by enabling and incentivising Start Network members to monitor risk and develop forecast-based humanitarian actions carried out by local and international NGOs for small- to medium-size crises.*

Achievements

- Strengthened partnerships, products and processes to successfully anticipate emergencies and mitigate risk;
- Increased quality and supply of forecasting information available to Start Network members;
- Increased members' capacity to interpret this information and apply it to programme design and adaptation via agreed triggering mechanisms;
- Creation of the Forecast-Based Early Warning and Response Network (FOREWARN¹), which brings together scientists and practitioners developing new approaches to humanitarian forecasting.

Key messages

A key element of this approach is collective sense-making, or collaborative risk analysis, around the situation forecasted and its potential humanitarian impact.

The fear of 'acting in vain' permeates the decision-making process.

Brief description of the initiative

Organisation

Start Network

¹ A network of risk analysts, FOREWARN represents a multi-disciplinary, multi-stakeholder network of aid professionals, academics and risk experts, which uses robust academic expertise to support operationally-sound anticipatory decision making. For more information: <https://startnetwork.org/forewarn>

Timing

01/10/2016 – 30/09/2018

Budget

€1,100,000

Beneficiaries

1,215,653 individuals and 42 organisations

DP Priority

Supporting National and local capacities for early response mechanisms (in Ongoing crises or situations of fragility).

Rationale

In 2016, several NGOs began forecasting a stronger-than-usual El Nino event but lacked the resources and funding to prepare for it. The Start Network found that waiting for a crisis to hit, and responding once the damage had been done, was not good enough - especially in the context of predictable crisis. Following this, the Start Fund – which was primarily aimed at response – was adapted so that Start Network members could access funding and implement projects before a disaster strikes.

Expected results/changes

- Forecast-based actions were appraised and lessons were disseminated effectively;
- Appraisal tools for anticipatory interventions were developed and implemented;
- FOREWARN was created as a tool to produce guidance notes and technical advisory information for decision-making for Start Fund anticipation alerts;
- A global risk analysis unit design report was produced and disseminated among donors and other key stakeholders in order to guide future direction for networked risk analysis. The unit, which at the global level will continue to use the FOREWARN title, will comprise global thematic risk-analysis subgroups and national or regional analysis teams.

Sustainability

DG ECHO's funding was essential for the development of a new anticipatory way of working, with new systems, partnerships, processes and activities. The project informed the design of the second phase of the anticipation window as well as its roll-out that is now fully effective. More specifically, beyond the project, the Start Fund's objective is to build inter-agency partnerships and further expand FOREWARN's interdisciplinary subgroups (conflict, WASH, geo-physical hazards, generalists, heatwaves, evidence, mapping, cyclones, flooding, cold waves and disease outbreaks) and structures (risk monitoring, crisis anticipation alerts and risk financing mechanisms). It is essential that humanitarian, climate, scientific and peacebuilding actors closely collaborate to anticipate and mitigate the impact of crises properly.

Main contribution to risk reduction, resilience and anticipation**Benefits and lessons**

- It is essential that decision-makers distinguish risk from uncertainty: *decisions can be made while recognising that there are elements of uncertainty.*

There is not necessarily a 'right' or 'wrong' outcome. Decision-makers should be comfortable embracing the learning that will occur when dealing with uncertainty and should review past decisions for learning purposes.

- Risk analysis/products are more effective when they are co-developed by heterogeneous partners, increasing the range of expertise. It is therefore important to go beyond the established network and create long-lasting cooperation actions with other relevant local and global stakeholders;
- Forecast-based actions require new approaches that are often unfamiliar to traditionally trained monitoring and evaluation personnel. Further piloting of approaches, along with resources to support monitoring and evaluation staff are required.

Why DG ECHO?

The project helped the Start Fund disseminate its approach more broadly outside the Start Network and contribute to policy development as well as the implementation of forecast-based actions in the humanitarian sector in line with DG ECHO's strategy. The creation of FOREWARN – bringing together humanitarians and forecasters to co-develop the technical aspects of the anticipation window – also fitted in well with DG ECHO's DP priorities.

Crisis anticipation projects have been implemented by fourteen Start members in nine countries, on a range of hazards including: cholera, conflict & displacement, drought, Ebola, flooding and landslides, heatwave and electoral violence. Among the ten forecast-based interventions carried out during the project period, the anticipation of flooding and landslides in Tajikistan (July 2017) and the anticipation of election violence in Kenya (July 2017) are good examples.

Challenges

- Fast decision making and fund disbursement may be challenging at times, in view of the different timeframes of academic partners that develop research and test theories. Balancing these two elements proved to be arduous;
- The frequency of the anticipatory alerts was low, showing that the use of the system was not mature enough. There is therefore a need to cultivate knowledge about and interest in the anticipation window, and to create the conditions for members to raise anticipatory alerts.

Links to documentation:

- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L_PqX_L1B0s&feature=youtu.be





The EU and the Red Cross assist thousands of Venezuelans migrating throughout Latin America. © 2018 European Union/N. Mazars

Strengthening the National System for Disaster Risk-management (SNGRD) by enhancing its capacity to respond to multi-hazard scenarios on the Colombian-Venezuelan border and improving cooperation between civilian components of SNGRD and Armed Forces

Summary: Increase the capacities of stakeholders to manage multi-hazard scenarios caused by migration emergencies such as the ongoing Venezuelan crisis, the presence of guerrilla groups and criminal groups, the volatile situation in post-conflict zones after the peace agreement with the FARC and the high levels of risk related to natural events such as landslides and flooding in the Departments of Norte de Santander, Arauca, La Guajira, Vichada and Guainía.

Achievements

- The project was initially focused on the departments of Norte de Santander, Arauca and La Guajira. However, some actions were also replicated in the departments of Vichada and Guainía due to the large-scale effects of the Venezuelan crisis;
- The emergency response capacity has been strengthened in the area of intervention. Young people have especially been targeted through «the Route of Prevention», visiting schools directly where all students were able to participate in training activities;
- Members of the National Police, Army and Navy have been trained in Disaster Risk Management;
- A drill exercise has been carried out in Cúcuta, involving participation of relief agencies and the Armed Forces. The municipal Administration of San José de Cúcuta also took part in the seventh National Emergency Response Drill, in order to sensitize the population. A methodological toolkit has been created in a multimedia version and web version. It contains eight tools with their respective associated resources and 184 files.



Venezuelans reach the Rumichaca border suffering from severe malnutrition, exhaustion, and a number of diseases that their country's collapsed health system cannot address. © 2018 European Union/N. Mazars

Key messages

Cooperation and coordination between civil and military actors should be promoted in the region to improve preparedness. This could be done through the provision of training in disaster risk management and the dissemination of knowledge among the different stakeholders involved in disaster response.

Brief description of the initiative

Organisation

German Red Cross

Timing

01/04/2017 – 31/12/2018

Budget

€450,000

Beneficiaries

9,292 individuals and 5 organisations

DP Priority

Institutional partnerships with national and regional Civil protection actors: UNGRD (Unidad Nacional para la Gestión del Riesgo de Desastres), SNGRD (Sistema Nacional de Gestión del Riesgo de Desastres), CDGRD (Directorio Coordinadores Departamentales y Municipales de Gestión del Riesgo de Desastres), local firefighters and civil defence departments.

Rationale

The border areas with Venezuela were faced with several complex situations, including the Venezuelan migration crisis, new armed confrontations between armed actors (especially in Catatumbo region) and floods (in Vichada and Guanía). All these situations exceeded the response capacity of the local authorities. In this complex scenario, the project contributed to strengthening the response capacity of local risk management systems at Departmental and local levels, providing technical training on civil-military coordination, management and response to emergencies of all kinds.

Expected results/changes

- To contribute to the reduction of casualties in emergencies in multi-hazard contexts among the most vulnerable population in the Department of Norte de Santander;
- Staff of the main members of SNGRD have improved knowledge, methods, tools and are equipped to manage emergencies in multi-hazard scenarios;
- The armed forces have improved knowledge, methods and resources (HR/tools) to manage emergencies in multi-hazard scenarios, and participate in the National System for Disaster Risk-management;
- Successful experiences resulting from past DIPECHO cooperation projects in Colombia have been systematised and shared.

Sustainability

With the aim of making the DRM courses accessible, a virtual diploma programme was created. This was initially



Most Venezuelan migrants come from hot, tropical regions and have to endure temperatures as low as zero degrees while crossing the Andes into Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru. © 2018 European Union/N. Mazars

developed for the Armed Forces, but it was found that this tool could have a broader reach, which is why the courses were opened to the public. Apart from the Armed Forces, educational, health and environmental institutions, as well as the private sector and relief agencies also benefited from this initiative. This training platform is currently available for new users.

The German Red Cross has submitted a new Disaster Preparedness proposal including certain activities that would strengthen the process with the Armed Forces and favour the optimal dissemination of the Disaster Preparedness Toolbox. Furthermore, its format makes it possible to include new publications and tools. This is an important characteristic that will allow the Toolbox to be continually updated.



More than 2.6 million Venezuelans have now fled their country, hoping to escape starvation, extreme poverty and violence. © 2018 European Union/N. Mazars

Main contribution to risk reduction, resilience and anticipation

Benefits and lessons

As staff turnover in institutions affected some of the activities (impeding a proper follow-up of the projects), the presence of one permanent employee per agency is being considered, with the aim of ensuring continuity despite turn-over.

The need to improve the response to multi-hazard scenarios could be highlighted, bearing in mind that the ongoing migration crisis is currently increasing in intensity.

The strategies and activities of this project helped to improve the response to the Venezuelan migratory crisis. Five kits were provided for the RUD (Registro Único de Damnificados) to identify and characterize the victims of natural events or of unintentional human actions.

Why DG ECHO?

This project follows on from previous DG ECHO disaster preparedness programme (DIPECHO) interventions on civilian-military cooperation, aiming to ensure institutional sustainability and appropriation of previous projects. As stated above, this project aimed to create and secure synergies with all the agencies that have implemented DIPECHO projects in Colombia, learning lessons from successful experiences from over the years.

Challenges

- To fully design and implement a learning strategy aimed at the school sector so that young people in the Municipality of Cúcuta will recognize natural phenomena that affect the territory as well as actions to be taken in response to these phenomena at the family, community and school levels;
- Rotation of officials in charge of risk management at the municipal or departmental level or the multiplicity of tasks that they are responsible for, particularly in emergency situations due to migration and floods;
- The ongoing migration crisis forced the members of the departmental risk management council of Norte Santander to dedicate most of their time to tasks related to the emergency response, which made it difficult to comply with the commitments made to work on the departmental instruments.





Medical staff gives instructions to Deddeh fort he feeding of Elijah.
© MSF - Martin Zinggl

Consolidation of an integrated response to the Ebola epidemic in 4 prefectures (N'Zérékoré, Beyla, Yomou and Lola) in the Guinean region of N'Zérékoré and in 5 health districts of the Liberian county of Nimba

Summary: *To mitigate the impact of the Ebola epidemic in the regions of N'Zérékoré and Nimba by improving epidemic surveillance, awareness raising and training using a community-based approach and supporting the social reinsertion of Ebola survivors and other vulnerable individuals directly or indirectly affected by the virus.*

Achievements

- 114 out of 170 individuals cured and 56 vulnerable persons received psychosocial assistance;
- 62 cured individuals received support in terms of economic recovery and socio-professional reinsertion;
- Five Ebola survivor associations received cash support and Income Generating Activities (IGA) starting kits on the basis of their specific needs;
- 1,206 individuals included in an awareness campaign to reduce the stigmatisation of people affected by the Ebola virus (604 men and 602 women);
- 200 persons received awareness, prevention and epidemic

- surveillance training (20 per community: 15 Protection Committee members; 1 traditional leader; 2 community health volunteers and; 2 members of the Community Welfare Committee);
- An estimated 68,500 individuals reached by the awareness campaigns broadcast on local radio channels.

Key messages

Countering the severe effects of the Ebola epidemic at a community level requires a holistic approach that, going beyond the health measures reducing the number of infected



The MSF Ebola management center in Monrovia has been admitting patients since 17 August. Although it is the largest Ebola management centre ever constructed, the 120 beds were very quickly filled by patients. Its capacity is overstretched albeit being increased to admit more and more patients.. © MSF - Caroline Van Nespén

individuals through prevention and epidemic surveillance actions, awareness-raising campaigns and training, also takes account of survivors and vulnerable persons by providing psychosocial support and prompting their economic recovery and socio-professional integration.

Brief description of the initiative

Organisation

Danish Refugee Council (DRC)

Timing

01/06/2016 – 30/11/2016

Budget

€300,000

Beneficiaries

Liberia: 69,956 individuals (1,456 direct beneficiaries and 68,500 indirect beneficiaries) and 2 associations.

Guinea: 4,587 individuals (583 direct beneficiaries and 4004 indirect beneficiaries) and 3 associations.

DP Priority

Supporting National DP systems, strengthening contingency planning and surge models in key national services – health (incl. epidemic).

Rationale

The Ebola epidemic response in Guinea and Liberia was considered slow in previous outbreaks. It was also hampered by poor community buy-in and even resistance. The project intended to boost community participation in surveillance and response by organising a number of community level training and awareness activities in the border areas where transmission was highest and community compliance low, notably on the Guinea/Liberia border.

This Ebola resurgence was strongly suspected to have originated from survivors. WHO's strategy was reviewed and focused on a much more thorough follow-up of survivors. This project supported the monitoring of survivors by obtaining their buy-in to a follow-up programme, by improving their acceptance and re-integration into their communities, improving their access to livelihood opportunities, helping them organise themselves into self-help associations and including them in the surveillance and response mechanism.

Expected results/changes

- Ebola survivors regained psychosocial balance through medical care and counselling. They received the necessary support for their social integration into the community. Persons with mental disorders were referred to the prefectural mental health focal points;
- Ebola survivors received adequate support in their professional reinsertion through appropriate training and IGA starting kits;

- Five survivor associations operating in N'Zérékoré and Nimba developed strategy and capacity reinforcement plans, as well as one pilot activity.

Sustainability

The activities under this project contributed considerably to the long-term and long-lasting development of communal structures in the targeted regions. Moreover, DRC was positive that most of the border mechanisms and protection structures implemented during the project would be kept by the local authorities. In fact, activities under this project were carried out in close cooperation with local health staff and the prefectural health directorates (DPS), district prefectures and the border authorities of Guinea and Liberia.

Main contribution to risk reduction, resilience and anticipation

Benefits and lessons

- During the implementation phase, it became clear that the local authorities should be involved as much as possible in order to better plan and adapt activities at the local and regional levels;
- During the final phase of the project, it also became clear

- that local survivor associations would need more support in the future due to their central role in reintegration;
- This project demonstrated the importance of maintaining regular training sessions and knowledge sharing involving different communities and local authorities. Awareness campaigns also proved to be very effective in disseminating key concepts in Ebola virus prevention;
- The social rehabilitation instruments developed during this project should be shared with the humanitarian community;
- This project can be used as a reference for similar large-scale actions in the future.

Why DG ECHO?

The severity of the Ebola outbreak in West Africa and the possibility that it would become a transcontinental epidemic – declared an international emergency by WHO – prompted DG ECHO to act and respond. A preparedness dimension was included and prioritised in the project to counter any resurgence of the epidemic. As a humanitarian assistance donor, it is essential to inject preparedness aspects into projects so that partners can respond swiftly and effectively in similar epidemic emergencies. The community-based approach was seen as the most relevant in this context.



The newest confirmed ward of ELWA 3, MSF's Ebola Management Centre centre in Monrovia was opened on the 16th of September. MSF is scaling up as fast as it can but is still running behind the epidemic. © MSF - Caitlin Ryan



During an Ebola outbreak, funeral rituals are the most important contamination vectors. Here, body bags disinfected with chlorine to prevent further contamination are incinerated in a crematorium by MSF staff. © MSF - Caroline Van Nespén

Challenges

- The underlying socio-economic, territorial, religious and ethnic tensions in Liberia and Guinea are in themselves a challenge for the implementation of projects. This extremely fragile context was considerably aggravated by the propagation of the Ebola virus in the region. This contributed to the recrudescence of tensions among different social/ethnic groups, through rumours and stigmatisation, and blaming each other for causing the outbreak;
- The rumours and lack of information about the Ebola epidemic contributed to the mistrust of the local population towards humanitarian actors;
- Despite the positive impact of the project in increasing border security between Liberia and Guinea, large numbers of individuals are still crossing the border without being controlled by the authorities, which increases the risk of a new widespread outbreak;
- The medical needs of the local population go well beyond the Ebola epidemic. There are currently not enough international partners to tackle this pressing issue;
- Both Guinea and Liberia have experienced a rise in goods and transport costs, which – coupled with the increased border restrictions in the region – have contributed to the reduction of the overall production capacity in both countries, impacting particularly the household economy. In addition, the quarantine measures and the frequent deaths of family members have greatly reduced many families' income, which has increased the burden on local socio-professional and economic reinsertion projects.

