

Regional Workshop:
Disaster Preparedness Makes the Difference:
Contributions from ECHO and its partners to the strategies of the Latin America and the Caribbean region

18-19 June, 2018 - Cartagena, Colombia

ECHO in the region

The Department of the European Commission for Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO) has been providing assistance to the Latin American and Caribbean region since 1994 in fulfilment of its humanitarian mandate to save and preserve lives to reduce disaster risk conditions and contribute to building the resilience of people, communities and countries in the region.

During this time, ECHO, through its Disaster Preparedness Programme (DIPECHO), has invested a total of 224 million euros in 34 countries in the region through more than 520 projects, reaching 13 million people in Latin American and the Caribbean, with the participation and involvement of a great diversity of organizations and partners.

In order to define funding priorities in disaster preparedness issues throughout the region, the DIPECHO programme has conducted consultation workshops with key actors on the subject for two decades, both at the country level and at the subregional level: Central America, South America and the Caribbean. Each workshop produced guidelines, recommendations and strategies that have helped to facilitate and complement subregional events.

In 2018, a workshop will bring together actors from the three subregions - Central America, South America and the Caribbean - for the first time to exchange views, experiences, knowledge and ideas on how investments in disaster preparedness make the difference. This event will constitute a preliminary activity to the Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction to be held in Cartagena, Colombia from 20 to 22 June, 2018.

Contributing to the Regional Platform!

The Global and Regional Platforms for Disaster Risk Reduction constitute a dynamic multi-sectoral space that enables the exchange of knowledge among the actors around disaster risk management, which promotes discussion and encourages the formulation of policies, processes and alliances at the regional, national and local levels. They also constitute a launching space for new initiatives, promotion of campaigns and networks and presentation of progress made in different areas related to disaster risk reduction.

Under the auspices of the Government of Colombia as host country, in cooperation with the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR), the sixth session of the Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in the Americas will represent an opportunity for

governments, the private sector, civil society and other actors in the Americas to exchange experiences regarding the implementation of the Regional Action Plan, approved in March 2017 in Montreal, Canada, as a support tool for the Americas in the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030¹.

The disaster preparedness projects supported by ECHO are aligned with the goals defined by the countries of the region (either national or regional) and contribute to the implementation of the Sendai Framework.

The realization of this workshop will promote exchanges and a synergistic environment that will foster communication about the expectations of these projects and about how international cooperation for disaster preparedness can provide an added value in increasing the capacity of community resilience to possible disasters. It is a space to share and promote knowledge and articulate a common, regional stance in preparation for the VI Regional Platform.

Objective of the Workshop

The main objective of this workshop is to illustrate how some preparedness actions (with or without ECHO funding) can make a difference in disaster's response and early recovery. This is strategically important especially when funds are not unlimited, therefore requiring the optimization of disaster preparedness resources. Equally important is to show how these actions are integrated into the specific disaster risk management strategies (how disaster preparedness is aligned with national and or regional risk reduction actions).

The spirit of the workshop is to generate a debate on how best to communicate about investments and how to optimize cooperation assistance in general in this sector.

The workshop will not focus on presenting ECHO-funded project but on the presentation of evidence and expected accomplishments over the next 18 months.

Evidences may reflect a change in practice, or the use of now institutionalized tools, or a successful early action that help avoiding an emergency or contribute an effective response in one of the recent emergencies.

At the same time, this workshop will provide a space to present priorities by subregion that will guide the contribution of international cooperation. These priorities should be oriented towards actions that anticipate and/or facilitate a rapid response and recovery. These recommendations will be disseminated during the Regional Platform.

¹ The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 was adopted by the Member States of the United Nations in 2015 and seeks to result in "the substantial reduction of disaster risk and loss in lives, livelihoods and health and in the economic, physical, social, cultural and environmental assets of persons, companies, communities and countries." Among other things, the Sendai Framework sets out 7 global goals and 4 priorities for action. As part of the follow-up process, the Open-ended Intergovernmental Expert Working Group on Indicators and Terminology relating to disaster risk reduction (OEIWG) recommended 38 indicators that respond to these global goals in its report that was approved by the General Assembly of the United Nations through Resolution A/RES/71/276 on 2 February, 2017.

Approximately 150 key actors will participate in the workshop including representatives from disaster preparedness and response in Latin America and the Caribbean, the National Disaster Risk Management Systems in the region, intergovernmental organizations on disaster risk management, current partners and counterparts of the European Commission and other strategic partners, including international, regional and subregional organizations, United Nations agencies, multilateral organizations and bilateral cooperation agencies involved in this issue.

Expected results

1. Identification and sharing of priorities in terms of disaster preparedness and response where cooperation can contribute added value.
2. Promoting a dynamic towards an evidence-based approach that illustrates how disaster preparedness makes a difference.
3. Communication on commitments and contributions by local, national, international cooperation organizations and their associated partners, regarding the main expected accomplishments in disaster preparedness, which seek to save lives or facilitate a rapid response or recovery.
4. Identify the evidence that will be presented and shared during the VI Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction.

This workshop will also serve to help orient participants on the Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in the Americas 2018 that will be held on June 20-22 in Cartagena, Colombia.

Participants

- Intergovernmental agencies: CDEMA, CEPREDENAC, CAPRADE, REMAGIR, GTANGRD.
- National authorities / national systems for DRM and DRR of the countries in the region;
- National, subregional (South America, Central America and the Caribbean) and regional (LAC) partners and their local counterparts;
- Representatives of international, multilateral and binational agencies in the region (donors);
- Sectoral representatives and interested parties;
- DG-ECHO, representatives of the EU Delegations in Latin America and the Caribbean, representatives of other services of the European Commission (DEVCO, EUROCLIMAT, etc.).