



## ECHO FACTSHEET

## Disaster Risk Reduction

### Facts & Figures

In 2012, over **16% of ECHO's humanitarian funding went to Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR)**.

ECHO is committed to strengthening resilience worldwide; **More than 40% of all ECHO-funded projects include DRR activities.**

In 2012, **EU funding for DRR activities reduced disaster risks for approximately 14 million people worldwide.**

The highest proportion of ECHO's DRR funding is spent in Africa where over one third of ECHO's total DRR funding was invested in 2012.

Health, water and sanitation are the sectors where there are the most ECHO-funded DRR activities; 123 of 250 projects involved DRR activities in these sectors.

European Commission –  
Humanitarian Aid and Civil  
Protection

B-1049 Brussels, Belgium

Tel.: (+32 2) 295 44 00

Fax: (+32 2) 295 45 72

email:

[echo-info@ec.europa.eu](mailto:echo-info@ec.europa.eu)

Website:

<http://ec.europa.eu/echo>



*"Now that we can better predict disasters, we have a responsibility to be better prepared for them"* - Kristalina Georgieva, EU Commissioner for International Cooperation, Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Response

### Key Messages

- Natural hazards such as earthquakes, floods, drought and cyclones **cannot be prevented** but the **damage they cause and the number of lives they take away can be greatly reduced** with good preparation and protection measures.
- Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) programmes aim to save lives and to protect livelihoods through simple measures such as making buildings safe, protecting lands from floods, establishing contingency plans and early warning systems.
- DRR programmes help people to be better protected and better prepared before disaster strikes and to better withstand and recover from the impact of natural disasters once they happen. Our Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) programmes are implemented all year round so as to be efficient whenever disaster strikes.
- On average, **for every euro spent on DRR activities between four and seven euros are saved which would have been spent on responding to disasters.**

### Measuring ECHO's contribution to disaster risk reduction

The European Commission's investment in DRR contributes to **global efforts to build a culture of safety and resilience** among vulnerable communities around the world.

Since the mid-1990s, funding from the European Commission's Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection department (ECHO) has provided essential humanitarian aid to around 120 million of the world's most vulnerable people each year. A significant portion of this aid goes towards increasing the preparedness and reducing the risks of communities that are vulnerable to natural disasters.

ECHO is behind global efforts to push for a greater integration of DRR in humanitarian operations. The logic behind ECHO's support for DRR activities is the fact that one euro spent on risk reduction activities before disasters strike can save up to seven euros in response after a disaster has occurred. ECHO's DRR funding reached approximately 14 million people in 2012.

DRR features in projects in all sectors of humanitarian aid from health to shelter to nutrition, through the development of tools such as health warning systems, emergency planning, and the protection of livelihoods. ECHO's DRR funding also addresses the area of civil protection (preparedness and prevention), aiming to increase the institutional preparedness of the humanitarian system as a whole.

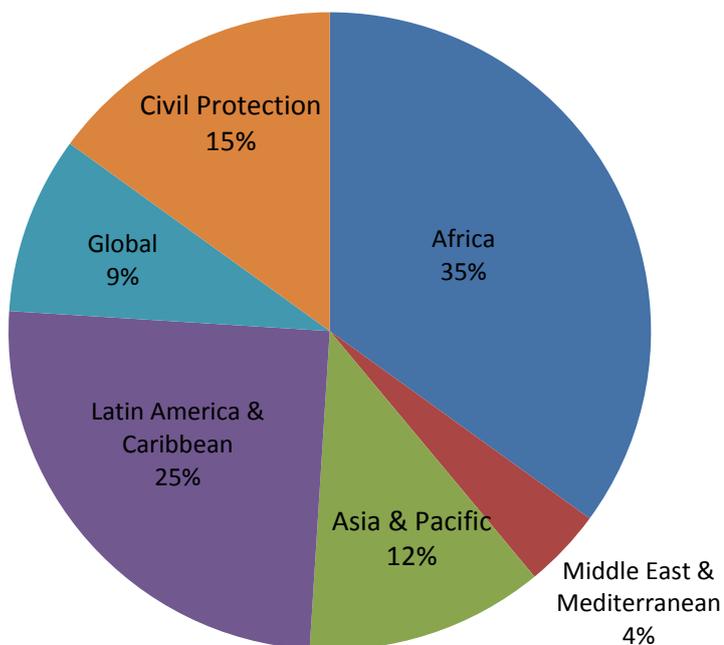
## European Commission's investment in DRR in 2012

	Million EUR
<b>Africa</b>	<b>64,5</b>
Sudan & Chad	6,5
Central and West Africa	7,5
Horn of Africa	40,5
Southern Africa & Indian Ocean	10
<b>Middle East &amp; Mediterranean</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Latin America &amp; Caribbean</b>	<b>22.5</b>
Latin America	14,5
Caribbean	8
<b>Asia &amp; Pacific</b>	<b>47</b>
Central Asia & Caucasus	8
South Asia	21,5
East & South East Asia	17,5
<b>Worldwide</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Civil Protection</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>185</b>

## DRR funding – Where and how it is spent

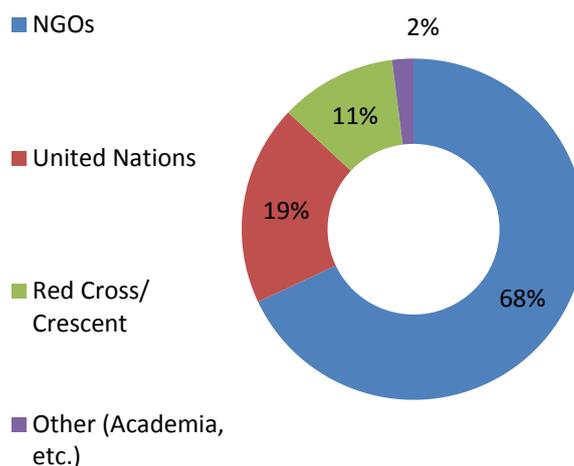
### DRR funding

(by % of DRR funding allocated in 2012)



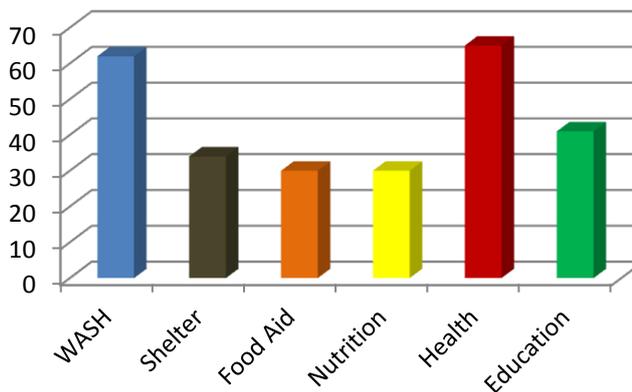
### DRR Partners

(per number of projects funded in 2012)



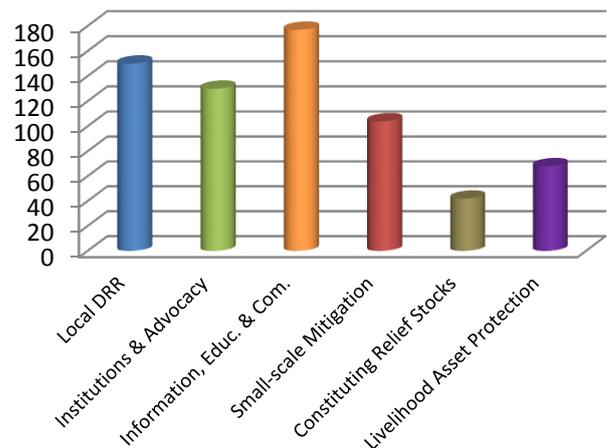
## DRR funding per humanitarian sector

Number of projects funded in 2012



## Types of DRR activities

Number of projects funded in 2012



## DRR in main Humanitarian Sectors – Good Practices

**Health Sector:** DRR is relevant in every aspect of health sector interventions in disaster-prone countries. Investment in making health systems accessible and more disaster-resilient should always be based on an assessment of local hazards, vulnerabilities and existing capacities. Following a disaster or epidemic, health systems should be further strengthened to cope with current and future risks.



**Good Practice:** Surveys warn of the risks of post-disaster disease outbreaks such as dengue, malaria and cholera. By improving the water and sanitation of the most vulnerable and reducing threats such as water pollution or mosquitoes in the most at-risk communities,, these outbreaks can be prevented or at least reduced.

(Photo; Mobile clinic set up by ECHO partner Johanniter in Haiti. Johanniter/Paul Hahn)

**Food Security and Livelihoods:** There is a direct link between disaster risk and food insecurity. People who may not have access to food are the least able to cope with disasters. Exposure to high levels of disaster risk and lack of capacity to manage these risks trap poor households in a cycle of food insecurity and poverty that quickly deteriorates into a food crisis and acute under-nutrition when a disaster occurs.



When providing food assistance, disaster risk can be reduced either by protecting livelihood assets (such as harvest, tools and herds) and/or supporting and advocating for a supportive environment for the most vulnerable. The EU's humanitarian food

assistance programme seeks to leave communities more resilient and to improve their ability to cope with disasters .

**Good Practice:** In dry pastoral areas, drought leads to less water, less pasture and a heightened risk of disease and death in animals. A deterioration of their animals' health has a direct impact on the herder's food security. In the short-term, food consumption is seriously compromised, while in the mid-term livelihoods are jeopardised, leaving herders more vulnerable to future crises. In such a situation, pre-emptive 'de-stocking' (i.e. the exchanging of some animals for cash, thereby giving pastoralists the cash they need to buy food, maintain a core herd and access the services they need) is one tool to reduce the impact of food crises caused by drought.

(Photo: ECHO-funded Food Assistance, Kenya EC/ECHO/Malini Morzaria)

## Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH):



The extent to which DRR considerations need to be addressed in WASH interventions will depend on the type of hazards faced and how vulnerable a community is. A sudden event (e.g. flood, earthquake, hurricane) can destroy or severely damage infrastructure, as well as limit the capacity of service providers (e.g. community, government or private sector) to operate and support victims. A slow onset or chronic event such as drought

can critically reduce normal water resources by drying up surface water and lowering groundwater sources. ECHO requires all humanitarian action to be risk-informed, meaning that analysis and design should be based on a sound assessment of the risks. The intervention should seek to reduce both immediate and future risks.

**Good Practice:** Improved planning and placement of temporary sanitation facilities (latrines, leaching fields) to prevent or limit the contamination of groundwater used for human consumption (especially critical in areas of high ground water tables); innovative designs for excreta disposal services in flooded areas – raised latrines, pit liners or sealed septic pits, preparedness measures through improving water and sanitation systems, distributing 'safe water' kits and working with HIV/AIDS and nutrition clusters.

(Photo: ECHO-funded wells in the Democratic Republic of Congo, EC/ECHO/Damien Blanc)

## Shelter:

Shelter is relevant to most aspects of DRR. Shelter is key for any family; without adequate and safe shelter, people are more exposed to major risks and disaster. Poorly located, designed, constructed and/or maintained shelter is a leading cause of death during natural hazards such as earthquakes (e.g. Haiti 2010). Although the provision of shelter during the immediate response phase following a disaster tends to be temporary or transitional, people generally start repairing or reconstructing their homes very early on. This is an opportunity to build back better and reduce future hazard risks.



When rebuilding, it is important to address the underlying causes that made previous shelters vulnerable. By considering durability and sustainability during reconstruction efforts, risks to disaster are reduced in the long-term. For example, by

incorporating construction elements such as bracings and struts in earthquake prone regions, or by elevating the level of homesteads or building multi-purpose evacuation centres in flood-prone areas. These interventions protect and save lives.

**Good Practice:** In the aftermath of a disaster, shelter is one of the most pressing needs for the displaced. The need to act quickly increases the risk of creating camps in at-risk areas. This happened in Haiti after the earthquake. In an attempt to reduce the risks faced by people in these camps, DG ECHO funded actions to help partners promote disaster preparedness. This involved supporting early warning systems for storms, emergency intervention teams and community-based vulnerability assessments. Risk assessments were conducted, to identify the camps at greatest risk and to support the risk mitigation measures for these camps, for example by improving flood drainage. This example illustrates the importance of incorporating risk analysis, and associated risk reduction measures, into the design and implementation of humanitarian interventions.

(Photo: Transitional Shelters, an intermediate stage between the emergency tent-tarps and permanent replacement housing in Haiti, EC/ECHO/François Duboc)