Evidence in disaster preparedness: anticipating complex crises in a context of systemic risk
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This workshop was driven by one the main challenges faced by the humanitarian sector: the urgent need to shift from a reactive response to crises to more proactive and forward-looking actions, with evidence-based anticipatory action in all aspects of humanitarian aid and effective disaster risk reduction (DRR) as guiding references. The aim is to achieve better preparedness at multiple levels to reduce humanitarian impact and losses and to better manage situations of forced displacement, one of the aggravating factors hitting the LAC region hardest.

It is no accident that the migration and forced migration factor should play the role of compounded trigger of the challenges and vulnerabilities faced daily by the four key thematic teams put together for this workshop, namely: Urban Preparedness and Resilient Cities -led by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP); Climate Shock Preparedness -led by the German Red Cross; Shock-responsive social protection and disaster risk financing -led by the World Food Programme (WFP); and Protection and Preparedness -led by UNICEF and World Vision.

We are experiencing a paradigm shift. By incorporating disaster risk reduction into humanitarian action, interventions successfully blend the short term and the long term, as actions go beyond the timeframe of the immediate emergency and help to build resilience over the long-distance race. Disaster risk reduction and recovery are a bridge linking a three-fold pathway of humanitarian action, development, and peace.

In this regard, the European Commission’s Directorate-General for Civil Protection and European Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO) Disaster Preparedness Workshop set up a roadmap to draw the future lines of work both for the above-mentioned task forces and for the actors in the region, who are partners of ECHO. The event had two high-incidence priority crosscutting themes: anticipatory actions as the basis for all interventions and early warning systems (EWS) development.

Taking as starting point the spread of informal settlements in Latin American cities -driven by factors such as migration, poverty and exclusion, and by inadequate urban planning that exacerbate the disaster hazard, the first working team set itself the goal of developing actions with a twofold temporal scope: actions with an impact in the short term and in the long run as well. For this purpose, it is crucial to work holistically (in a multilevel, interterritorial, intersectoral, multistakeholder fashion and along different timeframes), fostering resilience with an inclusive approach and encouraging local communities’ engagement in the process -which, as the participants admitted, is hard to put in practice.

To this end, they suggested working with existing local committees, binding together risk data and decision-making processes, and linking response to recovery and development for the future.

This thematic team suggested that disaster preparedness can be used as a gateway to address other issues that need heeding: citizen security, unemployment, lack of social integration -and concluded that social cohesion is the greatest asset for building resilience and crisis responsiveness.

To address the complexities of climate shocks in the context of the global food crisis, the second thematic team proposed drawing on local and ancestral knowledge, localising risk understanding, and turning evidence into the basis of data management so that it informs public policies. The anticipatory approach is key. It requires enhancing the connection of EWS with national and local systems, to progress towards climate-smart programmes which include warnings of less well documented events such as droughts.
The loss and damage funding agreement framework provides an opportunity for universal coverage of early warning systems. More resources need to be invested in risk understanding and risk modelling.

The third thematic team, Shock-responsive social protection and disaster risk financing, highlighted the need to have platforms for systematising regional experiences, and a shared assessment framework. Also, this team highlighted how migration is a driver of vulnerability in Latin America, where the humanitarian sector has key role to play.

In the region, there is a wealth of experiences in shock-responsive social protection. However, disaster risk funding is a more recent, innovative and less explored area. Data management needs to be more robust at the regional level. Furthermore, investing in systematisation is also necessary, as is expanding partner networks and prioritising slow-onset emergencies.

Finally, the fourth thematic team mentioned the importance of empowering local actors to produce a snowball effect from the municipality to the community itself. It also highlighted the importance of protection risk analysis for targeted preparedness actions, building capacities and reducing vulnerabilities via national and local protection systems.

Actors working in protection should come closer to actors working in disaster risk. The rapprochement shall focus on localisation-based community preparedness and protection, building on interculturality, and identifying and prioritising the most vulnerable populations. It is important to conduct a mapping of capacities that need strengthening, and to link these actors together. This shall be the starting point.

The four thematic teams match the four crosscutting priorities. They focused on challenges like improving risk understanding, strengthening early warnings and anticipatory actions, improving effective communication, and promoting data and network management and sharing, coordination, localisation and the use of science and technology in Central America.

In the Caribbean, the need to advance the Safe Schools Programme, promote regional agreements as national commitments, improve decision-making processes, and strengthen EWS at different territorial and thematic levels was emphasised.

South America raised the need to share risk scenarios, design regional aid protocols, exchange humanitarian aid between countries, allocate public resources to established priorities, and map early warning systems in the region to harmonise data and issue joint warnings.

Finally, more specifically, the Andean Community proposed to review agreements, prioritise networking, make inclusion effective, strengthen shared legal frameworks, unify evidence-based information, implement regional systems, link protection with disaster risks, and increase the dissemination of its actions.

We hope that the compilation of knowledge systematised in this report will help to achieve these challenging goals.
CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION AND DETAILS OF THE PROCESS

Since 1994, DG ECHO has been supporting the Latin America and Caribbean region, fulfilling its humanitarian mandate to preserve and save lives, with the ultimate aim of reducing disaster risk conditions and contributing to increasing people's, communities' and countries' resilience in the region.

Between 1994 and 2022, ECHO, through its Disaster Preparedness Programme (ECHO DP), has invested more than 321 million Euros in 34 countries of the region, through more than 631 projects, reaching 30 million people in Latin America and the Caribbean through the actions and engagement of a wide range of organisations and partners. The disaster preparedness projects supported by ECHO are aligned with regional and national goals defined by countries and also contribute to the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030.

Since 2011, the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) and DG ECHO have jointly carried out 14 actions with the financial support of ECHO (a EUR 7,818,367 investment) in Central America (4 actions), South America (5 actions), the Caribbean (4 actions) and one support activity for the whole Latin America and the Caribbean region.

As part of these joint actions, UNDRR organised multiple ECHO Disaster preparedness workshops at national, subregional and regional levels. In these workshops, best practices and shared challenges were identified, guidelines were shared, and strategic recommendations were established, with the ultimate goal of exchanging perspectives, experiences, knowledge, and innovative ideas on disaster preparedness.

This effort had four purposes:

1. Share evidence of the impact and the current and future alignment of Disaster Preparedness actions being executed by ECHO partners within the thematic lines.
2. Systematise knowledge, lessons learned and good practices.
3. Gather programmatic recommendations resulting from the systematisation work.
4. Based on the recommendations, identify priorities for the coming years for each of the subregions.

This report is the result of almost 18 months of collaborative work starting in September 2021 as part of action 2021-2023 of UNDRR and DG ECHO Implementing the Sendai Framework through disaster preparedness, engagement of key partnerships and risk knowledge in Latin America and the Caribbean.

The 2022-2023 edition of the regional workshop featured a new modality: through an open and consultative process with all ECHO partners in the region, four priority thematic lines for disaster preparedness in the region were identified.

As a result of this, four thematic teams led by DG ECHO key partners were set up. The teams started work in September 2021, following a methodology to support their progress. This became the subject of an online workshop on 24 and 25 November, 2022.

The outcome of this online workshop was part of an official pre-event of the VIII Regional Platform held in Punta del Este, Uruguay, from 27 February to 2 March, 2023.
The four thematic teams and the key partners who led each team are:

- **Climate Shock Preparedness in a context of global food crisis**
- **Shock-responsive social protection and disaster risk financing**
- **Protection and Disaster Preparedness**
- **Urban Preparedness and Resilient Cities**

The teams met four times between September 2021 and November 2022, according to the following timeline.
The summarised results of the four meetings held between 2021 and 2022 of each team can be found here.

The results of the online workshops held during the 24th and 25th of November, 2022 can be found here.

Around 250 ECHO partners and other key actors participated in the on-site and online workshops (200 virtually and 50 face-to-face) including organisations working in disaster preparedness, disaster risk reduction and emergency response in Latin America and the Caribbean, national disaster risk management systems in the region, ministerial authorities, intergovernmental disaster risk management organisations, current partners and counterparts and other strategic partners of ECHO, including international, regional and subregional organisations, United Nations agencies, multilateral organisations, and bilateral cooperation agencies involved in disaster risk management.

To mention just a few of them:

- The intergovernmental agencies of the region: Andean Committee for Disaster Prevention and Assistance (CAPRADE) / Andean Community (CAN), Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA) / Caribbean Community and Common Market (CARICOM), Coordination Centre for Disaster Prevention in Central America and the Dominican Republic (CEPREDENAC) / Central American Integration System (SICA), and the Meeting of Ministers and High Authorities for the Comprehensive Management of Disaster Risk (RMAGIR) / Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR);
- National DRM and DRR agencies and systems of the countries in the region;
- Authorities from national ministries including health, education, agriculture, social protection;
- ECHO partners at national, subregional (South America, Central America and the Caribbean) and regional (LAC) levels and their local counterparts;
- Representatives of international, multilateral, and binational cooperation agencies in the region (donors);
- Sectoral representatives, stakeholders; and
- representatives of ECHO delegations in Latin America and the Caribbean, and representatives of other European Commission services.
CHAPTER 2
THEMATIC CONCLUSIONS OF THE 4 DR PRIORITY TEAMS

This section presents the main systematised conclusions resulting from the twelve working meetings held over the 14 months preceding the ECHO DP workshop by the four thematic teams.

Discussions included references to crosscutting issues across all teams, such as the importance of further developing early warning systems in the region, and the relevancy of anticipatory actions in the current context, which must be the basis for all projects.

The outputs of each working team are shown below:

1. URBAN PREPAREDNESS AND RESILIENT CITIES (UNDP)

Key messages:

- Inadequate development processes
- Insufficient capability to address complex challenges
- Poverty and exclusion
- Informal settlements
- Urban land use, supply of essential services, and conflict resolution processes, all led by grassroots organisations
- Lack of employment
- Low income
- Lack of social cohesion
- Population displacement
- Citizen insecurity
- Disaster risk
KEY LESSONS:

- The importance of coordinating and combining two temporal scopes of intervention, combining the short and long term, was highlighted.
- Partners agreed that interventions must be focused and avoid working in a fragmented or 'siloes' way.
- There was a general consensus on the need to break away from welfarist and non-inclusive approaches - a true change of paradigm.
- Stimulating people's engagement throughout the process was considered key, albeit not easy to achieve.
- Experience has shown the importance of supporting local committees and finding ways to bring in other local entities.
- Binding together decision-making processes and risk data is crucial.
- The importance of avoiding creating a false sense of security, which can lead to new risks, was stressed.
- Finally, it is key to link the response stages to the recovery and development stages.

CONCLUSIONS

- To build resilience, systemic interregional intersectoral action at different levels, with multiple actors and timeframes, and linked to development processes, is a requisite.
- Disaster preparedness can serve as gateway to address urban issues in a comprehensive and specialised manner.
- Urban preparedness must target the interconnected issues related to informal settlements: citizen security, migration, family breakdown, unemployment, etc.
- With a humanistic, social ethics approach, urban preparedness should prioritise the most vulnerable by implementing inclusiveness.
- Social cohesion is the basis for resilience and the main asset in a crisis response action.
2. CLIMATE SHOCK PREPAREDNESS IN THE CONTEXT OF THE GLOBAL FOOD CRISIS (GERMAN RED CROSS)

KEY MESSAGES:

• It is essential to address resilience building on local knowledge, particularly ancestral knowledge, thus localising the understanding of risk.
• Partners agreed on the importance of strengthening evidence-based knowledge management at all levels, scaling up these initiatives so that they can have an impact on public risk management policies.
• There is also a need to scale up disaster anticipation approaches as a key strategy to address climate shocks.
• In this sense, it is essential to have the early warning systems connected to the national and local systems.
• The partners highlighted in several instances the need to bring disaster risk management (DRM) and climate change adaptation closer together programmatically and methodologically, moving towards climate-smart programmes.
• It should always be borne in mind that, in many circumstances, climate shocks are the triggers for compound crises.

KEY LESSONS:

• Documenting experiences and good practices in the face of climate shocks, especially events that are less well documented like droughts and others, is key. It should be accompanied by thematic capacity building.
• It is essential to compile methodologies and tools for climate shock risk management incorporating new approaches, such as anticipatory action and climate change adaptation, into DRR programmatic frameworks.
• It is urgent to foster stakeholder coordination spaces with the ultimate goal of achieving a comprehensive reduction of disaster risk.
CONCLUSIONS

• The climate crisis increases risk due to two factors that must be considered: on the one hand, the increase in magnitude and frequency of extreme events and, on the other, the aggravated vulnerability of exposed populations.

• Anticipatory action is an extremely important approach to mitigate the impacts of climate shocks.

• Climate hazards can be monitored, and their impact predicted. The framework Agreement on Loss and Damage Fund provides an opportunity to make early warning systems’ coverage universal.

• To have more effective decision-making processes in DRR, it is increasingly important to allocate resources to risk understanding and modelling.

• There is an urgent need to shift to livelihood management that incorporates climate-smart means of production.
3. SHOCK-RESPONSIVE SOCIAL PROTECTION AND DISASTER RISK FINANCING (GLOBAL FOOD PROGRAMME)

KEY MESSAGES:

• This working team turned into a sort of platform for the systematisation of experiences in Latin America and the Caribbean to learn more about preparedness and response through social protection systems.

• The systematisation was done via a shared framework for the study of shock-responsive social protection and disaster risk financing (SRSP in Spanish), which considered the constraints to strengthening the required technical effort.

• A key aspect in the current regional context is that migration is a phenomenon that accelerates vulnerabilities to climate shocks and other issues in Latin America and the Caribbean.

• The significant role of the humanitarian sector in the migration crisis and its relationship with mature national social protection systems, both during the response phase and in prevention actions, was highlighted.

• Experiences in Latin America and the Caribbean in disaster risk financing stand out for their innovative nature.

KEY LESSONS

• The wealth of regional experiences in shock-responsive social protection and disaster risk financing was highlighted. Many of these experiences were systematized with the help of several stakeholders and with very useful shareable tools.

• Risk financing was identified as a newer, less exploited area in the region where there are fewer but interesting experiences.

• There is an opportunity to improve knowledge management, by looking at existing experiences and their limitations to address them jointly with the participation of multiple stakeholders to ultimately strengthen programmes and policies in the current context.

• Both social protection for system response and preparedness, and migration (on which a big effort is yet to be done) are key challenges that need addressing.
CONCLUSIONS AND NEXT STEPS

• The variety of expertise on rapid-onset emergencies was acknowledged. Now, with a focus on the near future, it is necessary to prioritise the development of slow-onset emergency capacities - long-term emergencies are deeply linked to other crises in the region.

• Social protection must not be addressed as an isolated issue, but it must be tackled jointly. Thus, the network of partners should be expanded and continued, for such systems are intended to give support to different sectors.

• Partners highlighted the urgency of investing in joint and cross-sectoral systematisation.

• The suggested next step is to pursue opportunities for integrating shock-responsive social protection and disaster risk financing into other thematic teams that have been working on this process.
4. PROTECTION AND DISASTER PREPAREDNESS (UNICEF AND WORLD VISION)

KEY MESSAGES:

• Partners highlighted the importance of localisation, which translates into community protection (the empowerment of regional, national, local and municipal stakeholders) through protection actions for disaster risk reduction. Working from the municipality to the community itself creates a snowball effect. This increases the possibility of generating greater preparedness not only at the local and community levels, but also in prevention and preparedness.

• One of the main topics of discussion was the key role of prior work on risk assessment, analysis and monitoring and how these tasks are crucial for preparedness and protection. Concerning risk analysis for protection, mapping of the regional, national and local contexts can be a good starting point to identify higher risk areas. This can help to make preparedness actions at all levels more focused and interconnected.

• An analysis of existing capacities is also relevant. If capacities are strengthened and vulnerabilities reduced, there is better preparedness against risks of all sorts that jeopardize protection. Preparedness must link national and local protection systems with disaster risk reduction systems and vulnerable populations.

KEY LESSONS:

Challenges

• Emphasis on preparedness and community protection

• Indicators of the impact of preparedness on protection ought to be considered

• P&P working methodologies

• Identifying the most vulnerable populations to be prioritised in P&P
CONCLUSIONS AND NEXT STEPS

• As envisaged by the partners, the next step is the effective preparedness at the local, community, and municipality levels. Connecting with the population requires an intercultural approach, so that actions are focused on vulnerable populations and aimed to meet the need for protection.

• The need to further deepen the rapprochement of protection actors with disaster risk reduction actors, to strengthen preparedness plans at the national level, was stressed.

• It is also essential to map capacities, which exist in the protection services but not so much in preparedness, to further strengthen and link with disaster risk reduction actors.
CHAPTER 3
CROSSCUTTING CHALLENGES FOR DISASTER PREPAREDNESS AND FUTURE PRIORITIES

During the on-site workshop in February 2023 in Punta del Este, Uruguay, a specific session was devoted to discussing and contributing to the advancement of the crosscutting challenges faced by the four teams which had been set up previously.

To this purpose, parallel work was conducted on the thematic areas shared by all four teams. It was determined that more in-depth work was needed both for future and current lines of work in key areas, such as the crucially important anticipatory actions and the development of early warning systems, two pillars of the anticipatory, not-reactive response to disasters.

The crosscutting challenges identified were: inclusiveness, effective communication, early warning/anticipatory action systems, private sector integration, localisation/relying on local networks, constant risk monitoring and assessment, and science and technology.

Each crosscutting topic was the object of a parallel roundtable. All the roundtables had to find answers to the following four starting-point questions:

1. What shows that solutions to crosscutting challenges are not being implemented or mainstreamed?
2. What could we do to contribute effectively to solve this lack?
3. What prevents us from doing it or taking these actions permanently?
4. What ideas can we produce to keep advancing?

The following subsections show the results of the roundtables’ discussions:

INCLUSIVENESS

Inclusion challenges are evidenced by the usual lack of differentiated interventions. The participants in the roundtable highlighted that inclusion means thinking about integration, equality and equity for all people. However, it was also pointed out that overly focused interventions risk excluding other people.

The solutions put forward to effectively contribute to change were, among others: moving from the theory down to the field, with targeted interventions aimed at vulnerable populations, with results of needs analysis and community participation processes in which feedback is given to the affected communities. The importance of reaching a common approach to inclusiveness, leading to protocols and guidelines for all indicators, was also highlighted.

The suggestions on how to keep advancing were: technical-conceptual mapping of the inclusiveness approach, and a durable mechanism for systematising tools and experiences with meaningful and higher participation, i.e. greater accessibility for all actors to collaborate in systemic and intersectional work.

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

The lack of effective communication is shown by uncertainty and the failure to convey the messages to communities, ethnicities and indigenous peoples in a number of countries in the region. Communication per territories is required, in several languages to reach the local stakeholders in cases of emergency.

In some countries, vagueness and lack of coordination of the messages, and a lack of credibility of the political actors have been identified. This can generate confusion and resistance on the part of citizens. In addition, a lack of media diversity and technological gaps in the region have also been identified.
Possible solutions include: identifying local actors unrelated to any political label, to help communicate; using educational platforms already in place that raise awareness and have been successfully used on other issues (such as sanitation in Uruguay or Cuba), not relying only on text messages or WhatsApp; and using local media such as local radio stations, small newspapers, billboards in public places, and others.

There is also a need to translate scientific and technical information into effective non-alarmist messages that are easy to understand, and to develop clear protocols to ensure the continuity of this communication even in situations of changes in the government or in the institutional personnel.

Among cultural obstacles, one of them is the population’s perception of risk, an issue that needs to be addressed ahead of any new event. Another is misinformation coming from social networks or influencers. A third obstacle is using too technical language or an inadequate tone.

As solutions for the future, it is proposed to use the institutional framework or communication systems that already function in each country, ensure the constant and continuous training of communicators, diversify the media used, carry out long-term campaigns aimed at risk perception that involve community organisations but not political ones, generate messages from the bottom up, from the communities taking into account their ancestral knowledge, take into account communication for people with disabilities, create ongoing relations with the media before and after disasters, develop clear and established protocols that prioritise adequate, timely, relevant and non-alarmist communication and language, and not alarmist communication, consider communication for people with disabilities, create ongoing relationships with the media before and after disasters, develop clear and established protocols that prioritise appropriate, timely, relevant and non-alarmist communication and language that can address the consequences of staff turnover, and finally produce short, to-the-point executive summaries for decision-makers.

**EARLY WARNING/ANTICIPATORY ACTION SYSTEMS**

The limitations of this area are that the local or territorial level is not being reached and there are also doubts about how to reach intermediate levels of management. Furthermore, as it is a new terminology, it is necessary to standardise its concepts.

Anticipatory actions are not yet understood, and more value-added communication is needed. There is also a need to anchor anticipation in disaster risk management and to define crisis thresholds and make real use of forecasts for evidence-based decision making.

The working team proposes to move towards impact forecasting and communication and to modulate communication based on different target audiences. Create local models and unify criteria to provide greater clarity and to emphasise the need for timely communication.

It would also be interesting to create local protocols and protocols for national networks and to continue working to ensure that national plans clearly include early warnings and anticipatory actions, for which it is relevant to demonstrate the cost-benefit of these tools.

The need for greater collaboration with both academia and the private sector is highlighted as an impediment.
PRIVATE SECTOR INTEGRATION

The difficulties in this sector are evident because there is no articulation or integration of the private sector with the humanitarian and disaster risk reduction sector and there is currently no bilateral communication.

To effectively contribute to finding a solution, the members of the team suggested articulating initiatives from the government, the private sector such as Arise or MCR and academia, conducting territorial planning and including the different trade unions.

Future steps include the creation of spaces for conversation and public-private articulation, which will allow for the building of trust and high-level relationships to strengthen prevention and the preparatory phase.

LOCALIZATION/USE OF LOCAL NETWORKS

The limitations of localisation are established by the institutional weakness of local level organisations in many cases and by the fact that there is no articulation between the various levels. Vertical and centralised interventions are also a constraint, as local action does not permeate the national level.

The solutions proposed by the members of the team include strengthening local networks, improving access to information and communication channels, integrating institutionalism and linking disaster risk management with institutional programmes, favouring the link between local governance and community action.

Factors impeding action include staff turnover and turnover at the political level, irregularity and lack of funding, partisanship, burnout of institutional staff and community leaders, weakening multilateralism or institutional competition.

Next steps include strengthening institutional integration beyond human action, focusing on high-level advocacy with forward-looking plans, creating commonwealths with peer-to-peer monitoring, improving linkages with intergovernmental organisations and integrated monitoring among community organisations.

CONSTANT RISK MONITORING AND RISK ASSESSMENT

The limitations of monitoring data are shown by the fact that they do not include historical evidence of what happens in communities, of the recurrence of certain events. Multi-hazard approaches are also not incorporated or are weak.

The solutions proposed by the task force include the inclusion of crisis modifiers in all types of projects, linking to national risk financing mechanisms, sustainable development objectives or the Sendai framework at community, local, national and regional levels with outcomes that enhance national disaster risk reduction plans.

The obstacles identified are the lack of data and statistics, either due to non-existence, lack of access or lack of use, as well as the lack of integration mechanisms among implementers. In addition, there are limitations of political will or lack of resources for the sustainability of monitoring and evaluation actions at risk in the public sector in funding or implementing organisations and among local actors.

Ideas proposed for moving forward are the gathering of technical-scientific-social information on formulation and identification with the involvement of stakeholders, promoting multi-sectoral and multi-thematic coordination, and increased funding for monitoring and risk assessment.
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Limitations are shown in the lack of involvement of academia or techno-scientific entities and are increased by the excessive costs of technological equipment, as well as the lack of technological infrastructure at the local level.

The solutions proposed by this team include technological investment and capacity building and advocacy with decision-makers in both the private sector and the government in terms of infrastructure. In terms of academia, greater involvement is suggested, promoting the exchange of experiences and technical roundtables, as well as the generation of evidence and research, and the rescue and documentation of ancestral knowledge.

The solutions proposed are: raising awareness at all levels (government, cooperation, private sector, community); expanding knowledge on existing technological tools and their use; and developing and updating the mapping of academic and research institutions and entities that focus on relevant disaster risk reduction management issues.
CHAPTER 4
SUBREGIONAL PRIORITIES

One of the main objectives of the Disaster Preparedness Workshops held by UNDRR and ECHO was to establish the priorities for the coming months in the areas of funding and future work in each of the sub-regions (Central America, the Caribbean, Mercosur and the Andean Community).

The subregional priorities were established through joint work and discussions between all local, national, subregional, and regional actors working on disaster preparedness who took part in the multiple stages of the virtual and on-site working sessions.

During the 2023 on-site workshop in Punta del Este, Uruguay, a specific session was devoted to set these priorities. The table below showed the outcome:

### CENTRAL AMERICA

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<tr>
<th>Priority</th>
<th>Potential partner contributions</th>
<th>Comments</th>
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| Understanding risk                            | Methodological guidelines, training and resources | • Moving from hazard mapping to risk mapping/vulnerability measurement  
• Dynamic understanding of risk because risk is variable  
• Improving capacities for damage assessment |
| Early warning/anticipatory action             |                                  | • EWS in network  
• Closer links between EWS and Anticipatory Actions  
• Training and capacity building for better understanding and integration of proactive actions  
• Standardising concepts and methodologies |
| Effective communication                       |                                  | Translating risk to differentiated audiences |

1) Move towards a better understanding of risk and its mapping as a central element for preventive and anticipatory action.

2) Strengthen the updating or design of preparedness plans to include early warning and early action mechanisms (institutionalisation from national regulation of DRM systems to local level plans).
### Networks and exchanges

4) Further promote joint action on knowledge management based on existing information platforms such as Inform.

In addition, it is important to facilitate regular exchange and training initiatives, including the effective systematisation of good practices.

- It is committed to feeding information exchange platforms and anchoring their use in decision-making and risk management policy development.
- Generate a system of exchange of good practices that is accessible and shared (The region has good practices that should be shared and derived towards shared knowledge management).

### Localisation and decentralisation

5) Deepen community organisation and preparedness for localised risk management.

- More integrated (multi-stakeholder, inter-territorial) and comprehensive (multi-thematic) risk management systems
- Increase partnerships with civil society to weave together articulated actions and close the resource gap (partnerships and articulation because resources remain scarce).
- Accompany decentralisation processes of resources and capacities.
- Incorporation of local and ancestral knowledge as priority strategies for risk mitigation.

### Science and technology

6) Ensure more access to science and technology but accompanied by access to capacity building and capacity installation in national systems.

### Coordination and alignment

7) Align risk management with Central America’s strategic and programmatic visions.

Including indicators defining the framework for coordination and cooperation with all actors.
### THE CARIBBEAN

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<th>Priority</th>
<th>Potential partner contributions</th>
<th>Comments</th>
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| 1. Implementation of the School Safety Roadmap as a first good practice in sectoral intervention. | CDEMA working hand in hand with UNICEF, UNDRR and UNESCO                                        | • Good practices to start improving capacities at the sectoral level  
• Need for continued funding and technical assistance |
| 2. Promote regional agreements as a mechanism for securing national commitments. | CDEMA agreements and bilateral agreements with Cuba, Dominican Republic, UK, France and Netherlands | • Clear definition of roles and responsibilities  
• Strengthening institutional capacities to execute assigned roles  
• Monitoring and accountability mechanisms |
| 3. Improve disaster risk management articulated around decision-making processes. |                                                                                               | • Information is still focused on climate events and hazards. There is a need to expand the analysis to other hazards and to monitor vulnerability conditions.  
• Information is still produced in institutional silos. Mechanisms need to be established to share information between countries and institutions.  
• Risk information must be tailored to the needs of decision-makers for response and recovery at different levels (from local to national).  
• Need to develop specific information for sectors: agriculture, housing, utilities, etc. |
| 4. Strengthen the integration of Early Warning Systems at territorial and thematic levels. | UNDP, CREWS, governments developing EWSs at national and regional levels                      | • The focus is still on monitoring and disseminating technical information.  
• Other components of comprehensive EWS need to be developed: risk information, effective communication and institutional/community preparedness.  
• Great potential to capitalise on good practices at country level and through South-South cooperation.  
• Need to articulate existing territorial and threat-specific EWSs into multi-hazard EWSs |
# SOUTH AMERICA

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority</th>
<th>Potential partner contributions</th>
<th>Comments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Give visibility to shared scenarios on multiple natural hazards, migration, climate change, <strong>ENSO</strong></td>
<td>Insurance risk analysis methodologies.</td>
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<td>2. Construction of a mutual aid protocol, which considers south-south cooperation.</td>
<td>Identify entities and experiences. Consider private sector support</td>
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<td>3. Exchange between existing humanitarian architecture structures in each country</td>
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<td>4. Allocate public resources to implement the priorities defined by <strong>RMAGIR</strong>.</td>
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<td>5. Collection of information from EWS in the region, for the harmonisation of data and issuing of alerts, to establish coordination mechanisms to implement the agreed systems.</td>
<td>Mapping of existing actors in the countries (academic, technical-scientific institutions). Monitoring of integration, extractivism, technological (private sector) and social risks. Facilitate communities’ access to information, alerts and forecasts.</td>
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### ANDEAN COMMUNITY

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<th>Priority</th>
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<tr>
<td>1) Review existing agreements that allow the implementation of actions to strengthen them with a systemic and strategic view of the sub-region, including crosscutting issues.</td>
<td>Avoid the creation and duplication of coordination spaces between countries and capitalise on existing ones. Include the participation of communities in the processes.</td>
<td>Bilateral and South-South exchange. Joint and shared agendas. Moving from theory to practice at regional level on specific issues and based on capacities, enhancing actions. Bilateral thinking on how to strengthen actions with good practices between countries.</td>
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<td>2) Prioritise work with networks, NGOs and IOs. Prioritisation of local actors to enhance actions.</td>
<td>Generating evidence. Joint effort to make regional needs visible.</td>
<td>Operationalisation of national and regional agendas</td>
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<td>3) Effectively include, link and collaborate with academia (research agenda and regional networks) and the private sector (CBI, ARISE, others). How can legal frameworks enhance private sector participation?</td>
<td>Regional response capacities and programmes by funders are in place.</td>
<td>Understanding the scenarios of risks</td>
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<td>4) Enhancing and articulating legal frameworks</td>
<td>Donor roundtables to enhance regional outreach, for a DRD approach. Know the funds or their management. Public and private funds should be included. Financial management with a risk management approach</td>
<td>Raise issues that are invisible in political management agendas for DRR based on CSOs (that have knowledge and work with the population) in joint work with IGOs, NGOs and the participation of the population. To be included in the political agenda on the basis of calls for attention.</td>
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<td>5) Unification of evidence-based information systems, as common factors that exist in the region.</td>
<td>Effective knowledge management and communication processes</td>
<td>Promote the articulation of actions to operationalise the actions.</td>
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<td>6) CAN - CAPRADE strengthen and empower.</td>
<td>Advocacy at regional level to strengthen linkages between competences and capacities (protection and DRR).</td>
<td>Strengthening of the capacities of the actions of local organisations</td>
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<td><strong>7)</strong> Implementation of regional systems with integration of costs and resources</td>
<td>Territorial presence of organisations</td>
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<td><strong>8)</strong> Regional EWS such as CIIFEN</td>
<td>Dissemination and communication of the reality of risks in the region</td>
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<td><strong>9)</strong> Protection and DRR linkage. Build capacities among organisations working directly on actions. Strengthen information exchange and promote joint analysis.</td>
<td>Policy dialogue for disaster risk management as an example participation in platforms and other events</td>
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<td><strong>10)</strong> Shifting from reactive to forward-looking actions</td>
<td>Scalability of actions and results and good practices</td>
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<td><strong>11)</strong> To recognise joint territorial spaces, their problems, management and financing.</td>
<td>CAPRADE’s experience of articulation. Capacity to promote bilateral actions</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>12)</strong> Mirada a los problemas extensivos y el costo de los potenciales impactos</td>
<td>Fortalecer las acciones implementadas por medio de la difusión y gestión del conocimiento de los países de la CAN en el marco de la plataforma digital de información</td>
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<td><strong>13)</strong> Inclusion of social protection issues as critical elements of vulnerability. Broadening of issues by funders.</td>
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<td><strong>14)</strong> Focusing on certain countries for funding weakens the actions.</td>
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<td><strong>15)</strong> Increase dissemination of CAPRADE’s actions.</td>
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CHAPTER 5
INSTITUTIONAL STATEMENTS

The Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Disaster Risk Reduction and Head of the UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR), Mami Mizutori, recalled in her closing remarks at the ECHO DP Workshop that the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the inflation resulting from armed conflicts have increased socio-economic vulnerability, eroding response capacities and resilience and in turn deepening structural inequalities, a risk driver wreaking havoc in the region.

During his keynote address at the workshop by the renowned academic and risk management expert in the region, and 2015 Sasakawa Award winner, Allan Lavell, offered an executive summary in preparation for workshop participants on the UN Global Assessment Report (GAR) on Disaster Risk Reduction, one of the flagship reports of the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, recognised for its relevance and up-to-date risk knowledge it produces in each of its editions.

Lavell highlighted not only technical but also social aspects, such as the social construction of risk, which is one of the key aspects that should be transformed so DRR policies are truly successful in practice. Lavell recalled that the GAR insists on seeking and proposing governance models to be prepared for realities that society denied for a long time, such as the pandemic. Lavell stated that there was a structural short-sightedness in the face of the previous three or four pandemic warnings, in addition to ignoring the historical experiences of past centuries.

In this regard, he pointed out that the Covid-19 pandemic was poorly addressed globally in terms of preparedness, with many countries reducing their health system budgets. When the pandemic broke out, countries focused merely on the health aspect and did not consider many other areas, such as the social aspect, the financial aspect, or even inequalities or mental health consequences.

Lavell recalled that the human being’s role in risk has several dimensions. If these different aspects are not understood, we will not be able to reduce nor the primary fundamental risk nor to prevent the accomplished risk to ever becoming a risk. We need to understand the structural causes, the root causes, the structure of society and the choices made. In addition, factors such as the perception of threat and risk, the perception and understanding biases, the subjective interpretation of both risk and of the individual response as a risk driver must also be taken into account.

He also explained that other organisations, besides UNDRR, such as ECLAC with its assessment method that includes direct, indirect and other impacts, already foresaw the impact of what is now known as systemic risk. Lavell maintains that the risk was always systemic, given that in the urgency to measure the immediate and direct impact at the time of the event “we did not recognise the sequence of other issues that ended up being more serious.” He mentioned the example of the earthquake in Turkey, where the cascading impacts ended up being bigger than the initial event that originated them.

Lavell’s talk also touched on issues highlighted by the four working teams in the online and face-to-face workshop, such as the need to improve resources such as data sources for better preparedness, and the need for that data to be localised and contextualised. The imperative to improve communication in all its forms, with a focus on aspects such as context sensitivity and accuracy, the need to improve inclusiveness in DRR processes (women receive considerably less support in response in any country in the world) and noted that adaptive social protection is hampered by data gaps on vulnerable populations in different multi-hazard conditions and there may be limited understanding of systemic effects.

In this global context, displacement, food insecurity, and protection risks are exacerbated at the regional...
level. “DG ECHO’s role has been instrumental in redressing this situation in the region, through our joint actions over the last 12 years, which with the successful completion of this workshop marks another milestone in the fruitful regional collaboration,” recalled Mami Mizutori in her speech.

As part of the regional actions undertaken jointly with ECHO to implement the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction through preparedness actions, anticipatory actions and coordination activities with the Americas and the Caribbean, this edition of the Regional Workshop “symbolises not only an important milestone in our history of synergies with ECHO but also the continuation of work” that began in September 2021 to develop four preparedness working teams in the region whose efforts “have strengthened the disaster preparedness capacities of ECHO’s various partners in the region, with the virtual workshop in November 2022 and the current one (February 2023),” said Paola Albrito, Director of UNDRR.

This workshop responds to one of the great challenges faced by the humanitarian sector. As the EU Council call of November 2022 points out, Albrito stressed the urgent need to “make the shift from reactive crisis response to more proactive action”. Albrito highlighted the importance of evidence-based proactive action in all aspects of humanitarian aid and effective disaster risk reduction.

The mid-term review of the Sendai Framework points out that disaster risk reduction and recovery should be “the bridge filling the gaps between humanitarian, development and peace actions,” UNDRR Director recalled. By incorporating DRR into humanitarian activities, interventions will be able to go beyond the period of the immediate emergency to build resilience in the longer term. This workshop is a “clear contribution to that effort”, she concluded.

The event is a “testimony to the importance of sharing good practices and knowledge, and shows that a new business model is possible, in alignment with the shift that DG ECHO is pursuing to implement disaster risk reduction programmes globally and where preparedness is key,” recalled Andrea Koulaimah, Director of ECHO for Sub-Saharan Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Pacific.

Through “better anticipation we can better prepare programmes at multiple levels” to act earlier, reduce humanitarian impact and contain losses, she added.

The ECHO Director recalled that it is only through the generation of evidence that we can hope to change and adapt to the new challenges posed by climate and human-made disasters. DG ECHO’s Disaster Preparedness Guidance Note 2021 underlines the preparedness approach and promotes anticipatory action and preparedness for multiple hazards, not only of natural origin but also those originating or induced by humans, to respond more quickly and effectively.

It also focuses on preparedness for displacement by strengthening national and local actors to effectively manage situations of forced displacement and to assist and protect the displaced.

“We are trying to learn from this region to see how that approach can be applied and scaled up. That is why it is important to hear your views, experiences and evidence here [at the ECHO DP 2023 Workshop], which will help us all to be better prepared against threats, respond more quickly, and save more lives,” Koulaimah concluded.