



Emergency Humanitarian Aid Decision

23 02 01

Title: Emergency aid to Colombian communities affected by serious flooding

Location of operation: COLOMBIA

Amount of Decision: Euro 500,000

Decision reference number: ECHO/COL/BUD/2004/01000

Explanatory Memorandum

1 - Rationale, needs and target population.

1.1. - Rationale:

Each year between late October and December there are heavy rains in Colombia which cause flooding in northern and coastal areas. Usually the consequences are able to be dealt with by the National Disaster Prevention and Response System (SNAP), but this year, the flooding has been exceptional because the rains started early, at the beginning of October, and have been particularly heavy and continuous. The impact of the flooding has been accentuated by a failure to have taken adequate preparation and mitigation measures.

On 11 November 2004 the Colombian government declared a state of emergency in 8 departments: Atlantico, Bolivar, Guajira, Cesar, Cordoba, Magdalena, Sucre and Santander.

On 5 November IFRC launched an appeal for 953,000 Swiss Francs (€20,000) to assist 20,000 people. On 17 November this document was updated as the number of affected people had more than doubled. Since then, more rain has caused this figure to increase further, so that IFRC is likely to launch a revised appeal very shortly to assist 40,000 people (i.e. 8,000 families). By 23 November 345,108 people (68,021 families) from 21 of the 32 departments in the country were affected by the flooding¹ – this is 2-5 times higher than in the previous 4 years². 207,162 of those affected are children (60% of the total), 68,350 men (20%) and 69,596 women (20%).

¹ Data gathered by Colombian Red Cross and SNAP

² SNAP: 170,581 people affected by floods in 2003, 44,587 in 2002, 79,194 in 2001 and 51,063 in 2000

1.2. - Identified needs:

--**Food:** In the affected area rice is one of the major crops, typically with smallholdings of 1-5 hectares, close to the river banks. Many of these have been destroyed, along with crops of manioc and bananas, which are not very resistant to soil softening and disintegration. People who were already in a vulnerable position have lost their crops, animals, reserves and other means of subsistence, and have exhausted their coping mechanisms. Furthermore, agriculture is the principal source of employment and income generation in the area.

--**Emergency shelter:** 469 houses have been destroyed and 20,287 seriously damaged³. Temporary shelters for the duration of the floods are essential when people can no longer live in their homes. Since many of the seriously damaged houses were built in high risk areas, their rehabilitation is not viable.

--**Health:** Medical organisations report an increase in acute respiratory infections, acute diarrhoeas, food poisoning, skin diseases, anxiety crises and malaria. Most of the affected families do not have health insurance and although there are sufficient staff at most of the health centres, there is a serious lack of medicines.

--**Water, sanitation and hygiene:** Water for consumption has been polluted by the flooding and flood water has seriously damaged the network of water conduits in the urban areas. In the rural areas water sources such as streams and wells have become completely unusable. There are generally no sewage treatment installations in the area, in both urban and rural zones, and faecal particles are being discharged directly into rivers and streams. Waste disposal is very basic and the torrential rains have swept much waste into the watercourses.

--**Non food items:** Families forced out of their houses and into emergency shelters need basic items such as bedding, kitchen utensils, hygiene kits and mosquito nets.

--**Disaster preparedness:** It is essential to mainstream disaster preparedness, in terms of awareness, capacity-building and community organisation, into the emergency response, since lack of preparedness has been one of the roots of the present disaster.

National capacities are inadequate to cover the needs of all of those affected, especially people in geographically remote areas, those in conflict zones and those in areas controlled by the guerrillas, where state institutions are not present.

1.3. - Target population and regions concerned:

Up to 20,000 people living in the departments of Bolivar, Cesar and Sucre. Particular priority will be given to:

- *People living in flooded, isolated and/or conflict affected rural areas:* A large part of these people are IDPs who have fled from violence or are subsistence farmers with a very limited capacity to absorb the socio-economical shocks created by the floods.
- *People living in temporary shelters.* 26 temporary shelters (schools and sports halls) have been opened in the affected area. These so called emergency shelters often do not even have basic water and sanitation facilities and are certainly not geared up for emergencies.

³ Colombian Red Cross
ECHO/COL/BUD/2004/01000

- *People living on the river banks.* These are invariably the worst hit areas, with little or no aid reaching them.

1.4. – Risk assessment and possible constraints:

- If the rains continue to fall in the month of December, the recovery process will be held up, the level of damage and associated needs will be still greater, and the impact of the emergency response will be limited.
- The illegal armed groups can restrict humanitarian access and/or create a security risk for both humanitarian actors and the affected populations.

2 - Objectives and components of the humanitarian intervention proposed.

2.1. - Objectives:

Principal objective: To assist populations in Colombia affected by serious flooding

Specific objectives:

- To assist victims of flooding with an integrated assistance package

2.2. - Components:

The following are the sectors in which interventions under this decision will be made, together with an indication of the type of activities to be undertaken.

Food

- Food distribution
- Establishment of community kitchens

Emergency shelter

- Construction and improvement of emergency community shelters

Health and Nutrition

- Support to existing health centres through distribution of medicines and organisation of health brigades
- Health and nutritional education
- Nutritional assistance and surveillance
- Assessment of anaemia levels in children
- Improved prevention of vector borne diseases

Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

- Improvement of access to safe drinking water
- Improvement of sanitation facilities
- Hygiene promotion

Non-food items

- Distribution of items such as hammocks, blankets, mosquito nets, cooking kits, hygiene kits

5 - Other donors and donor co-ordination mechanisms.

Donors in COLOMBIA the last 12 months					
1. EU Members States (*)		2. European Commission		3. Others	
	EUR		EUR		EUR
Austria	0	ECHO	8,397,333	USA	37,000,000
Belgium	0	Other services		Canada	1,000,000
Denmark	0			Switzerland	530.000
Finland	300,000				
France	0				
Germany	1,514,000				
Greece	0				
Ireland	0				
Italy	0				
Luxembourg	0				
Netherlands	0				
Portugal	0				
Spain	0				
Sweden	324,600				
United Kingdom	0				
Subtotal	2,138,600	Subtotal	8,397,333	Subtotal	38,530,000
		Grand total	10,535,933		

Dated : 06/12/2004

(*) Source : ECHO 14 Points reporting for Members States. <https://nac.cec.eu.int>
Empty cells means either no information is available or no contribution.

6 - Amount of Decision and distribution of funding by specific objectives:

6.1. - Total amount of the Decision: Euro 500,000

6.2. - Budget breakdown by specific objectives

Principal objective: <i>To assist populations in Colombia affected by serious flooding</i>			
Specific objectives	Allocated amount by specific objective (Euro)	Geographical area of operation	Potential partners⁴
Specific objective 1: To assist victims of flooding with an integrated assistance package	500,000	Bolivar, Cesar and Sucre departments	- ACH- ESP - CROIX-ROUGE - ESP
TOTAL: 500,000			

⁴ ACCION CONTRA EL HAMBRE, (ESP), CRUZ ROJA ESPAÑOLA, (E)
ECHO/COL/BUD/2004/01000

7 –Budget Impact article 23 02 01

	CE (in Euro)
Initial available appropriations for 2004	476,395,908
Budgetary transfer	25,000,000
Commission transfer	-3,700,000
Supplementary budgets	
Transfers	
Total available appropriations	497,695,908
Total executed to date (as at 6/12/2004)	494,614,311.78
Available remaining	3,081,596.22
Total amount of the Decision	500,000

COMMISSION DECISION

of

on the financing of emergency humanitarian operations from the general budget of the European Union in COLOMBIA

THE COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES,

Having regard to the Treaty establishing the European Community,
Having regard to Council Regulation (EC) No.1257/96 of 20 June 1996 concerning humanitarian aid⁵, and in particular Article 13 thereof,

Whereas:

- (1) Exceptionally, heavy rains in Colombia in October and November 2004 have created serious flooding, causing a state of emergency to be declared in 8 departments in the country.
- (2) At least 350,000 people, in 21 of the 32 departments in Colombia, have been adversely affected by the flooding and need food, shelter, healthcare, clean water, sanitation and hygiene facilities and/or other basic non-food items.
- (3) Humanitarian aid operations financed by this Decision should be of a maximum duration of 6 months.
- (4) It is estimated that an amount of 500,000 Euro from budget line 23 02 01 of the general budget of the European Union is necessary to provide humanitarian assistance to over 16,000 people affected by the floods, taking into account the available budget, other donors' contributions and other factors.

HAS DECIDED AS FOLLOWS:

Article 1

1. In accordance with the objectives and general principles of humanitarian aid, the Commission hereby approves a total amount of 500,000 Euro for emergency humanitarian aid operations to provide the necessary assistance and relief to people affected by the floods in Colombia by using line 23 02 01 of the 2004 general budget of the European Union.
2. In accordance with Article 2 (a) of Council Regulation No.1257/96, the humanitarian operations shall be implemented in the pursuance of the following specific objectives:
 - To assist victims of flooding with an integrated assistance package.

⁵ OJ L 163, 2.7.1996, p. 1-6
[ECHO/COL/BUD/2004/01000](#)

Article 2

1. The implementation of humanitarian aid operations funded by this Decision shall have a maximum duration of 6 months from their starting date.
2. Expenditure under this Decision shall be eligible from 24 November 2004.
3. If the operations envisaged in this Decision are suspended owing to *force majeure* or comparable circumstances, the period of suspension shall not be taken into account for the calculation of the duration of the humanitarian aid operations.

Article 3

This Decision shall take effect on the date of its adoption.

Done at Brussels,

For the Commission

Member of the Commission