



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR HUMANITARIAN AID - ECHO

Humanitarian Aid Decision

23 02 01

Title: Support to humanitarian operations to provide, in accordance with UNICEF's mandate, protection to children and women in humanitarian emergencies

Location of operation: Global

Amount of decision: 2,000,000 euro

Decision reference number: ECHO/THM/BUD/2004/05000

Explanatory Memorandum

1 - Rationale, needs and target population:

1.1. - Rationale:

Children are amongst the most vulnerable victims of humanitarian crises. They are the most exposed and at-risk group in unstable situations. According to UNICEF, an estimated 20 million children have been forced to flee their homes and some 300,000 child soldiers are involved in more than 30 conflicts worldwide. Their **protection** from violence, exploitation, abuse and neglect, is often inadequate even in times of stability. In addition to being human rights violations, these abuses are under-recognized and under-reported barriers to child survival and development.

Humanitarian emergencies make protection programming particularly difficult, due to lack of humanitarian access, breakdown of family and social structures, collapse of basic social services, weak governance, the absence of accountability and the prevalence of violence. At the same time, the direct threats to child protection are compounded through forced displacement, abduction, labour and sexual exploitation by armed groups, disability due to combat or natural disasters, landmines and unexploded ordnance, and trafficking. Children may also witness war crimes, and come before truth and justice-seeking mechanisms.

The field of child protection is complex and relatively new. Despite the explicit references to child protection in the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child, the implementation of those provisions has remained slow and nowhere more so than in humanitarian crises – be they conflict-related or natural disasters.

Children and women are a natural target of all humanitarian operations funded by the Commission through its Directorate-General for Humanitarian Aid (ECHO) and they have been considered as priorities in ECHO's aid strategy since 2002. In 2005, ECHO will continue to promote the mainstreaming of child related activities in humanitarian operations. The strategy also underlines that a well-defined harmonized methodology is needed to make

child-related activities in humanitarian operations comparable and their impact measurable. In line with this commitment, in 2004 ECHO adopted internal guidelines clarifying the principles for its action in favour of children as well as the main sectors of intervention. These guidelines were prepared by in-depth consultations, including on field level, and widely discussed with and distributed to Member States and partners. ECHO also developed a new reporting mechanism to better gauge the overall effect of its funding for child-related activities at a qualitative and quantitative level.

Child protection is an important component of ECHO's overall strategy in supporting children affected by humanitarian crises and is at the core of UNICEF mandate. Child protection is a core part of UNICEF's Principles and Core Commitments for Children¹.

There is a clear expectation among all actors that UNICEF will provide leadership in its partnerships in setting standards, elaborating tools and policies, and gathering and analyzing information on the situation of children. As such, it is expected to take the lead in setting clearer and globally-endorsed policies and standards, and in developing and making available the guidelines, tools and instruments that will allow constant quality work in the field.

This principles were clearly highlighted in the 2003 ECHO funded Evaluation of UNICEF programmes. The Evaluation recommended that: "ECHO should set up thematic funding for activities and training in Child Protection and also possibly in Emergency Preparedness, a cross-cutting concern in the agency's humanitarian mandate. Synergies should be built up between ECHO and UNICEF for better protection of vulnerable children in crisis situations, such as e.g. child soldiers, orphans, family reunification, psychological support, forced labour or sexual exploitation, and for training of staff".

Consequently, ECHO envisages funding measures designed to reinforce UNICEF capacities to ensure coherent, timely and consistent response to **child protection needs in emergencies**.

Such activities are fully endorsed by ECHO's mandate, as enshrined in article 4 of Council Regulation (EC) no. 1257/96, which requires that the effectiveness and consistency of the intervention systems set up to meet the needs generated by natural or man-made disasters or comparable exceptional circumstances should be ensured and strengthened. They are in line with **ECHO's 2005 Strategy** and **ECHO's thematic approach** to funding International Organisations. This thematic approach to humanitarian needs represents a new way of working with International Organisations and ECHO's commitment to work closely with the UN agencies in the delivery of humanitarian aid.

The activities will also significantly contribute to the implementation of the EU guidelines on children and armed conflict.

1.2. Identified needs:

Assessments of lessons from recent emergency response and reviews/evaluations of UNICEF's capacities in the area of child protection in emergencies have demonstrated that significant advances have been made in increasing the emphasis on child protection in UNICEF programmes of cooperation.

UNICEF and partner organisations have made significant progress in the quality of their interventions over a relatively limited number of years. Lessons have been learnt, guidelines and principles have been drawn up in a number of protection areas.

¹ For details see UNICEF http://www.unicef.org/emerg/index_commitments.html

Among the best examples are the **Cape Town Principles** for the demobilisation and reintegration of children in Africa and the recently adopted **Guiding Principles on Unaccompanied and Separated Children**. However, much remains to be done.

Programmatic approaches differ from country to country, and efficient tools are still lacking for field practitioners who often are left with no other choice but to improvise their response. Lessons learnt are too seldom documented and only shared at regional level. With insufficient tools and little knowledge of similar experiences, projects remain too limited in scope.

Child protection programming in emergencies: While there is widespread commitment throughout UNICEF and its partners to better implementation of the CCCs relating to child protection, there is a strong need to increase the awareness and skills of UNICEF staff – protection officers working in more ‘regular’ contexts as well as other programme officers – of the special considerations and programmatic interventions necessary in the area of child protection in situations of emergencies.

Prevention of child recruitment, demobilisation and reintegration of child soldiers: The demobilisation of children associated with armed forces and armed groups has received important visibility and attention over the past few years, with programmes developed in countries such as Sri Lanka, Afghanistan, Sudan and Angola. Despite the increased attention given to these programmes, important aspects remain poorly addressed. As UNICEF and partners embark on further demobilisation and reintegration exercises, there is a need to look at reintegration of child soldiers within the broader context of the reintegration of all other children affected by a conflict.

Separated children: A family whose members have become separated puts children at particular risk. In all age groups, therefore, prevention of separation should be given special attention in humanitarian crises.

Although the recently adopted ‘Interagency Guiding Principles on Unaccompanied Children and Separated Children’ have been a major achievement in ensuring a common response to separated children in emergencies, UNICEF and partners still lack the tools to efficiently implement the principles, especially in the more challenging cases of younger children that become separated. Additionally, the ‘Guiding Principles’ need to be fully endorsed as they contain key recommendations that should be followed by all actors present in situations where children get separated from their primary care givers.

Psychosocial support: Since the early 1990s UNICEF and most other child protection agencies have been active in providing children with the support required for psychosocial reintegration. Psychosocial support has now become a systematic part of humanitarian response. However, approaches to psychosocial reintegration vary greatly, within UNICEF programmes and also between UNICEF and other child protection organisations. There is a strong expectation in this field that a clear UNICEF policy, accompanied by the development of a toolkit and guidelines, would greatly clarify the debate and lead to more consistency in approaches within UNICEF and within the wider humanitarian community.

Sexual violence, exploitation and HIV/AIDS: The international humanitarian community has become increasingly aware of the massive sexual violence and exploitation perpetrated against children and women in emergency situations. Violence during conflicts takes multiple forms, each demanding its own response: sexual violence used by armed groups as a weapon of war requires one strategy, sexual exploitation perpetrated by those taking advantage of the increased vulnerability of children and women in conflict situations demands another, sexual exploitation by those mandated to protect children and women (e.g. peacekeepers, humanitarian workers) demands its own approach. These specific strategies must however all

be part of a coherent and coordinated overall strategy on protection from gender-based violence.

1.3. - Target population and regions concerned:

Funding under this decision will benefit UNICEF protection staff and protection programmes, as well as humanitarian partners. However, the ultimate beneficiaries of this project should be children and women in humanitarian crises. While emphasis will be on enhancement of the protection response capacities of UNICEF in humanitarian situations, the partners that will benefit also include other UN agencies and NGOs involved in humanitarian action impacting children and women.

1.4. - Risk assessment and possible constraints:

It is certainly a challenge to reconcile ECHO's short term mandate with the long-term needs in the field of women and child protection. The programmes that ECHO is funding under the present decision, in principle, require a medium-term perspective that ECHO cannot formally commit to, given the annual basis of ECHO programming and budget. However, ECHO believes that this support is needed as a necessary investment, over a limited period of time, to ensure the effectiveness and feasibility of its short term actions in a medium to long-term perspective.

ECHO will decide, each year, how to target its funding to UNICEF protection activities so as to ensure that these resources are used in line with ECHO's strategy. At the same time, ECHO will elaborate a clear exit strategy that includes advocating with the other relevant Commission services to take on board the UN needs in terms of medium term funding and capacity building.

UNICEF's ability to perform these functions depends on having skilled and experienced staff within countries, properly supported by regional offices and headquarters, all working towards the same standards.

2- Objectives and components of the humanitarian intervention proposed:

2.1. – Objectives:

The principal objective of this decision is that children and women affected by humanitarian crises are provided with specific protection.

The specific objective is to strengthen UNICEF's capacity to respond to developments in the protection of children and women, by enhancing the organisation's child protection strategy in humanitarian emergencies.

2.2. - Components:

The objectives of this decision will be implemented through five main components: Improving the understanding of child protection in emergencies; Update and complement the Cape Town Principles on Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR); a UNICEF strategy on psychosocial support to children; Better target the needs of unaccompanied and separated children, especially with regard to younger children;

Reinforcement of the implementation of the interagency guidelines for HIV/AIDS interventions in emergency settings and sexual violence and exploitation.

Improving the understanding of child protection in emergencies

Under this component, UNICEF will develop a “Child Protection in emergencies” modular training package focusing on the needs of the regions of West and Central Africa and a CD ROM on how to communicate on child protection. On the basis of this instrument, training will be given to UNICEF child protection officers, emergency officers and programme coordinators, as well as partners in the region. Furthermore, UNICEF is planning to further develop protection staff’s understanding of child protection work in emergencies through a staff exchange mechanism which twins experienced emergency child protection staff with new/inexperienced staff in countries identified as unstable and/or likely to become so in the near future (based on UNICEF’s early warning analysis). Part of the implementation of the mechanism will include 5 such staff exchange deployments to test and refine the mechanism before expanding the project further.

Finally, UNICEF plans to organise a global consultation on child protection in emergencies, involving child protection and emergency advisers from regional offices. An important aim will be the review and refinement/development of mainstreaming strategies to make sure that child protection approaches are more widely owned throughout the organization.

Update and complement the Cape Town Principles on Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR)

In 1997, a set of principles, known as the “Cape Town Principles”, was adopted by a group of specialists. These principles were mainly based on experience accumulated in Africa and now serve as a reference among protection agencies. However, the principles, as well as accompanying policies and guidelines need an update based on the most recent experiences and on lessons learned from Africa and other regions.

Under this component UNICEF proposes to conduct additional research on prevention of recruitment, on reintegration of demobilized child soldiers, and lessons learned in DDR generally, and to convene consultations leading to an updated set of principles for programming by end 2005 for adoption by the international community, in particular key governments, donors, financial institutions and regional organizations.

To complement efforts in updating the Cape Town Principles, UNICEF will develop a set of tools and guidelines to facilitate programming. The detailed guidance will be on topics ranging from the provision of demobilization and reintegration packages for children, to the identification documents to be given to the children and the use of databases to record recruitment.

A UNICEF strategy on psychosocial support to children

UNICEF will conduct field evaluations of psychosocial projects in order to build its knowledge base. Experiences with Child Friendly Spaces are in the process of being further documented and its value assessed as an environment conducive to recovery and a methodology for added protection, particularly during displacement of populations. A policy will then be developed, within the context of this project, based on these evaluations and previous lessons learned.

To support the policy on psychosocial support and to ensure that staff know how to implement it, a toolkit and guidelines will be developed, which will include tools for assessing the level of distress among children, and better measurement of the impact of programme interventions. It will also include manuals for field practitioners.

Better target the needs of unaccompanied and separated children, especially with regard to younger children

The recently adopted Inter-Agency ‘Guiding Principles on Unaccompanied and Separated Children’, have been developed as a joint effort by ICRC, UNICEF, UNHCR, the International Rescue Committee, Save the Children and World Vision. Although the common guidelines were a major achievement, the “Guiding Principles” need to be fully endorsed by all, including major donors. They contain key recommendations that should be followed by all actors active in situations where children get separated from their primary care givers, for example on strict limitations to international adoptions. UNICEF is planning to undertake a thorough dissemination campaign. Under this component, work will be done on the development and testing of guidelines and tools specific to the care and protection of children under five years of age, in the form of a guide for field work.

Reinforcement of the implementation of interagency guidelines for HIV/AIDS interventions in emergency settings and sexual violence and exploitation

UNICEF has developed a provisional intensive training package on providing care and support to survivors of rape for community organizations, religious leaders, women’s groups and health care workers. However, before finalizing the package, UNICEF proposed to hold technical consultations with partner agencies and experts on gender based violence on the contents of this training package and to field test the package. Results from the field testing will be used to improve training of staff, develop ways of adapting it to different contexts, and ensuring that it can be also used by the wider humanitarian community.

UNICEF, as co-chair of the IASC task force on Protection from Sexual Abuse and Sexual Exploitation, has been developing model complaints mechanisms and investigative protocols for complaints of sexual abuse or exploitation by UN personnel and rolling out training in the field. UNICEF has also been working with its partner NGOs to strengthen their accountability for acceptable standards of behaviour. This component will focus on the development of specific training material and training of UNICEF staff and partners so that they are better equipped to handle complaints of abuse and exploitation of children. In 2005, the training will focus on staff in the West and Central Africa region (where there are numerous conflicts and peacekeeping missions, increasing the vulnerability of children and women) and the East Asia and Pacific region (where there is a mix of conflict and non-conflict emergencies, and an acute need to strengthen capacity in prevention of sexual abuse and exploitation).

In addition to ongoing interagency collaboration, as part of the process to mainstream implementation of its own HIV/AIDS programmes in emergency settings, UNICEF will organize a series of workshops at regional level for Child Protection, Emergency and HIV/AIDS officers from selected country offices. The training will focus on HIV/AIDS in emergencies, through the utilization of the IASC guidelines and the related training package. The first two regional offices with which plans for the training are already under development are West and Central Africa region and East and Southern Africa region.

Finally, funding under this decision will support a video campaign to promote the ECHO/UNICEF partnership for children in emergency situations with a specific focus on child protection issues (e.g. child soldiers).

3 - Duration foreseen for actions within the framework of the proposed decision:

The duration for the implementation of this decision will be 13 months. This duration will enable the implementation period of the operations to be streamlined with the UN Financial Year, thus ensuring a smoother implementation of the operations, covering effectively a full financial year. Humanitarian operations funded by this decision must be implemented within this period. Expenditure under this Decision shall be eligible from 01/01/2005. The start date is: 01/01/2005.

If the implementation of the actions envisaged in this decision is suspended due to *force majeure* or any comparable circumstance, the period of suspension will not be taken into account for the calculation of the duration of the decision.

Depending on the evolution of the situation in the field, the Commission reserves the right to terminate the agreements signed with the implementing humanitarian organisations, where the suspension of activities is for a period of more than one third of the total planned duration of the action. In this respect, the procedure established in the general conditions of the specific agreement will be applied.

4 –Previous interventions/decisions of the Commission within the context of the crisis concerned herewith

List of previous ECHO Thematic Funding operations				
Decision number	Description	2002 EUR	2003 EUR	2004 EUR
ECHO/TPS/210/2002/14000	UNHCR: protection, staff security, registration	11,000,000		
ECHO/THM/210/2003/01000	ICRC, protection to victims of armed conflicts		10,000,000	
ECHO/THM/210/2003/02000	UNHCR, protection to refugees and to enhance security of humanitarian staff		11,000,000	
ECHO/THM/210/2003/03000	UNICEF, children affected by armed conflicts		996,000	
ECHO/THM/BUD/2004/01000	UN-OCHA, humanitarian information systems			4,000,000
ECHO/THM/BUD/2004/02000	WHO, humanitarian response to health emergencies.			3,500,000
ECHO/THM/BUD/2004/03000	WFP, Assessing Emergency Needs in Food Security Crises			4,500,000
Subtotal		11,000,000	21,996,000	12,000,000
Total (2002-2004)				44,996,000

Dated : 22/11/2004
Source : HOPE

5 - Other donors and donor co-ordination mechanisms

UNICEF's mandate in emergencies is to protect the rights of children and women.

Like the European Commission, various EU Member States, as well as the US, Japan and Canada have provided continued strong support to UNICEF operations, notably in Africa. All recognise that strong support is needed in this particularly vulnerable and volatile area.

An important organisational capacity building effort for emergency response has been ongoing through a series of increasingly more coherent programmes of cooperation with the British Department for International Development (DFID). To ensure that UNICEF is better prepared and equipped to respond to crises, the programme focuses, among other areas, on the continued development and implementation of policy, improvements in operational systems (e.g. security, human resources, telecommunications, etc.), development and institutionalisation of an emergency preparedness planning framework, and improvements in understanding the impact of armed conflict on children (including data collection and policy guidance). UNICEF's contribution to policy development as well as monitoring and reporting on the impact of armed conflict on children will contribute to strengthening the overall UN response in this area. All these elements have been undertaken with an enhanced engagement in inter-agency partnerships.

UNICEF, the Social Science Research Council and ECHO have identified the importance of establishing base-line and developing data regarding children in emergencies – particularly those affected by armed conflict. To this end, ECHO is supporting a major research project on the collection and analysis of data regarding children affected by conflict (ECHO/THM/210/2003/03000). The work from this proposal will both provide information and be informed by that process.

ECHO has contributed to UNICEF's programmes all over the world since 1992. Activities particularly related to thematic funding have been funded by ECHO through contribution agreements in 2003 and 2004 with the support of their emergency preparedness programme.

UNICEF ensures that there is no overlap in funding of activities by different donors and notably between ECHO funding at country and thematic level.

ECHO will ensure the monitoring of the programme in selected countries via its network of field experts. At **headquarters level**, meetings with UNICEF will take place to review the programme.

6 –Amount of decision and distribution by specific objectives:

6.1. - Total amount of the decision: 2,000,000 euro

6.2. - Budget breakdown by specific objectives

Principal objective: <i>To provide children and women affected by humanitarian crises with specific protection.</i>				
Specific objectives	Allocated amount by specific objective (Euro)	Possible geographical area of operation	Activities	Potential partners²
To strengthen UNICEF's capacity to respond to developments in the protection of children and women by enhancing the organisation's child protection strategy in humanitarian emergencies.	2,000,000	Global	Training activities for UNICEF staff on child protection; Develop and implement a staff exchange mechanism in emergencies for child protection staff; Develop a CD Rom on how to communicate on child protection; Organise a global UNICEF child protection in emergencies forum; Develop tools and guidelines for application of principles on disarmament , demobilisation and reintegration of child soldiers; Develop toolkit and guidelines on psychosocial programming; Develop guidelines and tools specific to separated children under 5; Evaluate response to separated children in West and Central Africa; Train Unicef and partner staff in dealing with complaints of sexual abuse and exploitation; Conduct two regional training in Latin America and East Asia on HIV/AIDS in emergencies.	- UN - UNICEF - BEL
TOTAL	2,000,000			

²

UNICEF

7 –Evaluation

Under article 18 of Council Regulation (EC) No.1257/96 of 20 June 1996 concerning humanitarian aid the Commission is required to "regularly assess humanitarian aid operations financed by the Community in order to establish whether they have achieved their objectives and to produce guidelines for improving the effectiveness of subsequent operations." These evaluations are structured and organised in overarching and cross cutting issues forming part of ECHO's Annual Strategy such as child-related issues, the security of relief workers, respect for human rights, gender. Each year, an indicative Evaluation Programme is established after a consultative process. This programme is flexible and can be adapted to include evaluations not foreseen in the initial programme, in response to particular events or changing circumstances. More information can be obtained at:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/echo/evaluation/index_en.htm.

8 –Budget Impact article 23 02 01

	CE (in Euro)
Initial Available Appropriations for 2004	472.000.000
Virement Commission	-3.700.000
Supplementary budgets	
Transfers	
Total Available Credits	468.300.000
Total executed to date (as at 23/11/2004)	458.814.311,78
Available remaining	9.485.688,22
Total amount of the Decision	2,000,000

COMMISSION DECISION

of

on the financing of humanitarian operations from the general budget of the European Union to support humanitarian operations to provide, in accordance with UNICEF's mandate, protection to children and women in humanitarian emergencies

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 aid³, and in particular Article 14 thereof,

Whereas:

- (1) Children are amongst the most vulnerable victims of humanitarian crises and the most exposed and at-risk group in unstable situations;
- (2) According to UNICEF, an estimated 20 million children have been forced to flee their homes and some 300,000 child soldiers are involved in more than 30 conflicts worldwide;
- (3) Humanitarian emergencies make protection programming particularly difficult, due to lack of humanitarian access, breakdown of family and social structures, collapse of basic social services, weak governance, the absence of accountability and the prevalence of violence;
- (4) Direct threats to child protection in emergencies are compounded through forced displacement, abduction, labour and sexual exploitation by armed groups, disability due to combat or natural disasters, landmines and unexploded ordnance, and trafficking;
- (5) Child protection is an important component of ECHO's overall strategy in supporting children affected by humanitarian crises and is at the core of UNICEF mandate;
- (6) ECHO envisages funding measures designed to enhance the protection of children and women by funding UNICEF, an experienced partner with a unique mandate and a global outreach in that domain;
- (7) An assessment of the humanitarian situation leads to the conclusion that humanitarian aid operations should be financed by the Community for a period of 13 months starting on 01/01/2005;
- (8) It is estimated that an amount of 2,000,000 euro from budget line 23 02 01 of the general budget of the European Union is necessary to provide protection to children and women affected by humanitarian emergencies, taking into account the available budget, other donors' interventions and other factors.

³ OJ L 163, 2.7.1996, p. 1-6

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 2,000,000 euro for humanitarian aid operations to provide, in accordance with UNICEF's mandate, protection to children and women in humanitarian emergencies, by using line 23 02 01 of the 2004 budget of the European Union.
2. In accordance with Article 4 of Regulation (EC) No.1257/96, the humanitarian operations shall be implemented in the pursuance of the following specific objective:

To strengthen UNICEF's capacity to respond to developments in the protection of children and women, by enhancing the organisation's child protection strategy in humanitarian emergencies.

Article 2

1. The duration for the implementation of this decision shall be for a maximum period of 13 months, starting on 01/01/2005.
2. Expenditure under this Decision shall be eligible from 01/01/2005.
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 implementation of this Decision.

Article 3

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

Done at Brussels,

For the Commission

Member of the Commission