



Humanitarian Aid Decision

23 02 01

Title: Strengthening the humanitarian response to natural disasters through thematic support to the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)

Location of operation: Global

Amount of Decision: EUR 3,500,000

Decision reference number: ECHO/THM/BUD/2005/05000

Explanatory Memorandum

1 - Rationale, needs and target population.

1.1. - Rationale :

Over the past decades, natural hazards such as earthquakes, droughts, floods, storms and tropical cyclones, wildland fires and volcanic eruptions have caused major loss of human lives and livelihoods and the destruction of economic and social infrastructures, as well as environmental damage. As a result of climate change, the frequency and intensity of climate-related events are likely to increase.

According to Munich Re¹, in the last decade economic losses have increased almost ten times, with around 7,000 natural disasters causing economic losses estimated at over EUR 650 billion. The South Asian Tsunami alone has caused the annual death toll from natural disasters to soar to 320,000 worldwide, more than four times the toll from the previous year. The emphasis on responding to disasters by providing humanitarian assistance, instead of building disaster-prevention capacity, absorbs significant amounts of resources which would normally be allocated for development efforts. The Hyogo Declaration from the World Conference on Disaster Reduction recognizes that “disasters seriously undermine the results of development investments in a very short time, and therefore, remain a major impediment

¹ Munich Re. Topics 2003, Natural Catastrophes- the current position
[ECHO/THM/BUD/2005/05000](#)

to sustainable development and poverty eradication". More effective prevention strategies could save millions of euros as well as thousands of lives.

While many countries are confronted with natural hazards, the poorer developing countries are disproportionately vulnerable. An estimated 97% of annual natural disaster related deaths occur in developing countries². In some cases, natural disasters can amplify man-made emergencies or vice versa, as epitomized by the ongoing drought and unfolding events in Afghanistan.

Although the South Asian Tsunami that occurred on 26 December 2004 could not have been prevented, it is clear that its impact could have been reduced if countries in the region and coastal communities were better equipped with efficient early warning systems. The South Asian Tsunami also demonstrated the vital role of preparedness for an appropriate emergency response mechanism.

Within this challenging context, governments, international organizations such as the UN and the Red Cross and other humanitarian actors need to take effective and appropriate initiatives and actions to mitigate, prepare for and quickly respond to natural disasters.

The Red Cross Movement, and specifically, the International Federation of Red Cross & Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) is not only dedicated to assisting and responding to the needs of the most vulnerable, but is particularly well positioned and resourced to meet these challenges. Since its creation in 1919, a network of 181 National Societies and their volunteers have worked daily to meet the needs of vulnerable people, working with them to reduce the vulnerability of their communities to disasters and to strengthen their capacities to respond and to rebuild their lives. The volunteers are the first line responders in case of disaster, and in over 90% of the natural and man-made disasters that occur each year, National Societies (NS) are able to respond.

When the scale of a disaster overwhelms NS's capacity, the International Federation is able to mobilize as necessary the resources to support them at national, regional and international level. For example, in ECHO's Primary Emergency Decision³ in response to the Tsunami, the IFRC was selected as the only partner as it was the best placed organization able to respond through the NS in the entire region affected.

This advantage, that makes the IFRC a world leader in disaster response, also presents a sizeable challenge. The complexity of disasters is growing in an increasingly insecure and unstable international environment and the International Federation must strive to improve the coordination of its response to disasters alongside other actors in the humanitarian world. The IFRC has developed a strategy to reinforce and strengthen its disaster management tools and has approached ECHO for thematic funding. Today, the IFRC has the recognised preparedness and expertise to respond to natural disasters, environmental catastrophes and population displacements, and has demonstrated the value this expertise brings to disaster management, specifically in the following areas:

- Mobilisation and coordination of trained national, regional and international teams in the form of National Society Intervention Teams, Regional Disaster Response Teams (RDRT), Field Assessment & Coordination Teams (FACT), and specialised technical

² World Bank. World Development Report, 2000

³ Decision ECHO/AS/BUD/2004/03000

Emergency Response Units (ERU).

- Mobilisation and coordination of all in-kind donations of goods, monitored through mobilisation tables made available to all donors at any time on Disaster Management Information System (DMIS).
- National and regional disaster preparedness and response planning.
- Disaster Preparedness tools such as Vulnerability and Capacity Assessments (VCA) and guidelines for the Well Prepared National Society (WPNS).

The IFRC seeks ECHO thematic funding to continue strengthening, and where necessary, develop new applications, for the IFRC disaster preparedness and response programmes to ensure high quality assistance to the most disaster vulnerable populations.

This programme is in line with **ECHO's DIPECHO 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 (IO) and ECHO's commitment to work closely with the IO in the delivery of humanitarian aid. Through thematic funding, ECHO is looking for start-up activities of an innovative nature that provide an added value for meeting humanitarian needs and strengthening response capacities of the humanitarian community.

1.2. - Identified needs :

Despite considerable efforts, the majority of humanitarian actors recognize that there are still gaps in the response to natural disasters, in terms of assessing the situation, developing response strategies, convening partners, establishing joint action, identifying gaps and making sure they are filled.

Over the past decades the IFRC has responded to most of the major global natural disasters. Population movement and refugee operations in Rwanda, Liberia, Chad, Malawi, Cambodia, the Balkans and others; Famine and drought in Ethiopia, Sudan, Southern Africa, North Korea, Central Asia and Somalia; earthquakes in India, Colombia, Armenia, Turkey, Peru, Algeria, Iran and El Salvador; Hurricanes and cyclones in the Caribbean, Central America, Asia and the Pacific; and countless minor disasters. The IFRC played a key role in responding to the Tsunami Disaster. IFRC undertakes evaluations of its programmes to constantly review and adapt its disaster systems and methodologies. The IFRC is in the process of concluding an internal evaluation of its response to the Tsunami disaster.

From these evaluations, there have been recommendations and lessons learned which have been incorporated into the development of IFRC disaster response tools and systems, coordinated by the secretariat and its delegations in the field and implemented by national societies. These systems are focused on improving the capacity and effectiveness of the Red Cross national societies to prepare for and respond to disasters and to maximize the critical need to deliver well-coordinated and appropriate support for victims and beneficiaries.

The ability to rapidly assess damages and needs in a disaster and provide effective coordination and implementation of a plan of action drawn up from these assessments is key to effective **disaster response**. The IFRC has developed tools which are the platform for the Red Cross movement's capacity to respond to natural disasters:

FACT “*Field Assessment and Coordination Teams*”. The Federation’s internationally trained and prepared FACT teams are the primary vehicles to support national societies where the situation has become so large, or so complex, that its own resources are challenged and international assistance may be required. FACT teams have been deployed in many cases and their ability to provide assistance and to add value to the response has been demonstrated in most cases where they were deployed. The FACT methodology has been developed in close cooperation with the UN’s OCHA and the assessment and coordination systems are compatible with OCHA’s UNDAC system.

RDRT “*Regional Disaster Response Teams*” is an initiative that began in 1998 with the aim of effectively utilising existing capacities of National Societies within each region. The system is designed to activate trained Red Cross and Red Crescent staff and volunteers in responding to disasters occurring in their own regions. They are entirely staffed by members of National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. The aim of RDRTs is to actively promote the building of regional capacities in disaster management given the RDRT ability to function in the *local condition* (e.g. the Malaysian RDRT health team joined the Norwegian /Finnish RC Hospital ERU in the Federation’s Bam earthquake response). The Federation has successfully trained and incorporated RDRT teams into disaster responses in Africa, the Americas, the Middle East, Asia and the Pacific where they complement the regional delegations and, when deployed, FACT and ERU teams in supporting the national society.

ERU: “*Emergency Response Units*” provide specific support or direct services when local facilities are either destroyed, overwhelmed by needs, or do not exist. Using a standardized modular system of equipment and pre-trained teams of National Society technical specialists, ERUs can be deployed within 48 hours. The deployment of an ERU is based on a needs assessment undertaken by a FACT team or a RDRT and is coordinated by the Operations Support department at the Secretariat in Geneva. Today, 13 National Societies have 32 ERUs to support service sectors of logistics, telecommunications and information technology, water and sanitation, health and relief.

DMIS: The gathering, management and dissemination of all kinds of information become critical during a disaster. The Federation has developed the DMIS system which is a web-based tool made accessible only to Red Cross and Red Crescent staff working in National Societies. This tool has proved a useful and important component of the preparedness of the Federation providing comprehensive real-time field reports, and allowing users access to many valuable tools and information databases. There is a need to train a wider user base by providing courses and access to the system for national societies that may have less access to the Internet. In addition, the system would benefit from upgraded software for mapping and interfacing with other agencies and information management tools such as ReliefWeb and the OCHA Global Disaster Alert System.

Logistics and procurement: The contribution that effective logistics brings to professional disaster management is pivotal in the overall delivery of assistance to affected populations. It aims to establish the required capacities to mobilise and to move goods and people where and when required. The rapid mobilisation of relief supplies, materials, equipment, transport and specialised logistics professionals is a key component of the Federation preparedness and response system. The International Federation was generally commended for its capacity to rapidly provide appropriate relief and mobilise the resources of its members during the Tsunami response, although there is also recognition that by improving regional capacity this could be more efficient. The Federation is therefore looking to considerably increase and develop more pre-positioned regional logistics stocks and logistics units, while extending its

supplier framework agreements to cover further basic relief items. This will be done at global level (not only for the areas affected by the Tsunami) in order to ensure faster delivery of appropriate relief items.

The IFRC has already established one logistic unit (Dubai) and one Disaster Management Center (PADRU) where emergency stocks are pre-positioned to enable fast delivery of relief to affected populations. It has also negotiated supplier framework agreements for many essential relief items, which allow rapid delivery in disasters. These will be extended and expanded, and the aim would be to have a global stock management strategy implemented.

Disaster preparedness interventions have been invaluable in developing efficient, timely and effective disaster response. Disaster preparedness and contingency plans are to be reviewed and periodically updated with a particular focus on the most vulnerable areas and groups. The Tsunami operation has shown once again the importance of the role the Red Cross and Red Crescent play in early warning safety dissemination, awareness raising, education and evacuation planning at the community level.

In recent years, the International Federation has continued to develop its policies, standards, and accountability and review its disaster management operations in order to improve its service to the most vulnerable and to advocate for their interests and the work of the National Societies. The IFRC has developed key disaster preparedness assessment tools which need to be further implemented and strengthened: The Vulnerability and Capacity assessment (VCA), Well-Prepared National Society (WPNS) and finally the Better Programming Initiative (BPI) methodology which provides the NS with a tool to analyse the positive and negative impact of their programmes in communities, especially those recovering from violence or conflict.

Contingency planning in disaster management encompasses planning at all levels from community to international, taking into account all Government and other humanitarian actors, and is carried out continuously in the International Federation. Experience from the Tsunami underlined the importance of linking plans at a regional level, and of making information on contingency plans available and easy to access in order to make decision making easier, more rapid and appropriate. The recommendations were therefore to undertake regional disaster mapping and contingency planning: each region to have a Disaster Management plan which identifies the potential disasters, likely scales and magnitudes, what preparedness is needed in terms of supplies, management surge capacity, fundraising, resource mobilisation, procurement, etc.

Coordination aims to ensure cooperation both within the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, as well as between the Movement and other actors, in order to reduce duplication, to maximise the organisation of response operations based on shared information and to optimise the use of all resources. The International Federation is working on lessons learned from recent crises in order to improve cooperation within the movement and with other humanitarian actors.

1.3. - Target population and regions concerned :

Funding under this decision will benefit local communities that are particularly vulnerable to the impact of natural disasters. It will also benefit the victims, injured and survivors of sudden or slow onset disaster and the Red Cross movement and other stakeholders working in disaster management.

This funding decision will specifically support the reinforcement of the disaster preparedness capacity of some NS in high risk countries (which will be identified with the IFRC), in complement to the DIPECHO program (e.g. VCA workshops in countries like Guatemala, Panama, Costa Rica and Honduras or support to the NS contingency planning exercise in East Timor, Nepal, Bangladesh, Ecuador, Armenia, Georgia or Ghana).

1.4. - Risk assessment and possible constraints:

The complexity of disasters is growing in an increasingly insecure and unstable international environment which is a significant constraint for the International Federation who must strive to improve the coordination of its response to disasters alongside other actors in the humanitarian world. The political instability in some of the countries where the IFRC will implement the programme is another constraint.

Major and sudden onset disasters might have an impact on the availability and use of the International Federation resources and assets, which could divert work on the implementation of this programme's activities, especially field based.

It is also assumed that other donor governments, National Societies and the public continue to support the further development of the Federation disaster preparedness and response system worldwide.

2 - Objectives and components of the humanitarian intervention proposed:⁴

2.1. - Objectives :

The principal objective of this decision is that victims of natural disasters are better assisted and that National Red Cross and Red Crescent societies have the capacity to successfully help people reduce risk, respond to and recover from disasters, thus alleviating human suffering and avoidable loss of life.

The specific objective is that the IFRC capacity to prepare for and quickly respond to sudden and slow onset disasters is strengthened by reinforcing the Federation's disaster management programme.

2.2. - Components :

Funding under this decision will support the following components of the IFRC disaster management programme:

⁴ Grants for the implementation of humanitarian aid within the meaning of Council Regulation (EC) No.1257/96 of 20 June 1996 concerning humanitarian aid are awarded in accordance with the Financial Regulation, in particular Art.110 thereof, and its Implementing Rules in particular Art.168 thereof (Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1605/2002 of 25 June 2002, OJ L248 of 16 September 2002 and No 2342/2002 of 23 December 2002, OJ L 357 of 31 December 2002).Rate of financing: In accordance with Art.169 of the Financial Regulation, grants for the implementation of this Decision may finance 100% of the costs of an action.Humanitarian aid operations funded by the Commission are implemented by NGOs and the Red Cross organisations on the basis of Framework Partnership Agreements (FPA) (in conformity with Article 163 of the Implementing Rules of the Financial Regulation) and by United Nations agencies based on the Financial and Administrative Framework Agreement (FAFA). The standards and criteria established in Echo's standard Framework Partnership Agreement to which NGO's and International organisations have to adhere and the procedures and criteria needed to become a partner may be found at http://europa.eu.int/comm/echo/partners/index_en.htm
ECHO/THM/BUD/2005/05000

Disaster Response

The IFRC is undertaking a review of their FACT and RDRT tools, their complementarity and synergies. The staffing database requires both review and updating. Additional basic FACT training courses will be carried out but with a view to an increased participation of regional members and national less developed NS. Some additional specialised functions have been identified as being important to include in FACT teams (finance, administration, psychological support and family tracing) and IFRC will continue training for deployment of FACT staff with experience in these fields. Progressively, FACT training may also include other organisations such as UNDAC, ECHO, DFID, OFDA, OXFAM, government response agencies such as CDERA in the Caribbean and other NGO's, so as to provide a wider knowledge base for better contact and coordination in complex disasters. Recent reviews identify that FACT and RDRT teams need to be better equipped both personally and operationally to carry out their duties more effectively. Improved personal team kits, telecommunications, water & sanitation basic equipment, administration and accommodation modules are to be developed and deployed within the teams.

Recent evaluations recommend that closer links between RDRT and FACT should be established through more joint training, allowing them to merge when they are both deployed. RDRT, with local and regional knowledge, would concentrate more on needs assessments as well as ensuring operational cooperation and contact between the host national society and the Federation, while FACT would concentrate more on coordinating the appropriate use of international resources. The FACT teams should play a coordinating role in the immediate emergency phase, facilitating the Federation emergency response and deployment of ERUs, as well as rapidly assessing outstanding emergency needs and laying the basis for a Plan of Action. Under this funding decision, the IFRC will take the necessary measures to implement these recommendations.

Furthermore, following up on lessons learned from previous response operations, a needs assessment methodology and handbook have been developed in consultation with other humanitarian agencies. The Tsunami further underlined the importance of rapid and accurate needs assessments and also recommended that a minimum of one-third of operations support personnel deployed to a disaster must come from neighbouring countries with local knowledge and that there must be at least two in each team who specialise in making assessments. Work is continuing on producing the handbook, which will be widely disseminated and training will be provided to delegates and National Societies on carrying out assessments during specific workshops but also in FACT, RDRT and ERU training.

ERU: Recent experience with ERU deployments has indicated that some ERUs should be made more modular and flexible to enable them to support dispersed populations. There appears to be a need for new ERUs, for example, camp establishment and management, and Water and Sanitation for a small population caseload. In many cases it has appeared essential that a Logistics ERU and a Telecoms ERU should be deployed together with FACT, and depending on the situation, an immediate Relief (distribution) ERU as well. This cuts down considerably the time it takes to start up operations in the immediate aftermath of a disaster.

DMIS: The IFRC will further develop DMIS early warning, alert, forecasting and communication systems and update the software. Furthermore, the IFRC will develop an interface with other agency systems such as the Disaster Management Alert (DMA), the OCHA Global Disaster Alert System (GDAS) currently under development, the OCHA

Relief web and other specialised seismic, weather and early warning systems. For an increased use of DMIS globally, the IFRC is planning to translate key information into other languages and to increase the training of those NSs that are less familiar with DMIS.

ECHO will also support IFRC's **logistics preparedness** through supply mapping and strategic stockpiling and pre-positioning of essential relief supplies. Further development and extension of Logistics Units in 2 regions (Dubai and Nairobi) and possibly the creation of another Disaster Management Center in Kuala Lumpur will be undertaken. Sharing with other organisations (i.e. ICRC, UN) common logistics services, such as warehouses, will be encouraged.

ECHO will support the pre-positioning of container stocks in island states within the Pacific and the Caribbean to enable the branches of a National Society to respond immediately in case of emergency. Another tool to ensure speedy and sustained response at branch level is volunteer kits. These kits, containing suitable and protective clothing with identification, dust-masks, tools etc. enable volunteers to start working immediately in the disaster. ECHO will support the pre-positioning and the review of these kits to be able to use them in other parts of the world.

The coordination of international airlifts and procurement, are complex and require further development to take advantage of lessons learned and to implement initiatives such as the Humanitarian Logistics System (HLS), which will be piloted in selected regional centres, Dubai, Kuala Lumpur and Nairobi.

Global standards of logistics reporting can be developed by making the HLS software available to all National Societies and training them in its use. This would also help to promote standardisation in supply management and reporting.

The International Federation has a high-quality procurement service which is almost ready to be certified as an ECHO-approved Humanitarian Procurement Centre (HPC) that will be established to serve the procurement needs of different humanitarian actors both internal and external to the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement. In order to carry out this task, the Logistics department will require resources to complete appraisal on extension of HPC to service other humanitarian organisations, a programming system and to prepare policy and procedural documents for dissemination.

The IFRC will develop best practices and a handbook for good **co-ordination** within the Movement and with the other humanitarian actors during natural disasters and their immediate aftermath.

Finally, funding under this decision will contribute to the finalisation of the Standard Operating Procedures Handbook in order to update and simplify them to widely disseminate them among delegations and National Societies.

Disaster Preparedness

Further work is needed to support National Societies in strengthening their risk reduction and preparedness programmes and to evaluate the effectiveness of existing programmes.

There is a need to further strengthen and update relevant preparedness tools like the contingency plans, the VCA and the WPNS as useful and practical tools in preparing national

societies to respond to disasters as well as providing critical information in developing both contingency and emergency response plans and designing appropriate response.

IFRC seeks EC funding to continue its training activities aimed at harmonising community based tools with community based programs used in Disaster Preparedness.

3 - Duration expected for actions in the proposed Decision:

The operation funded under this decision has been designed to last one year to achieve the expected results, including the time for adequate preparation for the fairly complex operations. The duration for the implementation of this decision will be **15 months**. Humanitarian operations funded by this decision must be implemented within this period.

Expenditure under this Decision shall be eligible from 1 October 2005.

Start Date: 1 October 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 humanitarian aid operations.

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 current crisis

This is the first thematic funding decision to support the IFRC disaster management programme. ECHO has developed thematic collaborations with the following partners:

- UNHCR: Refugee Protection and Registration (EUR 10M 2003 and EUR 5M 2005)
- ICRC: Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflicts (EUR 10M 2003 and EUR 4M 2005)
- OCHA: Humanitarian Information Systems (EUR 4M 2004 and EUR 4M 2005)
- WHO: Health Action in Crises programme (EUR 3.5M 2004 and EUR 4M 2005)
- WFP: Food Aid Needs Assessment (EUR 4.5M 2004)
- UNICEF: Data collection, child protection and emergency preparedness (EUR 996.000 2003, EUR 7.4M 2004)

List of 2005 ECHO- IFRC grant agreements		
Country	Contract title	Amount in EUR
AFGHANISTAN	Floods operation	570.000
GUYANA	Guyana Floods Emergency Response	624.348
CHAD	Support to Sudanese refugees in Chad	800.000
ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA	Strengthening Regional Disaster Management in the Caribbean	500.000
PAPUA NEW GUINEA	Manam volcano: medium term shelter for IDP's in care centres	200.000
TOTAL		2.694.348

IFRC will ensure that there is no overlap in funding of activities by different donors and notably between ECHO funding at geographic and thematic level.

5 - Other donors and donor co-ordination mechanisms.

A broad range of donors (institutional, RC/RC national societies, private) usually contribute to the funding of the Federation Disaster Management and Coordination global programs.

The Department for International Development (DFID) of the UK Government has a 4-year partnership with the International Federation, which seeks to improve the impact of National Societies individually and the Federation as a whole in service delivery to the most vulnerable people through implementation of the International Federation's Strategy 2010. This focuses on four core areas which include disaster preparedness and response, and DFID supports the Disaster Management and Coordination appeal.

The annual planning and subsequent appeal process undertaken by the Secretariat and its delegations seeks to support National Societies in meeting the needs of the most vulnerable by prioritizing activities in accordance with Strategy 2010. Adherence to Strategy 2010 and to the Strategy for the Movement will ensure the coherence and complementarities of the projects covered by the appeals.

The International Federation also assists member National Societies in the coordination of donor support and promotion of partnerships through the Cooperation Agreement Strategy (CAS) process. CAS is the process through which a National Society manages its cooperation with its partners (Movement and non-Movement) in order to achieve its mission in favor of the community it serves.

A Disaster Management Working Group, consisting of donor National Societies and representatives of National Societies active in disaster management has, since the year 2000, been acting as an unofficial advisory group to the Secretariat in the development of disaster management tools and strategies. On an annual basis this group agrees on priorities for action that are included in the appeal and supported by the donor National Societies.

ECHO will ensure the monitoring of the program in selected countries with its network of field experts and regional support offices. Joint Review Missions between ECHO and IFRC will take place. In **headquarters**, quarterly meetings with the Federation will take place to review the program.

6 - Amount of decision and distribution by specific objectives:

6.1. - Total amount of the decision: EUR 3,500,000.

6.2. - Budget breakdown by specific objectives

Principal objective: <i>Victims of natural disasters are better assisted and National Red Cross and Red Crescent societies have the capacity to successfully help people reduce risk, respond to and recover from disasters, thus alleviating human suffering and avoidable loss of life.</i>				
Specific objectives	Allocated amount by specific objective (EUR)	Geographic area of operation	Activities	Potential partners⁵
<p>Specific objective 1:</p> <p>The IFRC capacity to prepare for and quickly respond to sudden and slow onset disasters is strengthened by reinforcing the Federation's disaster management programme.</p>	3,500,000	Global	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment of specialist staff (9 consultants and 9 staff for 12 months); • Update FACT and RDRT database; Increase participation of less developed NS in FACT training; Increase participation of finance, administration and psychosocial support staff in FACT training for deployment; purchase of equipment for FACT and RDRT; • Development and consolidation of ERUs for camp management and development of a modular water and sanitation ERU with NS. Telecoms, logistic and emergency relief ERU to be deployed with FACT; • Further extension and development of Logistic Unit in Dubai and Nairobi and of Kuala Lumpur as a DMC; • Pre-positioning of stocks in Nairobi, Kuala Lumpur and Dubai and of container stocks in island states within the Pacific and Caribbean. Extension of HLS software to all NS and training its use; Upgrade and open an interface with DMIS. Provide relevant training and translation of the tool; • A completed appraisal to upgrade the logistic center as an ECHO recognised HPC , accessible to all humanitarian actors;Improvement of logistics preparedness tools (CD-rom, catalogue, website, mapping); • Train and pilot Federation and National Society staff in needs assessment and adapt the tool according to users feedback;Development of best practices and a handbook on co-ordination within the Movement and with the other humanitarian actors during natural disasters; • Reinforcement of disaster preparedness in high risk countries through: update of contingency plans, disaster management plans and VCA; • Conduct the 2nd round of WPNS baseline self-assessment and complete its analysis; • Pilot the needs assessment tool in 80% of sudden and slow-onset disaster response operations over the 12 months and adapt the tool to users feedback; • Development and test training of material on community preparedness and on LRRD including mainstreaming of risk reduction components; • Update and simplification of SOP and development of a Handbook. 	IFRC
TOTAL:	3,500,000			

⁵

IFRC

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 (EUR)
Initial Available Appropriations for 2005	476.500.000
Supplementary Budgets	
Reinforcement from Emergency aid reserve	100.000.000
Transfers Commission	-3.500.000
Total available appropriations	573.000.000
Total executed to date (as at 25/07/2005)	474.337.870
Available remaining	98.662.130
Total amount of the Decision	3,500,000

Payment Schedule

<u>Year</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>2007</u>
Amount EUR	2,800,000	0	700,000

COMMISSION DECISION

on the financing of humanitarian operations from the general budget of the European Union to strengthen the humanitarian response to natural disasters, through thematic support to the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)

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 aid ⁶, and in particular Article 15(2) thereof,

Whereas:

- (1) Over the past decades, natural hazards such as earthquakes, droughts, floods, storms and tropical cyclones, wildland fires and volcanic eruptions have caused major loss of human lives and livelihoods and the destruction of economic and social infrastructures, as well as environmental damage;
- (2) An estimated 97% of annual natural disaster related deaths occur in developing countries;
- (3) The emphasis on responding to disasters by providing humanitarian assistance, instead of building disaster-prevention capacity, absorbs significant amounts of resources which would normally be allocated for development efforts. More effective prevention strategies could save millions of euros as well as thousands of lives;
- (4) Within this changing and ever more complex context, IFRC has sought to strengthen its emergency capacity and be a more predictable and consistent partner in its response to natural disasters;
- (5) An assessment of the humanitarian situation leads to the conclusion that humanitarian aid operations should be financed by the Community for a period of 15 months;
- (6) It is estimated that an amount of EUR 3,500,000 from budget line 23 02 01 of the general budget of the European Union is necessary, to strengthen the humanitarian response to natural disasters, through thematic support to IFRC, taking into account the available budget, other donors' contributions and other factors;
- (7) In accordance with Article 17 (3) of Regulation (EC) No.1257/96, the Humanitarian Aid Committee gave a favourable opinion on 22 September 2005.

¹⁰OJ 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 EUR 3,500,000 to strengthen the humanitarian response to natural disasters, through thematic support to International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), by using line 23 02 01 of the 2005 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 objective:
 - The IFRC capacity to prepare for and quickly respond to sudden and slow onset disasters is strengthened by reinforcing the Federation's disaster management programme.

The total amount of this decision is allocated to this objective.

Article 2

1. The duration for the implementation of this decision shall be for a maximum period of 15 months, starting on 1 October 2005.
2. Expenditure under this Decision shall be eligible from 1 October 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