



Emergency Humanitarian Aid Decision
F9 (FED9)

Title: Emergency Assistance to the Victims of Floods in Guyana

Location of operation: GUYANA

Amount of Decision: EUR 700,000

Decision reference number: ECHO/GUY/EDF/2005/01000

Explanatory Memorandum

1 - Rationale, needs and target population.

1.1. - Rationale:

Guyana has experienced heavy rainfall since late December 2004. From 14 to 20 January, rainfall was particularly intensive with a precipitation of 915 millimetres within this short time span. Since the rains began, more than 1,250 millimetres of rain have been recorded, while the usual monthly average in this area is of 177 millimetres. As a result of the uninterrupted rainfall which has already been considered as the worst in the last 100 years, the entire eastern coast of Guyana has been affected by vast flooding, including the capital Georgetown where two thirds of the city have been flooded. Forecasts indicate that rains will continue in the coming days, thus threatening to further worsen the already severe situation.

Three regions (regions 3, 4 and 5) out of the 10 regions that form Guyana were declared disaster areas. Coincidentally, most of Guyana's population lives in the most affected regions, which are coastal areas. Assessments point at 150,000 as the number of flood victims which require some form of assistance. Most of them live in Georgetown, though residences of coastal towns near the capital are also affected. The hardest hit communities are Albouystown, Shopia, Better Hope, Coldingen, Enterprise Gardens, Paradise and Enmore. Many residents in these areas live in poverty and the severe flooding has further exacerbated their already precarious situation. The complexity of the situation is aggravated by the fact that the whole coastal area lies below sea level. Therefore the drainage system, which only operates at low tide, has become dysfunctional. Furthermore, a 150 year old earth embankment that encloses the East Demerra Water Conservancy is overflowing, contributing to the flooding of the coastal towns.

Whilst the government, with the help of OCHA's UNDAC team is making efforts to co-ordinate the response, its overall capacity to manage the disaster is overwhelmed by the extent of the floods. A number of humanitarian organisations have deployed teams in the area to carry out assessments. Some humanitarian agencies have rapidly become operational, and not only assess needs but also respond with the delivery of humanitarian aid.

The Guyanese government is appealing for pumps, inflatable dinghies, small flat bottom aluminium boats, retractable bridges, outboard engines, shelter goods, beds, mattresses, food supplies and plastic tanks.

The Pan American Disaster Response Unit (IFRC's logistic branch) sent a first relief airlift on Friday 21 January including blankets, kitchen sets, hygiene kits, collapsible jerry cans and plastic sheeting, which have been distributed to those most affected by the floods. Meanwhile, a second airlift has arrived in Georgetown with more relief supplies. IFRC have launched an appeal for flood relief amounting to more than €1.3 million.

An ECHO mission was deployed to Guyana from 25 to 28 January in order to assess the humanitarian situation in the disaster affected areas and to help to design ECHO's intervention.



1.2. - Identified needs:

Several assessments carried out by teams of IFRC, PAHO, Oxfam GB, UNDAC and CDERA agree on the extent of the effects of the disaster on the population. Close to 4,000 flood victims have sought refuge in 43 shelters, which have been set up in government buildings, schools, community centres and other establishments. The situation in the shelters is very precarious and the distribution of aid is being carried out with difficulties due to the limited access to some of the affected areas.

Water sanitation operations are required because latrines and septic tanks have been flooded and the flood water is contaminated with faecal matter. Victims are exposed to the threat of diseases from being in contact with polluted water. Many are already suffering from diarrhoea, vomiting, skin ailments and coughs.

There is an urgent need for food aid as well as for logistical means to carry out the distribution of food and other relief items in the flooded areas, many of which are inaccessible by road. In these areas distribution has to rely on inflatable dinghies and small flat bottom aluminium boats while the water level is still high.

Moreover, agriculture activities have been severely affected by the floods. In the medium term food distribution will need to be complemented by food security programmes.

In quantitative terms the required humanitarian relief is estimated as follows:

- Access to safe-drinking water for around 30.000 people
- Safe sanitation, initially prioritising environmental sanitation: drainage of stagnant waters, removal of dead animals, vector control (mosquitoes, rats, snakes and other reptiles), latrine rehabilitation, solid waste management for around 30.000 people
- Temporary sheltering options for at least 1.000 families
- Emergency repairs to health centres and schools (water and sanitation)
- Food aid for 6,000 families
- Non-food items such as hygiene, kitchen kits, candles, etc. for at least 8.000 families

1.3. - Target population and regions concerned:

- 6,000 families are to be targeted by food and non-food relief (kitchen sets, blankets, bed sheets), the majority of them living in the most affected areas.
- Water and sanitation action is foreseen for 6,000 families, distribution of hygiene kits for 1,200 families and some 20,000 families will benefit from vector control and epidemiological surveillance.

1.4. – Risk assessment and possible constraints:

In some of the flooded villages, accessibility is a major problem. If the situation worsens insecurity could become a problem as access to food and safe drinking water is limited. Insecurity could also pose a problem as gang activity is common in the poorer neighbourhoods of Georgetown and looting is already taking place. Furthermore, Guyana has not seen much presence of humanitarian organisations in the past; thus the lack of experience in running operations in Guyana could pose problems to the implementation of projects and the coordination among the humanitarian and institutional actors.

The risk of further rainfall could also worsen the situation as the structural integrity of the conservancy dams and the seawall defence could be compromised, prompting the evacuation of thousands of persons and increasing the needs to be covered.

2 - Objectives and components of the humanitarian intervention proposed.

2.1. - Objective:

To save and preserve lives during the emergency caused by floods

Specific objective :

To provide short-term emergency assistance to flood victims in the sectors of water, shelter, sanitation, health and non-food items

2.2. - Components:

- Water and sanitation activities.
- Hygiene kits distribution
- Kitchen kits distribution
- Temporary shelters
- Primary health support including vector control and epidemiological surveillance
- Food distribution

3 - Duration expected for actions in the proposed Decision.

The duration of humanitarian aid operations shall be 6 months from their starting date. Expenditure shall be eligible as from 18 January 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 procedures 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.

None.

5 - Other donors and donor co-ordination mechanisms.

SUMMARY OF PLEDGES TO GUYANA FLOOD RESPONSE 2005 as of January 25, 2005 (Source CDERA¹)

	DONOR	CASH ASSISTANCE PLEDGED (US\$)	REMARKS
INTERNATIONAL GOVERNMENTS/AGENCIES			
1	Government of United States	50,000	Donated through Guyana Gov.
2	Government of China	100,000	Donated through Guyana Gov.
3	Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA)	35,000	-
4	Department for International Development (DFID)	183,000	100,000 pounds sterling. Third part cash contribution delivered through UNICEF
5	Inter-American Development Bank (IDB)	200,000	Donated through Guyana Gov.
6	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs	50,000	-
7	United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)	100,000	Rough estimates that 50% of pledged aid would be in cash, and 50% in technical assistance
8	United States Agency for International Development/Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (USAID/OFDA)	50,000 In-kind	Cash and provision of 10,000 ater jugs, 10,000 hygiene kits and 10,000 cotton blankets
9	Caribbean Development Bank (CDB)	100,000 500,000	Donated through CDERA. Soft loan for cleaning, clearing and reinstatement of essential public services
10	Government of Japan	120,000	In-kind: electric generators, portable water tanks, plastic tanks and sleeping mats.
11	Government of France	68,000	Donated through Guyana Gov.
12	Government of Venezuela	300,000	In-kind: non perishable food, drugs and potable water

¹ Caribbean Disaster Emergency Response Agency
ECHO/GUY/EDF/2005/01000

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

6.1. - Total amount of the Decision: EUR 700,000

6.2. - Budget breakdown by specific objectives

Principal objective: <i>To save and preserve lives during the emergency caused by floods</i>			
Specific objectives	Allocated amount by specific objective (EUR)	Geographical area of operation	Potential partners²
Specific objective 1: To provide short-term emergency assistance to flood victims in the sectors of water, shelter, sanitation, health and non-food items	700,000	Areas along the Southern Coast affected by Floods	- IFCR - OXFAM-GB - UN - PAHO
TOTAL: 700,000			

² INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT SOCIETIES, OXFAM (GBR), UNITED NATIONS - PAN AMERICAN HEALTH ORGANIZATION
ECHO/GUY/EDF/2005/01000

COMMISSION DECISION
of
on the financing of emergency humanitarian operations from the 9th European Development Fund
in
GUYANA

THE COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES,

Having regard to the Treaty establishing the European Community,

Having regard to the ACP-EC Partnership Agreement signed in Cotonou on 23 June 2000, in particular Articles 72 and 73 thereof⁴,

Having regard to the Internal Agreement of 15 December 2000 on the Financing and Administration of the Community Aid under the Financial Protocol to the Partnership Agreement between the African, Caribbean and Pacific States and the European Community and its Member States signed in Cotonou (Benin) on 23 June 2000, in particular Articles 24(3) and 25 thereof⁵.

Whereas

- (1) From 26 December 2004 to 18 January 2005 Guyana experienced heavy rainfall causing major flooding in the coastal areas;
- (2) Some 150,000 persons are estimated to be in need of different forms of assistance;
- (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 EUR 700,000 from the 9th European Development Fund is necessary to provide humanitarian assistance to vulnerable populations affected by flooding 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 EUR 700,000 from the 9th European Development Fund for humanitarian aid operations to assist vulnerable people directly affected by the devastations caused by floods in Guyana.

⁴ OJ L317 of 15.12.2000, p.3

⁵ OJ L317 of 15.12.2000, p.354

2. In accordance with Articles 72 and 73 of the ACP-EC Partnership Agreement, the humanitarian operations shall be implemented in the pursuance of the following specific objectives:

- To provide short-term emergency assistance to flood victims in the sectors of water, shelter, sanitation, health and non-food items

Article 2

1. The implementation of humanitarian aid operations funded by this Decision shall have a maximum duration of 6 months from their start date.
2. Expenditure under this Decision is eligible from 18 January 2005.
3. If the operations envisaged in this Decision are suspended due to *force majeure* or comparable circumstances, the period of suspension will 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