



Humanitarian Aid Decision

23 02 01

Title: Humanitarian Aid for the victims of floods and disaster events in El Salvador

Location of operation: EL SALVADOR

Amount of Decision: EUR 2,000,000

Decision reference number: ECHO/SLV/BUD/2006/01000

Explanatory Memorandum

1 – Rationale, needs and target population.

1.1. - Rationale:

Floods affected Central America at the beginning of October 2005, causing a humanitarian emergency particularly in El Salvador which continues to impact on the local population. Floods, landslides, tremor and avalanches of boulders were triggered by Hurricane Stan, with rainfall of more than 700mm in five days and the eruption of the Ilamatepec volcano, in Santa Ana. Hurricane Stan hit El Salvador and neighbouring Guatemala with wind speeds of 130 km/h and led to more than 1,500 deaths and widespread damage in both countries.

In El Salvador, directly after the floods, some 250,000 people¹ were displaced and 32,000 people had to be accommodated temporarily in public facilities.

El Salvador ranks 105 out of 175 countries in the UNDP's Human Development Index² and according to the GINI Index of the World Bank, it is amongst the 20 countries with the most striking internal inequalities. The quasi-inexistence of access to land contributes to an increasing impoverishment of the vulnerable population. The coping capacity of the population has suffered already from the civil war between 1961 and 1989 and previous catastrophes. Hurricane Mitch and two earthquakes hit El Salvador in 2001. Nearly 25% of all private homes in the country were either

¹ 2005 Archive of the Dartmouth Flood Observatory:
<http://www.dartmouth.edu/~floods/Archives/2005sum.htm>

² UNDP HDI 2004
ECHO/SLV/BUD/2006/01000

destroyed or badly damaged, and 1.5 million people were left without housing. The country, with 6.7 million inhabitants, is earthquake prone as six tectonic plates are located in the vicinity. On 7 October 2005, El Salvador was hit by an earthquake with an intensity of 6.2 on the Richter scale. Furthermore, the country has 27 active volcanoes.

In response to the hurricane and eruption in October 2005, DG ECHO³ intervened in El Salvador immediately with a primary emergency decision of EUR 1.7 million, aiming at the provision of relief items for more than 30,000 victims. EUR 1.05 million out of this programme was donated to El Salvador, while the balance was utilized for Guatemala. Additionally, two projects funded under the subsequent emergency decision with an amount of EUR 400,000 targeted medical attention, food and water supply as well as sanitation provision in El Salvador.

Between 30 January and 3 February 2006, DG ECHO visited the country, discussed extensively with partners and other agencies and concluded that widespread humanitarian needs continue to exist. Having coordinated with the Member States' representatives in El Salvador, it can be stated that only a fraction of the aid required is available. Besides DG ECHO, relatively few other donors are operating in the country. A conclusive post STAN intervention from the Commission's side is therefore proposed with this decision.

1.2. - Identified needs:

The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) launched an assessment which concluded⁴ that the damage amounts to USD355 million, with the housing sector being the most affected with USD 113 million. Some 30% of the housing stock of some municipalities has been damaged, and in addition 10% destroyed. In relative terms La Paz and San Vicente are the most affected departments. However, out of the 5,533 affected houses, in the whole country some 1,855 have been totally destroyed and 3,678 damaged. Many of the damaged houses however, cannot be repaired because they are built out of mud and/or the land on which they stood has been completely washed away.

The report also states that in order to avoid further waterborne diseases, interventions would be necessary. Many of the latrines were swept away and large strips of land have been contaminated with faecal coliform bacteria, posing a serious threat to the water supply of the local population.

The affected population, which is estimated at more than 72,000 people, is mostly made up of peasant farmers growing corn, beans, and sorghum. Family members jointly contribute to generate an average monthly income of USD 55, which corresponds to less than two dollars per day and per person. Many of those affected by Hurricane Stan are single mothers, with an average of 2.9 children under 11 years old. In addition to agriculture, women and children work as street vendors, placing great burdens on children's ability to attend school. Children over 12 years of age and adults are often poorly educated, with few opportunities to improve living conditions. In general, people lack knowledge of the risk factors surrounding natural disasters and expertise to cope with the impact.

³ Directorate General for Humanitarian Aid - ECHO

⁴ Assessment of ECLAC November 2005

More than three months after these catastrophes, some 4,992 people still live in 61 temporary communal shelters⁵ such as schools and other public facilities. However, these schools are needed again for their original purpose and have to be vacated; but many of the displaced cannot return to their homes. Therefore, for thousands of children it was not possible to begin classes scheduled for 16 January. The Ministry of Education hopes the shelters in the Municipalities of La Libertad and in San Salvador will soon be vacated. Despite the fact that many shelter residents have been able to return to their homes, many of the remaining caseload will probably not be able to return for some considerable time, especially those who were living in the exclusion zone around the Ilmanatepec volcano, which remains active. Many of the communities are heavily dependent on fishing, coffee and agriculture, and their crops have been almost totally destroyed by incursions of salt water and volcanic ash. Many residents are subsistence farmers who rely on crops of corn beans and sorghum or the sale of animals to meet their basic needs. Long-term recovery activities will be necessary to ensure that these families have food and shelter and can pay school and medical costs.

1.3. - Target population and regions concerned:

This Decision will aim at the rehabilitation of housing, provision of water/sanitation provision, other integrated activities and disaster preparedness activities. At least 20,000 victims will benefit from this intervention; with more than half of the target group being children. Special needs of the elderly, handicapped and other vulnerable groups will be reflected in the selection criteria. Female-headed households, which make up between 30% and 55% of the population depending on the areas, will receive special attention.

The main focus of the programme funded under this Decision will be on rural areas and may include the departments of Santa Ana, La Libertad, Cuscatlan, La Paz, Sonsonate, Usulután, Chalatenango and San Vicente, with consideration also of the urban problematic in San Salvador. The programme will be implemented mostly through self-help whereby the beneficiaries will be given the materials and the partners will supervise the quality standards and proper use. In cases where self help is not possible, such as handicapped or elderly people, DG ECHO's partners will organise community-based solutions. In general, specific measures will be taken to verify the availability of beneficiaries in order to ensure that the project does not undermine their coping strategies and their ability to continue with their income-generating or family subsistence activities. Particular attention will be given to female heads of household in order to ensure that their workload is not increased unreasonably and to ensure equal access to benefits. The rehabilitation of shelters will be done using relevant standards and policy papers, with a minimum of 3.5m² per beneficiary. Water and sanitation components will be an integral part of the programme. Where possible and relevant, partner organisations will develop risk reduction, disaster preparedness and mitigation activities with the affected communities. These may include measures to raise wells above flood levels, to encourage construction according to earthquake codes and to reduce soil erosion and floodwater flows through planting of trees.

⁵ Information from 26 January 2006 obtained directly from El Salvador Government.
ECHO/SLV/BUD/2006/01000

1.4. - Risk assessment and possible constraints:

There are three major risk factors for this programme. Firstly, during the rainy season (usually May-November) the weather could seriously affect the ability of the partner organisations to implement their projects including the capacity of suppliers to deliver in a timely manner. Furthermore, there is also a possibility that a “La Niña” weather phenomenon strikes in 2006, which could lead to the occurrence of further disaster events in the region. Secondly the self help of the target group could become unavailable, especially because of hurricanes that have intensified in recent years. Thirdly, municipal elections will take place during the third week of March, which could threaten previous commitments of the local authorities in power regarding properties and land ownership.

2 - Objectives and components of the humanitarian intervention proposed: ⁶

After the two DG ECHO emergency interventions, the main objective of this decision is to prepare the European Commission’s exit, while considering preparedness for future disasters.

2.1. - Objectives:

Principal objective: Support victims of natural disasters to regain a minimum level of self sufficiency while considering disaster preparedness.

Specific objectives: Post emergency support for households displaced by floods, volcanic eruptions and other disaster events.

2.2. - Components:

In pursuance of the above-mentioned objectives, projects may include one or several of the following components:

- health
- water/sanitation
- shelter
- emergency rehabilitation
- food security
- disaster preparedness and mitigation

3 - Duration expected for actions in the proposed Decision:

⁶ 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 Article 110 thereof, and its Implementing Rules in particular Article 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 Article 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 DG 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

The duration of the implementation of this Decision shall be 15 months.

Humanitarian operations funded by this Decision must be implemented within this period.

This duration will allow funding of the required humanitarian actions for a sufficient transition period before reconstruction takes place.

Expenditure under this Decision shall be eligible from 15 March 2006, in order to enable support to some humanitarian operations scheduled to start rehabilitation on that date before the rainy season begins.

Start Date: 15 March 2006

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

List of previous DG ECHO operations in EL SALVADOR				
Decision Number	Decision Type	2004 EUR	2005 EUR	2006 EUR
ECHO/-CM/BUD/2005/01000	Primary Emergency		1,050,000	
ECHO/-CM/BUD/2005/02000	Emergency		400,000	
	Subtotal	0	1,450,000	0
	Grand Total	0	1,450,000	

Dated : 07/02/2006
Source : HOPE

The two decisions listed above amount to EUR 5.7 million. Under the primary emergency decision five projects in El Salvador were launched and have now been completed. Two projects in El Salvador were launched under the emergency decision and are ongoing. This amount totals EUR 1.45 million and the balance of the two decisions was committed to Guatemala.

5 - Other donors and donor co-ordination mechanisms.

Donors in EL SALVADOR the last 12 months					
1. EU Members States (*)		2. European Commission		3. Others	
	EUR		EUR		EUR
Austria		DG ECHO	1,450,000		
Belgium		Other services			
Cyprus					
Czech Republic	77,000				
Denmark	402,685				
Estonia					
Finland					
France					
Germany	468,504				
Greece					
Hungary					
Ireland	270,000				
Italy	200,000				
Latvia					
Lithuania					
Luxemburg	270,000				
Malta					
Netherlands	498,000				
Poland					
Portugal					
Slovakia					
Slovenie					
Spain	525,000				
Sweden	265,065				
United kingdom					
Subtotal	2,976,254	Subtotal	1,450,000	Subtotal	0
		Grand total	4,426,254		

Dated : 07/02/2006

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

In 2004, Sweden financed the rehabilitation of housing, amounting to EUR 1.6 million. Spain was the most significant donor for 2005 with the financing of two projects after Hurricane Stan hit the country. The Netherlands has intervened in response to the eruption of the Santa Ana volcano. Denmark and Germany also intervened after Hurricane Stan through seven projects with a total of EUR 870,000.

Coordination between the Commission and the Member States on site took place during a meeting at deputy head of unit level on 30 January 2006. During 2006, Spain, Italy and Germany will donate funding for rehabilitation amounting to EUR 2.9 million. As to the Spanish contribution, some EUR 22 million have been programmed for the next years. Besides a EUR 10 million programme for micro credits, proportions of each four million EUR will be given to the Government, International Organizations and NGOs. This will enable ECHO partners to link up with the Programme of the Spanish Agency of International Cooperation AECI wherever possible.

6 - Amount of Decision and distribution by specific objectives:

6.1. - Total amount of the Decision: EUR 2,000,000

6.2. - Budget breakdown by specific objectives

Principal objective: <i>Support victims of natural disasters to regain a minimum level of self sufficiency while considering disaster preparedness..</i>				
Specific objectives	Allocated amount by specific objective (EUR)	Geographical area of operation	Activities	Potential partners⁷
Specific objective: Post emergency support for households displaced by floods, volcanic eruptions and other disaster events.	2,000,000	Santa Ana, San Salvador, La Libertad, Cuscatlan, La Paz, Sonsonate, Usulután, Chalatenango and San Vicente	Integrated projects covering the sectors health, water/sanitation, shelter and rehabilitation, and food security, disaster preparedness and mitigation	- ACSUR - MADRID - ATLAS - AYUDA EN ACCIÓN - CARE - FR - OXFAM - BEL - PLAN INTERNATIONAL UK - PTM
TOTAL:	2,000,000			

⁷ ATLAS LOGISTIQUE, (FR), AYUDA EN ACCIÓN, (E), Asociación para la Cooperación con el Sur "LAS SEGOVIAS", CARE FRANCE, (FR), OXFAM-Solidarite(it), (BEL), PLAN INTERNATIONAL (UK), PTM-mundubat, (E)

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 DG 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 2006	470,429,000
Supplementary Budgets	-
Transfers	-
Total Available Credits	470,429,000
Total executed to date (by 06/03/2006)	252,550,000
Available remaining	217,879,000
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 in
EL SALVADOR

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 ⁸, and in particular Article 14 thereof,

Whereas:

- (1).El Salvador is a country which is very vulnerable to natural disasters such as floods, volcanic eruptions and earthquakes.
- (2).More than 250,000 people have been affected by the 2005 floods caused by Hurricane Stan and other disaster events;
- (3).It has been difficult for El Salvador to recover from these disasters, with around 5,000 victims still being accommodated in temporary community shelters;
- (4).Post emergency rehabilitation is necessary in order to continue to support the affected communities to regain a minimum of self sufficiency;
- (5).It is estimated that an amount of EUR 2,000,000 from budget line 23 02 01 of the general budget of the European Union is necessary to provide humanitarian assistance to over 20,000 people affected by the 2005 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 EUR 2,000,000 for humanitarian aid operations for the victims of the 2005 floods and disaster events in El Salvador by using line 23 02 01 of the 2006 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:

Post emergency support for households displaced by floods, volcanic eruptions and other disaster events.

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 15 March 2006.
2. Expenditure under this Decision shall be eligible from 15 March 2006.
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