



**Emergency Humanitarian Aid Decision**

**23 02 01**

Title: Emergency humanitarian aid in favour of communities in India and Bangladesh affected by floods in July-September 2006

Location of operation: South Asia

Amount of Decision: EUR 4,000,000

Decision reference number: ECHO/-SA/BUD/2006/02000

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**Explanatory Memorandum**

**1 - Rationale, needs and target population.**

1.1. - Rationale :

The 2006 monsoon season started in India and Bangladesh in the middle of June. A serious flooding situation started developing at the end of July, when the UN(United Nations), IFRC (International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies) and international NGOs (Non-governmental organizations) were already reporting critical flooding in Bangladesh, in particular in three districts of the south-west, namely Jessore, Khulna and Shatkhira, with devastating effects in terms of displacement, and loss of assets and livelihoods. With approximately 50% of the rainy season still to come, flood water levels were already higher than in September 2004, following which DG ECHO<sup>1</sup> launched funding Decision ECHO/BGD/BUD/2004/02000. Similarly critical flooding was occurring, at the same time, in India in the states of Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Orissa and even in arid Rajasthan.

By mid-September over 4 million households in India were affected and over 100,000 houses were partially or completely damaged, resulting in 500,000 people living in emergency makeshift shelters or public buildings. In Bangladesh, over 135,000 families<sup>2</sup> were severely affected; again, their houses were partially or totally destroyed, or marooned for weeks. Over 3,000 families were living in makeshift shelters in road-side camps and public buildings, and up to 15,000 families were in need of emergency shelter support<sup>3</sup>. Damage includes loss of standing crops, serious erosion of farmland and property, destruction of livestock, food and

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<sup>1</sup> European Commission Directorate-General for Humanitarian aid - DG ECHO

<sup>2</sup> NGO Information Centre, Satkhira, 21 September 2006

<sup>3</sup> DER (Disaster Emergency Response Team) Report 27 August 2006

tools, as well as the contamination of surface water supplies, open wells and tube-wells and of latrines.

In Bangladesh the floods caused embankment breaches, which in turn resulted in sudden-onset flooding of villages and farmland, leading to death and injury of people and livestock. In Gujarat, Orissa and Andhra Pradesh, the unusual water levels led to discharges of overflowing dams, which compounded the already serious flooding down-stream and left hundreds of villages, and even the town of Surat (3.6 million), submerged. In arid Rajasthan communities will often live on, or near, the natural flowing channels where water is easier to find during droughts. Many of these structures, people and livestock were washed away by the flash floods and in areas of gypsum-rich sub-soil (poor permeability) the water will stay trapped for months until it evaporates.

In the absence of a centralised appeal, authorities at the local level (state, district and sub-district) have welcomed assistance from international aid agencies, and are cooperative in facilitating aid agencies to provide assistance on the ground.

In August and September 2006, DG ECHO undertook emergency assessment missions to the affected areas, and made recommendations. The reports recommend emergency relief, focusing on food, shelter and water-sanitation to displaced, host and stranded families; and ultimately to assist in the recovery of livelihoods and rehabilitation of damaged housing and water-sanitation facilities<sup>4</sup>. The situation in the assessed areas has reportedly continued to deteriorate<sup>5</sup>. At the time of writing, another assessment mission is underway in Bangladesh.

#### 1.2. - Identified needs :

Several affected areas are not among the flood-prone areas of India and Bangladesh, consequently the populations do not have the coping capacities developed elsewhere in the sub-continent and are more vulnerable when floods strike. In some areas of Rajasthan it rained more in one day, than the usual annual average. Household-level food and fodder stocks, which are scarce at the best of times, were washed away by the floods, as were seeds and livestock, both of which represent major livelihoods assets.

GoB and GoI have deployed the Army for distribution of emergency relief items, and a number of international aid agencies are involved in emergency relief, but the resources available are insufficient to cover all the needs. Whole areas and communities (Dalits in particular) remain unreached.

The floods have damaged large areas of crops and seedbeds, livestock and fish ponds; long-term flood damage thus includes the loss of the expected harvest and reduced ability to provide seeds for the following year, both of which additionally result in daily wage labourers receiving a reduction in work available, exacerbating the vulnerability of the poorest. These are being forced into selling, at bargain price, what remaining livelihoods assets they have, a disinvestment for the future. Sand-casting will further reduce the productive potential of farmland once the floods recede. Some of the areas affected are major seed-producers for other parts of the country, and destroyed seed-beds thus have implications for longer and wider household-level food insecurity. Consequently, there is a need to provide food assistance for at least a 2-month period and in some areas that suffered total

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<sup>4</sup> Bangladesh Mission Report 15 August 2006

<sup>5</sup> DG ECHO Bangladesh field report, Jessore, 22 September 2006

crop loss, this type of assistance may need to be extended until the next crop, thus for up to 6 months.

Shelter has been affected as the inundation of large areas has left over 135,000 households flooded in Bangladesh, with over 20,000 (more than 100,000 population) in Bangladesh completely destroyed<sup>6</sup>. In India, over 100,000 houses have been partially or completely destroyed. In both countries, tens of thousands families have been living in makeshift shelters in road-side camps for weeks, others are being housed in schools or other public buildings; all of which are in urgent need of improved emergency shelter materials, and with their houses in need of repair. DG ECHO's assessment showed that the 2004 flood response had been successful in raising homesteads above the flood level, making a significant difference to those people who had been assisted in that year and in those areas.

The water and sanitation system has also been seriously affected by the floods. Despite mitigation measures undertaken following the 2004 floods, namely the raising of the levels of manual tube-well platforms, even the newly-installed hand pumps are now under-water in Bangladesh; this results in the hand pumps being inaccessible, and the water in the tube-wells contaminated. Rudimentary pit latrines (and open defecation sites) are similarly inundated, resulting in the contamination of standing water that is now out of necessity being used for drinking, washing and cleaning. The problem is compounded by the presence of decomposing livestock bodies. This enhances the likelihood of water-borne diseases (though no major outbreaks have been reported so far), which is exacerbated by the fact that the standing water is stagnant, providing a breeding ground for other disease vectors such as mosquitoes and rats. In this scenario, the provision of regular and reliable drinking water, safe and secure sanitation, primary healthcare and promotion of personal and public hygiene are an emergency.

### 1.3. - Target population and regions concerned :

The Decision will benefit:

- In Bangladesh - the rural population living in the most heavily-affected *upazillas* of three districts of the south west, in particular Jessore, Khulna and Shatkhira. The target groups of the Decision are the most vulnerable women, men, and children (approximately 50% of the total affected population) affected by the floods.
- In India – the most vulnerable of both rural and urban (in particular slum dwellers) communities in the affected areas of Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Orissa and Rajasthan.

In both cases DG ECHO should be flexible to allow reallocation of funds to address the needs arising out of the flooding situation, which is still evolving indicating that further serious flooding will still take place in 2006.

### 1.4. - Risk assessment and possible constraints :

The monsoon season will last another 2-3 months, and there is the very real likelihood of further flooding which may hamper relief work as well as exacerbate the existing situation. In addition, the affected areas on both sides of the Bay of Bengal are liable to be affected by tropical storms and the situation would further deteriorate in the event of such a disaster.

The political situation in Bangladesh is increasingly unstable, and this may be exacerbated if people's basic needs are not met by the government, or outside agencies. Conversely, government ministries nominally responsible for the welfare of the population are

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<sup>6</sup> NGO Information Centre, Shatkhira, 21 September 2006  
ECHO-SA/BUD/2006/02000

increasingly focused on the forthcoming General Election, currently planned for January 2007. Political considerations are likely to dictate government assistance at local level, especially as up to 75% of the affected people are from the Hindu minority (a core constituency of the opposition Awami League). It should be noted that there will be a caretaker government in place from November 2006 to January 2007. Few major policy decisions are likely to be made during that period. Similarly, in India, allocations of resources and distributions of aid are often dependent on local political considerations, leaving the most vulnerable left out.

Coordination between the INGOs (International non-governmental organizations) is positive, thanks to repeated DG ECHO initiatives. A new and highly-experienced Programme Officer has recently been recruited for the Dhaka antenna office, and in combination with the ECHO Regional Support Office in New Delhi will ensure that there is no geographical or sector-based duplication of activities in Bangladesh. The RSO (Regional support office) and Antenna offices will appraise project proposals, co-ordinate and monitor the implementation of humanitarian operations financed by the Commission. There are currently five organisations implementing DIPECHO (ECHO Disaster Preparedness) contracts in Bangladesh, and another in the most-flood affected district of Rajasthan, and these are well-placed to monitor flood developments, to report on a coherent and consolidated basis to DG ECHO, and indeed to respond. Coordination among NGOs in India is well developed as a result of past and ongoing tsunami projects, and pre-monsoon contingency initiatives at the beginning of 2006.

## **2 - Objectives and components of the humanitarian intervention proposed:** <sup>7</sup>

### **2.1. - Objectives :**

Principal objective: To respond to the emergency humanitarian needs of the most flood-affected communities of south-west Bangladesh and in India

Specific objectives:

- 1 - To provide integrated relief assistance to the most vulnerable flood-affected families in south-west Bangladesh
- 2 - To provide integrated relief assistance to the most vulnerable households in the flooded areas of India

### **2.2. - Components :**

DG ECHO will focus on targeted food aid, shelter, water-sanitation and livelihood rehabilitation interventions. Medical support may be provided, together with hygiene education and water purification to help avoiding disease outbreaks from contaminated polluted water supplies. Projects will be implemented by organisations already responding in the targeted districts, which can scale up their operations.

The objectives will be met through the following activities:

- Distribution of food rations to highly vulnerable groups.
- Provision of emergency shelter materials to the most needy.
- Provision of drinking water and improved storage and sanitation facilities.

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<sup>7</sup> 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.



Government ministries and UN agencies. DG ECHO held a partners meeting in August, where organisation highlighted the situation, leading to the deployment of an emergency rapid assessment the following week. In India, there is regular coordination and information-sharing between ECHO, USAID and DFID.

Donors in BANGLADESH/INDIA the last 12 months					
1. EU Members States (*)		2. European Commission		3. Others	
	EUR		EUR		EUR
Austria		DG ECHO	26,000,000		
Belgium		Other services			
Cyprus					
Czech republic					
Denmark					
Estonia					
Finland					
France					
Germany	20,000				
Greece					
Hungary					
Ireland					
Italy	46,923				
Latvia					
Lithuania					
Luxemburg					
Malta					
Netherlands					
Poland					
Portugal					
Slovakia					
Slovenie					
Spain					
Sweden	811,255				
United kingdom	740,785				
Subtotal	1,618,963	Subtotal	26,000,000	Subtotal	0
		Grand total	27,618,963		

Dated : 25/09/2006

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

## 6 - Amount of decision and distribution by specific objectives:

6.1. - Total amount of the decision: EUR 4,000,000

## 6.2. - Budget breakdown by specific objectives

<b>Principal objective:</b> <i>To respond to the emergency humanitarian needs of the most flood-affected communities of south-west Bangladesh and in India</i>			
<b>Specific objectives</b>	<b>Allocated amount by specific objective (EUR)</b>	<b>Geographical area of operation</b>	<b>Potential partners<sup>8</sup></b>
Specific objective 1: To provide integrated relief assistance to the most vulnerable flood-affected families in south-west Bangladesh	1,000,000	Flood affected areas of south-west Bangladesh and West Bengal	- CONCERN WORLDWIDE - CROIX-ROUGE - FICR-IFCR-CH - ISLAMIC RELIEF - OXFAM - UK
Specific objective 2: To provide integrated relief assistance to the most vulnerable households in the flooded areas of India	3,000,000	Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Orissa, Rajasthan (other states may also need to be considered given that the flooding situation is still developing)	- ACTIONAID - CARE - UK - CHRISTIAN AID - UK - CONCERN WORLDWIDE - DANCHURCH AID - DNK - SAVE THE CHILDREN - UK - UN - UNICEF - BEL
TOTAL:4,000,000			

<sup>8</sup> ACTIONAID (GBR), CARE INTERNATIONAL UK , CHRISTIAN AID (GBR), CONCERN WORLDWIDE, (IRL), FEDERATION INTERNATIONALE DES SOCIETES DE LA CROIX-ROUGE ET DU CROISSANT ROUGE, FOLKEKIRKENS NODHJAELP, (DNK), ISLAMIC RELIEF , OXFAM (GB), THE SAVE THE CHILDREN FUND (GBR), UNICEF

**7 - Budget Impact article 23 02 01**

-	CE (EUR)
Initial Available Appropriations for 2006	470,429,000
Reinforcement from emergency aid reserve	140,000,000
Transfers	0
<b>Total Available Credits</b>	<b>610,429,000</b>
Total executed to date (by 25 September 2006)	562,867,000
Available remaining	47,562,000
<b>Total amount of the Decision</b>	<b>4,000,000</b>



**COMMISSION DECISION**  
**of**  
**on the financing of emergency humanitarian operations from the general budget of the**  
**European Union in**  
**South Asia**

**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<sup>9</sup>, and in particular Article 13 thereof,

Whereas:

- (1) From July to September 2006 there was an increase in the floods experienced in the South-West of Bangladesh and in several states of India, following heavier than usual rain in the region, and depleted drainage capacity.
- (2) Villages have been completely inundated, causing damage to houses and loss of assets and stocks comparable to that inflicted by earthquakes.
- (3) The populations affected do not have enough food because food stocks and crops have been destroyed.
- (4) Drinking water sources and sanitation facilities have been contaminated
- (5) Humanitarian aid operations financed by this Decision should be of a maximum duration of 6 months.
- (6) It is estimated that an amount of EUR 4,000,000 from budget line 23 02 01 of the general budget of the European Union is necessary to provide humanitarian assistance to over 450.000 displaced persons, 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 4,000,000 for emergency humanitarian aid operations to provide the necessary assistance and relief to the people of Bangladesh and India affected by floods in July-September 2006, 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 objectives:  
- To provide integrated relief assistance to the most vulnerable flood-affected families in south-west Bangladesh

- To provide integrated relief assistance to the most vulnerable households in the flooded areas of India.

The amounts allocated to each of these specific objectives are listed in the annex to this decision.

#### *Article 2*

The Commission may, where this is justified by the humanitarian situation, re-allocate the funding levels established for one of the specific objectives set out in Article 1(2) to another objective mentioned therein, provided that the re-allocated amount represents less than 20% of the global amount covered by this Decision.

#### *Article 3*

1. The implementation of humanitarian aid operations funded by this Decision shall have a maximum duration of 6 months from their starting date.
2. Expenditure under this Decision shall be eligible from 1 August 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 humanitarian aid operations.

Done at Brussels,

For the Commission

Member of the Commission

## Annex: Breakdown of allocations by specific objectives

<b>Principal objective:</b> To respond to the emergency humanitarian needs of the most flood-affected communities of south-west Bangladesh and in India	
<b>Specific objectives</b>	<b>Amount per specific objective (EUR)</b>
To provide integrated relief assistance to the most vulnerable flood-affected families in south-west Bangladesh	1,000,000
To provide integrated relief assistance to the most vulnerable households in the flooded areas of India	3,000,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4,000,000</b>