

**COMMISSION DECISION**  
**on the financing of humanitarian operations from the general budget of the European Communities 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>1</sup>, and in particular Articles 2 and 15(2) thereof:

Whereas:

(1) The 2007 monsoon season was particularly heavy in parts of India and in Bangladesh. Some communities suffered up to five cycles of flooding and it is estimated that floods affected 13 million people in Bangladesh and almost 50 million in India.

(2) Besides the loss of life, other consequences of the floods include: house destruction and consequent population displacement, loss of livelihoods due to crop and livestock destruction and consequent food crisis, water contamination and breakdown in basic sanitation, with serious consequences in terms of public health.

(3) While there have been both government and civil society efforts to address the situation, the magnitude of the problem is far greater than the response so far. On 30 August, the European Commission approved a 9.5 MEUR Emergency Decision for humanitarian assistance to the most affected communities in India, Nepal and Bangladesh, all of which is currently being implemented, but the magnitude of the flooding and the numbers of vulnerable communities affected are such, that the un-met needs are still vast.

(4) There are also special concerns relating to access of marginalised communities, "dalits" and minorities, to government assistance.

(5) Reports from the field alert us that the most vulnerable families are being led to resort to irreversible coping mechanisms, such as sale of the remaining household assets and livestock, distress migration and other critical measures.

(6) 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.

(7) It is estimated that an amount of EUR 10,000,000 from budget line 23 02 01 of the general budget of the European Communities is necessary to provide humanitarian assistance to over 1,000,000 vulnerable persons affected by the monsoon floods in both India and Bangladesh, taking into account the available budget, other donors' contributions and other factors;

(8) The present Decision constitutes a Financing Decision within the meaning of Article 75 of the Financial Regulation (EC, Euratom) No. 1605/2002<sup>2</sup>, Article 90 of the detailed rules for the implementation of the Financial Regulation determined by Regulation (EC, Euratom)

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1- OJ L 163, 2.7.1996, p. 1-6

2 - OJ L 248, 16.9.2002, p.1. Regulation as last amended by Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1995/2006, OJ L 390, 30.12.2006, p.1

No. 2324/2002<sup>3</sup> and Article 15 of the internal rules on the implementation of the general budget of the European Communities<sup>4</sup>

(9) In accordance with Article 17 (3) of Regulation (EC) No. 1257/96, the Humanitarian Aid Committee gave a favourable opinion on 31 October 2007.

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 10,000,000 for the early recovery of communities in India and Bangladesh affected by monsoon flooding, using line 23 02 01 of the 2007 general budget of the European Communities.

2. In accordance with Article 2 of Council Regulation No.1257/96, the humanitarian operations shall be implemented in the pursuance of the following specific objectives:

- To provide early recovery assistance to the most vulnerable flood-affected families in India.
- To provide early recovery assistance to the most vulnerable flood-affected families in Bangladesh.

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 and does not exceed EUR 2,000,000.

#### *Article 3*

1. The duration for the implementation of this decision shall be for a maximum period of 15 months, starting on 01 December 2007.

2. Expenditure under this Decision shall be eligible from 01 December 2007.

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 4*

1. The Commission shall implement the budget by direct centralised management or by joint management with international organisations.

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<sup>3</sup> OJ L 357, 31.12.2002, , p.1 Regulation as last amended by Commission Regulation (EC Euratom) No. 478/2007, OJ L 111 of 28.4.2007, P. 13

<sup>4</sup> Commission Decision of 21.2.2007, C/2007/513

2. The actions supported by this decision will be implemented by humanitarian aid organisations that are signatories to the Framework Partnership Agreements (FPA) or the EC/UN Financial Administrative Framework Agreement (FAFA).

3. Taking account of the specificities of humanitarian aid, the nature of the activities to be undertaken, the specific location constraints and the level of urgency, the activities covered by this decision may be financed in full in accordance with Article 253 of the Implementing Rules of the Financial Regulation.

#### *Article 5*

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

Done at Brussels,

For the Commission

Member of the Commission

## Annex: Breakdown of allocations by specific objectives

<b>Principal objective:</b> To respond to humanitarian needs of the communities of India and Bangladesh most affected by the monsoon floods	
<b>Specific objectives</b>	<b>Amount per specific objective (EUR)</b>
To provide early recovery assistance to the most vulnerable flood-affected families in India	6,000,000
To provide early recovery assistance to the most vulnerable flood-affected families in Bangladesh	4,000,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>10,000,000</b>



## Humanitarian Aid Decision

23 02 01

Title: Humanitarian assistance for the early recovery of communities in India and Bangladesh affected by monsoon flooding

Location of operation: South Asia

Amount of Decision: EUR 10,000,000

Decision reference number: ECHO/-SA/BUD/2007/03000

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### **Explanatory Memorandum**

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

##### 1.1. - Rationale :

This year's monsoon season has been particularly destructive in the Indian sub-continent. Some areas are suffering its fifth spate of floods since the season started, in June. Most affected have been Assam, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Orissa and all the North and Central districts of Bangladesh. The number of people affected has reached almost 50 million (NDMA<sup>5</sup> estimate) in India and 13 million (GoB<sup>6</sup> estimate) in the 46 affected districts of Bangladesh. Millions have been living in make-shift camps for weeks, by the road side or on marooned elevations, with insufficient food and water, grossly inappropriate shelter, virtually no sanitation and surrounded by stagnant water.

The floods washed away houses, property and standing crops, eroded farmland, left many villages isolated for days, in some cases weeks, killed people and livestock and increased the risk of water-borne diseases. Cholera is present in Assam and Orissa, where over 250 lives have been lost to the illness this season<sup>7</sup>, and malaria is prevalent in many of the flooded areas. Exact numbers of people dying of malaria are not available, but it is generally accepted that they reach the thousands in Orissa alone each year. Dengue and Japanese

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<sup>5</sup> NDMA (National Disaster Mitigation Authority), India

<sup>6</sup> Government of Bangladesh

<sup>7</sup> Oxfam report, 14.09.07

Encephalitis are also reportedly spreading in flood affected areas of Assam, Bihar and Orissa<sup>8</sup>.

In some regions 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 Bangladesh, the death toll stands close to 900 human lives (GoB estimate) and in India it has passed the 2700 cap<sup>9</sup>. The unusual water levels led to discharges of overflowing dams, which compounded the flooding down-stream and left thousands of villages submerged.

The population living along the rivers and on river islands is used to this type of situation and has developed coping mechanisms to deal with it. It is not rare that these dwellers have to shift their home twice a year and have been doing so for generations. The communities living in the plains however, are less used to floods because they live under the perceived protection of embankments and therefore are more vulnerable when these are breached. A DG ECHO<sup>10</sup> team observed such an occurrence in Bangladesh, in the Kazipur upazila (Sirajganj district) and Polashbari Village (Kazipur Sadar upazila.), where 22 km of embankments were fully destroyed. Long after the rivers revert to their normal flow, many of these communities remain marooned and their fields water-logged and impossible to cultivate. At the height of the flood the waters flow over the embankments, or breach them, and inundate areas from which there is no natural drainage. Thus the water remains stagnant for weeks, in some areas even several months, posing serious health risks and precluding most usual economic activities. In Bangladesh alone, so far 88 km of such embankments have been completely destroyed and 1001 km partially<sup>11</sup>.

Humanitarian assistance is being provided by national authorities and external donors. In Bangladesh and some states of India the official relief effort is real, but insufficient. For instance, the GoB food package includes, at best, only 10 kg of rice, 3 kg of pulses and 2 liters of oil per family (one-off distribution). In India it differs greatly from state to state, but even in the best cases the relief assistance provided is insufficient to withstand such a prolonged period. In August the European Commission approved an Emergency Decision to the tune of €9,500,000. This assistance, currently being implemented, is directed towards emergency operations, such as food distribution, water purification and hygiene, emergency shelter and health. But important needs are still unmet, because more areas have been affected since, some isolated communities have not yet been assisted and support is needed for early recovery to limit the distress sales and migration that are already taking place among the most vulnerable families – sales of cattle at very low prices were reported by DG ECHO field missions in Assam, Bihar and Orissa and corroborated by several DG ECHO partners' assessment reports. In Bangladesh the second spell of floods, at the beginning of September, fully destroyed the crops on some 819 985 acres of land recently planted and some farmers lost their harvest for the second time. Recently returned home, thousands of people had to be displaced again and take refuge on road sides<sup>12</sup>. In India an estimated (NDMA) 5,970,548 ha of cropped land has been affected.

In absence of a centralised appeal, authorities at the local level in both countries have welcomed assistance from international aid agencies, and are cooperative in facilitating aid agencies to provide assistance on the ground.

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<sup>8</sup> India and Bangladesh Mission Reports, September 2007

<sup>9</sup> Source: NDMA, India

<sup>10</sup> Directorate-General for Humanitarian Aid - ECHO

<sup>11</sup> Source: Disaster Management Information Center, Bangladesh

<sup>12</sup> DG ECHO field visit to Manikanj and Faridpur districts, September 2007

DG ECHO has undertaken a series of assessment missions to the most affected areas and recommends the provision of humanitarian relief and early recovery measures, focusing on food, shelter, water-sanitation, health and assistance for the recovery of livelihoods<sup>13</sup>.

#### 1.2. - Identified needs :

The floods damaged large areas of crops, seedbeds and livestock. 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 a reduction of work available for daily wage labourers, exacerbating the vulnerability of the poorest. Agricultural tools were often washed away by the waters and livestock was killed; these must be replaced because without assistance many will be forced into selling, at bargain price, what remaining livelihood assets they have, a disinvestment for the future. Sand-casting will further reduce the productive potential of farmland once the floods recede. In some cases alternative livelihoods must be sought. In Bangladesh, these losses are compounded by the seasonal scarcity in income possibilities during October/November (Monga/lean season) and the current prices hikes<sup>14</sup>. In both countries, high malnutrition rates and poor food security levels will be further worsened by the loss of harvests and livestock, and the destruction of livelihoods

Although official reports do not produce figures, anecdotal and NGO reports indicate that there have been a large number of starvation deaths in remote areas, where assistance has been inadequate or nonexistent – particularly with regard to young children and the elderly. As many families' coping mechanisms will have been exhausted and the new crop is not yet available, it is probable that targeted food aid will still be necessary, in particular for pregnant and lactating women, children, the elderly, people living with disabilities and some traditionally excluded castes (Dalits) and tribal communities.

Shelter has been affected as the inundation of large areas left over a million households flooded or destroyed<sup>15</sup>. DG ECHO's assessment showed that the 2004 flood response was successful in raising homesteads above the flood level, making a significant difference to those who were assisted in that way. In Bangladesh the floods destroyed an estimated 65,984 houses and partially damaged 927,650 houses (GoB est.). In India the number of destroyed houses is estimated at 583,601 and those partially damaged at 1,042,275 (NDMA est.). For those people whose houses have been destroyed, submerged or badly damaged, there is also a need to replace basic non-food items lost to the floods.

Water and sanitation systems have also been seriously affected by the floods. Mitigation measures undertaken following the 2004 floods, namely the raising of the levels of manual tube-well platforms, have proven valid but not all affected areas benefited from these measures and where they were not raised the water in the tube-wells is 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, which is exacerbated by the fact that the 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 of crucial importance.

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<sup>13</sup> India and Bangladesh Mission Reports, August and September 2007

<sup>14</sup> A WFP survey reports a 5-11% increase for rice and 3-14% for wheat flour in 6 districts of Bangladesh

<sup>15</sup> India and Bangladesh Mission Reports, August and September 2007

Disaster preparedness and mitigation measures will be mainstreamed into the operations, to build these communities' future resilience against this type of cyclical catastrophe.

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

The Decision will benefit an estimated 1,000,000 of the most vulnerable people of both rural and urban communities (in particular Dalits, religious and other minorities, slum dwellers and vulnerable families – women or child headed, unaccompanied aged, people living with disabilities) in the affected areas.

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

The political situation in Bangladesh and some of the affected states in India is at times unstable, and this may be exacerbated if people's basic needs are not being met. Allocations of resources and distributions of aid are often dependent on local political/social considerations, leaving the most vulnerable left out.

Coordination between the INGOs is positive. The DG ECHO RSO (Regional support office) in India and the Antenna office in Bangladesh will appraise project proposals, co-ordinate and monitor the implementation of humanitarian operations financed by the Commission. The partners implementing DIPECHO (ECHO Disaster Preparedness) financed projects in the affected areas are well-placed to monitor flood developments, to report on a coherent and consolidated basis to DG ECHO, and indeed to respond.

## **2 - Objectives and components of the humanitarian intervention proposed:**

### 2.1. - Objectives :

Principal objective:

To respond to humanitarian needs of the communities of India and Bangladesh most affected by the monsoon floods.

Specific objectives:

- 1 - To provide early recovery assistance to the most vulnerable flood-affected families in India.
- 2 - To provide early recovery assistance to the most vulnerable flood-affected families in Bangladesh.

### 2.2. - Components :

DG ECHO will focus on targeted food aid, shelter, water-sanitation and livelihood recovery interventions, together with medical support and hygiene education to help avoiding disease outbreaks from contaminated water supplies. As many roads are still unusable, provisions for boats may need to be included. Projects will be implemented, in priority, by organisations already responding in the targeted districts and which can scale up their operations.

The objectives will be met through the following activities:

- Distribution of targeted food rations to highly vulnerable groups.
- Provision of drinking water and improved storage and sanitation facilities, clean up of water sources and distribution networks, rehabilitation and construction of hand pumps, wells, gravity-fed systems and latrines.
- Personal and public health and hygiene campaigns and provision of adequate hygiene materials.
- Provision of basic medical assistance, prevention of outbreaks of diseases and emergency response, disease surveillance, rehabilitation of damaged health facilities.
- Improved environmental sanitation.



## 5 - Overview of donors' contributions

Donors in Bangladesh/India the last 12 months					
1. EU Members States (*)		2. European Commission		3. Others	
	EUR		EUR		EUR
Austria		DG ECHO	16,442,857		
Belgium		Other services			
Bulgaria					
Cyprus					
Czech republic					
Denmark					
Estonia					
Finland					
France					
Germany	873,196				
Greece					
Hungary					
Ireland	873,687				
Italy	2,000,000				
Latvia					
Lithuania					
Luxemburg	105,000				
Malta					
Netherlands					
Poland					
Portugal					
Romania					
Slovakia					
Slovenie					
Spain	300,000				
Sweden	1,141,098				
United kingdom	1,105,050				
Subtotal	6,398,031	Subtotal	16,442,857	Subtotal	0
		Grand total	22,840,888		

Dated : 17 September 2007

(\*) 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 10,000,000

## 6.2. - Budget breakdown by specific objectives

<b>Principal objective:</b> <i>To respond humanitarian needs of the communities of India and Bangladesh most affected by the monsoon floods</i>				
<b>Specific objectives</b>	<b>Allocated amount by specific objective (EUR)</b>	<b>Geographical area of operation</b>	<b>Activities</b>	<b>Potential partners<sup>16</sup></b>
<p>Specific objective 1:</p> <p>To provide early recovery assistance to the most vulnerable flood-affected families in India</p>	6,000,000	Areas most affected by the 2007 monsoon floods in Assam, Bihar, Orissa, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal and other states of India	Activities: food aid, shelter, water and sanitation, health, livelihood recovery, disaster preparedness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ACTED</li> <li>- ACTIONAID</li> <li>- ADRA Deutschland</li> <li>- AGA KHAN</li> <li>- CARE – UK</li> <li>- CARITAS - AUT</li> <li>- DCV</li> <li>- CHRISTIAN AID - UK</li> <li>- CONCERN WORLDWIDE</li> <li>- FKN / DCA</li> <li>- GERMAN AGRO ACTION</li> <li>- HI</li> <li>- HAI</li> <li>- IFRC-FICR</li> <li>- MSF-ESP</li> <li>- MSF-H</li> <li>- OXFAM GB</li> <li>- Plan UK</li> <li>- SC(UK)</li> <li>- UNICEF</li> <li>- MALTESER HILFDIENST</li> </ul>

<sup>16</sup> ACTION CONTRE LA FAIM, (FR), ACTIONAID (GBR), AGENCE D'AIDE A LA COOPERATION TECHNIQUE ET AU DEVELOPPEMENT, (FR), ARTSEN ZONDER GRENZEN (NLD), Adventistische Entwicklungs- und Katastrophenhilfe e.V., CARE INTERNATIONAL UK, CARITAS AUSTRIA, (AUT), CARITAS FRANCE - SECOURS CATHOLIQUE, (FR), CHRISTIAN AID (GBR), CONCERN UNIVERSAL (GBR), CONCERN WORLDWIDE, (IRL), DEUTSCHE WELTHUNGERHILFE / GERMAN AGRO ACTION, (DEU), DEUTSCHER CARITASVERBAND e.V, (DEU), DEUTSCHES ROTES KREUZ, (DEU), FEDERATION INTERNATIONALE DES SOCIETES DE LA CROIX-ROUGE ET DU CROISSANT ROUGE, FOLKEKIRKENS NODHJAELP, (DNK), FONDAZIONE TERRE DES HOMMES ITALIA ONLUS, HANDICAP INTERNATIONAL (FR), HELPAGE INTERNATIONAL (GBR), ISLAMIC RELIEF, MEDICOS SIN FRONTERAS, (E), Muslim Aid, OXFAM (GB), PLAN INTERNATIONAL (UK), SVENSKA RÖDA KORSET, TERRE DES HOMMES-CHE, THE SAVE THE CHILDREN FUND (GBR), UNICEF, WORLD FOOD PROGRAM, WORLD VISION – UK, MALTESER HILFDIENST e.V. (DE), AGA KHAN FOUNDATION (UK), CARITAS AUSTRIA

<p>Specific objective 2:</p> <p>To provide early recovery assistance to the most vulnerable flood-affected families in Bangladesh</p>	<p>4,000,000</p>	<p>Areas most affected by the 2007 monsoon floods in Bangladesh</p>	<p>Activities:          food aid, shelter, water and sanitation, health, livelihood recovery, disaster preparedness</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ACF</li> <li>- ACTIONAID</li> <li>- ADRA Deutschland</li> <li>- CARE - UK</li> <li>- CARITAS -AUT</li> <li>- DCV</li> <li>- SECOURS CATHLOLIQUE</li> <li>- CHRISTIAN AID - UK</li> <li>- CONCERN UNIVERSAL</li> <li>- CONCERN WORLDWIDE</li> <li>- CROIX-ROUGE - DEU</li> <li>- CROIX-ROUGE - SWE</li> <li>- FKN / DCA</li> <li>- HI</li> <li>- HAI</li> <li>- IFRC-FICR</li> <li>- IR &amp; IRW</li> <li>- MUSLIMAID</li> <li>- OXFAM GB</li> <li>- Plan UK</li> <li>- SC(UK)</li> <li>- TDH - IT</li> <li>- TDH - CH</li> <li>- UNICEF</li> <li>- WFP-PAM</li> <li>- WV - UK</li> </ul>
<p><b>TOTAL:</b></p>	<p>10,000,000</p>			

## 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://ec.europa.eu/echo/evaluation/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/echo/evaluation/index_en.htm).

## 8 - Budget Impact article 23 02 01

-	CE (EUR)
Initial Available Appropriations for 2007	485,000,000
Supplementary Budgets	-
Transfers	-
<b>Total Available Credits</b>	<b>485,000,000</b>
Total executed to date (by 19/09/2007 )	419,275,694.95
Available remaining	65,724,305.05
<b>Total amount of the Decision</b>	<b>10,000,000</b>

### Payment schedule (amounts in EUR):

2007	2008	2009
0	8,000,000	2,000,000

## 9. MANAGEMENT ISSUES

Humanitarian aid actions funded by the Commission are implemented by NGOs, Specialised Agencies of the Member States, and the Red Cross organisations on the basis of Framework Partnership Agreements (FPA) and by United Nations agencies based on the EC/UN Financial and Administrative Framework Agreement (FAFA) in conformity with Article 163 of the Implementing Rules of the Financial Regulation. These Framework agreements define the criteria for attributing grant agreements and financing agreements in accordance with Article 90 of the Implementing Rules and may be found at [http://ec.europa.eu/echo/partners/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/echo/partners/index_en.htm).

Individual grants are awarded on the basis of the criteria enumerated in Article 7.2 of the Humanitarian Aid Regulation, such as the technical and financial capacity, readiness and experience, and results of previous interventions.