



COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

Brussels
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COMMISSION DECISION

of

**on the financing of humanitarian Actions from the general budget of the European
Communities in Lebanon
(ECHO/LBN/BUD/2008/02000)**

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on the financing of humanitarian Actions from the general budget of the European Communities in Lebanon (ECHO/LBN/BUD/2008/02000)

THE COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES,

Having regard to the Treaty establishing the European Community,
Having regard to Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No.1257/96 of 20 June 1996 concerning humanitarian aid ¹, and in particular Articles 2, and Article 15(2) thereof,

Whereas:

- (1) The armed conflict between the Lebanese army and combatants of the Islamic movement Fatah al Islam in 2007 in the Nahr el Bared refugee camp had dramatic humanitarian consequences.
- (2) Over 27,000 persons (an estimated 5,500 families) have been displaced, many of them sought refuge in other already over-crowded refugee camps all over Lebanon and most of them have lost all their belongings. The inner part of the Camp which accommodated an estimated 20,000 people has been completely destroyed and reconstruction will be needed. The adjacent areas that accommodated an estimated 10,000 persons equally suffered from severe destruction of infrastructure and housing.
- (3) The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) responded to the crisis with a Flash Appeal of USD 12,700,000 (June-August 07) and an Emergency Appeal of USD 54,800,000 (Sept. 07 – August 08). The Commission has financially contributed to these appeals and funded humanitarian actions by other United Nations (UN) partners and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs).
- (4) Ongoing relief efforts have mitigated some of the worst impacts of the crisis for affected families. However, the degree of destitution for the vast majority of refugee families displaced from the Nahr el Bared refugee camp remains high. In this situation and as the reconstruction of the original camp is supposed to take up to 4 years, humanitarian needs will remain for a large number of the affected population, in its majority composed of displaced Palestinian refugees, for some time to come.
- (5) In September 2008 UNRWA launched a new Relief and Early Recovery Appeal of USD 42,700,000 to respond to the needs whilst reconstruction is ongoing.

¹ OJ L 163, 2.7.1996, p. 1.

- (6) To reach populations in need, aid should be channelled through NGOs, International Organisations, including UN agencies. Therefore the European Commission may implement the budget by direct centralized management or by joint management.
- (7) An assessment of the humanitarian situation leads to the conclusion that humanitarian aid actions should be further financed by the Community for a period of 12 months.
- (8) It is estimated that an amount of EUR 1,500,000 from the budget line 23 02 01 of the general budget of the European Communities, is necessary to provide humanitarian aid in favour of Palestinian refugees and the most vulnerable Lebanese affected by the conflict in the Nahr el Bared Refugee Camp.
- (9) The present Decision constitutes a financing Decision within the meaning of Article 75 of the Financial Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1605/2002², Article 90 of the detailed rules for the implementation of the Financial Regulation determined by Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 2342/2002³, and Article 15 of the Internal Rules on the Implementation of the general budget of the European Communities⁴.

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 1,500,000 for humanitarian aid operations to provide the necessary assistance and relief to Palestinian refugees in Lebanon and to the most vulnerable Lebanese population affected by the conflict in the Nahr el Bared Refugee Camp by using line 23 02 01 of the 2008 general budget of the European Communities.

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

Provide basic humanitarian assistance to the most vulnerable people affected by the crisis in the Nahr el Bared refugee camp with integrated relief including the provision of shelter, food and non-food items.

An amount of EUR 1,500.000 is allocated to this specific objective.

Article 2

1. The duration for the implementation of this Decision shall be for a maximum period of 12 months, starting on 1 November 2008.

2. Expenditure under this Decision shall be eligible from 1 November 2008.

3. If the Actions 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.

² OJ L 248, 16.9.2002, p. 1.

³ OJ L 357, 31.12.2002, p.1

⁴ Commission Decision of 21.02.2007, C/2007/513

Article 3

1. The Commission shall implement the budget by direct centralised management or by joint management with international organisations.
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 4

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

Done at Brussels

For the Commission
Member of the Commission



Humanitarian Aid Decision
23 02 01

Title: Humanitarian assistance in Lebanon for Palestinian refugees and the most vulnerable Lebanese population affected by the conflict in Nahr el Bared Refugee Camp.

Location of Action: Lebanon

Amount of Decision: EUR 1,500,000

Decision reference number: ECHO/LBN/BUD/2008/02000

Explanatory Memorandum

1 - Rationale, needs and target population.

1.1. Rationale:

The three months armed conflict between the Lebanese army and combatants of the Islamic movement Fatah al Islam in the Nahr el Bared refugee camp (NBC) between 20 May and 2 September 2007 had severe humanitarian consequences. The fighting involved heavy artillery and aerial bombardments, as well as house-to-house raids and intense street battles.

In total, 180 Lebanese soldiers were killed in the fighting, in addition to 287 Islamist combatants of Fatah al Islam and 47 civilians.

During the conflict, the entire population of the camps (an estimated 5,500 families or 27,000 persons) had to flee the NBC and found refuge in other camps. Most of them lost all their belongings, household equipment, furniture, vehicles, and entire businesses. The core of the camp (the so-called 'old camp') which accommodated an estimated 17,000 people was completely destroyed and full reconstruction is needed. The adjacent areas which accommodated a further 10,000 persons suffered equally from severe destruction of infrastructure and housing, leaving 30% of the remaining buildings classified as 'partially safe' or 'unsafe'.

Economic activity in the camp will take time to recover, especially as prior to the conflict most of the Palestinian refugees already relied on a low income. 1,400 businesses have been

destroyed, representing estimated economic losses of nearly USD 11,000,000, including outstanding loans and loss of profits⁵.

To date, the old camp of Nahr el Bared is still not accessible (the camp is under strict control of the Lebanese army) and only part of the displaced population has been able to return to the adjacent areas of the old camp. Based on the data provided by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA)⁶, 2,000 families have returned to adjacent areas of the NBC, either to private houses (713 families), to collective shelters (160 families), to specially constructed temporary shelters (429 families), to rented accommodation (506 families), to living with a host family (164 families) and to free accommodation in empty houses or apartments (28 families). The remaining 3,553 families are located outside of NBC: 1,363 in Beddawi camp, 1,847 in other parts of northern Lebanon and 343 outside northern Lebanon.

UNRWA responded to the crisis with a Flash Appeal of USD 12,700,000 (June-August 07) and an Emergency Appeal of USD 54,800,000 (Sept. 07 – August 08). DG ECHO⁷ responded to the humanitarian needs created by the crisis contributing to the funding of the operations implemented by UNRWA, additional United Nations (UN) partners and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) with EUR 13,290,329. Additional funding coming from other programmes of the European Commission has been allocated to this relief effort: EUR 6,800,000 and EUR 8,700,000 mobilized under the EC Instrument for Stability and the European Neighbourhood Partnership Instrument (ENPI) respectively.

A major relief effort was launched to meet life-saving needs, with priority given to provision of food, water and sanitation adequate shelter and emergency health care. In addition to the life-saving activities, emergency funding has supported the provision of education and psycho-social support programs, recreational activities for children and improved temporary shelter; funds have also been secured for immediate post-conflict recovery, to prepare the groundwork for the reconstruction and rehabilitation of the camp.

Ongoing relief efforts have mitigated some of the worst impacts of the crisis for affected families, ensuring access to shelter, food, water and sanitation and other services. However, the degree of destitution for the vast majority of refugee families displaced from NBC remains very high. Families still find themselves in overcrowded and substandard housing with limited access to basic services and livelihoods opportunities.

Reconstruction has begun in the adjacent areas but for the 'old camp' full funding for the reconstruction is still lacking and works have only started in October 2008. The time necessary for reconstruction for the old camp is estimated at a minimum of 4 years. Humanitarian needs will therefore remain for a substantial number of displaced for some time to come.

Therefore, in September 2008 UNRWA launched a new Relief and Early Recovery Appeal (RERA) for USD 42,700,000, covering the period September 2008 to December 2009, to respond to the continued needs of the displaced whilst reconstruction of the 'old camp' is ongoing.

⁵ Based on data collected by the NBC Business Association in November 2007.

⁶ UNRWA update as of 15 May 2008

⁷ Directorate General for Humanitarian Aid - ECHO

The present financial Decision will address remaining humanitarian needs covered under this newly launched UNRWA appeal. In the case where, due to any eventually circumstance, UNRWA would be not in the position to correctly implement this operation, aid to reach populations in need, should be channelled through NGOs or International Organisations, including other UN agencies than UNRWA.

Humanitarian situation and suggested DG ECHO response:

Following the needs assessments from UNRWA and the weak international response to their most recent appeal for relief and early recovery assistance it is recommended to adopt an ad hoc Decision for an amount of EUR 1,500,000 covering humanitarian needs in the following sectors:

1.2. - Identified needs :

The following identification of needs is based on the figures submitted under the Relief and Early Recovery Appeal of UNRWA. They have been prioritised, after consultation with UNRWA, from among the range of activities enumerated under the RERA.

Shelter

Due to the extent of the damage caused during the conflict, only a minority - 713 families - have so far been able to return to their homes, all in the adjacent area.

A further 429 families have been assisted by UNRWA with purpose built temporary accommodation. Much of this accommodation was constructed quickly with an expected short-term lifespan. With the delays in reconstruction of the 'old camp' these families now face up to four years in their current accommodation. Upgrading of these units to cope with both winter and the prolonged period of occupation is therefore necessary to ensure minimum standards are met.

The majority of the remaining families displaced from the 'old camp' have had to find rented accommodation in an increasingly competitive market. Due to the economic challenges created by the crisis, many of these families face enormous difficulties in meeting monthly rental payments. UNRWA has instigated a programme of rental subsidies, which provides assistance whilst efforts to revive livelihoods are ongoing.

Food and Non Food Items

Due to the economic difficulties created by the crisis, high levels of poverty and unemployment - which affect much of the Palestinian population in Lebanon - have further increased amongst the affected population of NBC.

Prior to the conflict the majority of workers were employed inside the camp and therefore have lost their income as a consequence of the crisis⁸. DG ECHO support to livelihoods is ongoing; to date interventions have helped to promote the process of return to the adjacent area and ensured immediate cash injection through cash for work activities. However, a large percentage of the displaced and returning population still face vulnerabilities, lacking

⁸ FAFO survey – Socio economic profile of the Nahr el bared and Beddawi camp - 2007

sustainable economic opportunities and having to face up to the challenging rising cost of living.

In this situation a majority of the households are left in vulnerable situation. Household coping mechanisms often lead to families cutting back on basic necessities, limiting their access to adequate nutrition and acceptable levels of hygiene. This problem has particularly acute effects on children and infants with recent reports indicating that almost a third of children in NBC and Beddawi camp affected by the crisis do not eat breakfast before going to school⁹. The limited access to basic food and hygiene and detrimental nutrition and sanitary coping mechanisms employed consequently lead to health implications with families also often unable to cover basic medication needs. The provision of food and non-food items is therefore essential to ensure minimum standards of health and living are met.

1.3. - Target population and regions concerned :

This Decision targets the population affected by the conflict in and around the Nahr El Bared refugee camp as well as other affected Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon.

1.4. - Risk assessment and possible constraints :

The political and security situation in Lebanon remains unstable. Tensions exist in the Lebanese political arena and in society, as well as in the Palestinian refugee camps. The hostilities between the Lebanese army and the Islamic group Fatah al Islam during the Nahr El Bared conflict have revealed the potential damage that such unresolved conflicts may entail. It therefore cannot be fully excluded that tensions might spread beyond the current crisis in and around the NBC.

UXO (Unexploded Ordnance) and booby traps have been found in NBC and its surroundings and are currently cleared by the Lebanese army. However, UXO will remain a life threat for some time until rubble removal and simultaneous demining activities are completed.

Hazardous buildings pose an additional threat and will need to be demolished as quickly as possible.

A possible additional constraint to the delivery of humanitarian aid and emergency rehabilitation of the NBC are the potential restrictions imposed by the Lebanese authorities for access to and rehabilitation of the camp.

2 - Objectives and components of the humanitarian intervention proposed:

2.1. - Objectives :

Principal objective is to assist the Palestinian refugees and the most vulnerable Lebanese population affected by the conflict in the Nahr el Bared Refugee Camp.

⁹ Save the Children 'Baseline Study of the 'Strengthening the Community Based Child Protection System in the Northern Palestinian Camps' Programme July 2008.

Specific objective:

Provide basic humanitarian assistance to the most vulnerable people affected by the crisis in the Nahr el Bared refugee camp with integrated relief including the provision of shelter, food and non-food items.

2.2. - Components :

The following components are envisaged to be funded under the present Decision.

Shelter:

- Maintenance and upgrading works for collective centres and temporary shelters. This includes minor repairs, infrastructure work and winter upgrading for centres currently housing displaced refugees.
- Provision of rental subsidies for families living in private rented premises, payment of the rental cost for the use of the land where schools, temporary shelters and health clinics have been built and for the use of collective centres.

Food and Non-Food Assistance:

- Distribution of food parcels and specific food and non-food items.

3 - Duration expected for Actions in the proposed Decision:

The duration for the implementation of this Decision shall be 12 months.

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

Expenditure under this Decision shall be eligible from 1 November 2008

Start Date: 1 November 2008

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 Actions.

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.

5 - Overview of donors' contributions

Donors in LEBANON the last 12 months					
1. EU Members States (*)		2. European Commission		3. Others	
	EUR		EUR		EUR
Austria		DG ECHO	13.290.329		
Belgium	1,000,000	Other services	15.500.000		
Bulgaria					
Cyprus					
Czech republic	20,000				
Denmark	2,010,023				
Estonia					
Finland					
France	158,226				
Germany	1,050,000				
Greece	200,000				
Hungary					
Ireland	271,746				
Italy	6,700,000				
Latvia					
Lithuania					
Luxemburg	85,000				
Malta					
Netherlands	2,443,238				
Poland					
Portugal					
Romania					
Slovakia					
Slovenie					
Spain	600,000				
Sweden	1,972,195				
United kingdom					
Subtotal	16,510,428	Subtotal	28.790.329	Subtotal	0
		Grand total	45,300,757		

Dated : 24 October 2008

(*) Source : DG ECHO 14 Points reporting for Members States. <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/hac>
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 1,500,000

6.2. - Budget breakdown by specific objectives

Principal objective: <i>To assist the Palestinian refugees and the most vulnerable Lebanese population affected by the conflict in the Nahr el Bared refugee camp</i>				
Specific objectives	Allocated amount by specific objective (EUR)	Geographical area of operation	Activities	Potential partners¹⁰
Specific objective 1: Provide basic humanitarian assistance to the most vulnerable people affected by the crisis in the Nahr el Bared refugee camp with integrated relief including the provision of shelter, food and non-food items.	1,500,000	Lebanon	Provision of shelter, food, and non-food items support.	- UNRWA
TOTAL:	1,500,000			

¹⁰

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 Actions financed by the Community in order to establish whether they have achieved their objectives and to produce guidelines for improving the effectiveness of subsequent Actions." 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.

8 – 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.

For International Organisations identified as potential partners for implementing the Decision, actions will be managed under joint management.

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.