



COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

Brussels
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COMMISSION DECISION

of

**on the financing of humanitarian Actions in Afghanistan from the general budget of the
European Communities**

(ECHO/-FA/BUD/2009/07000)

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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 aid¹, and in particular Article 2 and Article 15(2) thereof;

Whereas:

- (1) The North and North-east provinces of Afghanistan were severely affected by successive waves of flash floods in May/June 2009 resulting from unusually long and strong rains overwhelming the coping capacities of many communities, followed in July and August by recurrent floods of a smaller scale punctually hitting areas where the important rains and cumulated snow's cover led to significant amounts of water while melting.
- (2) Livelihoods were destroyed with farmers losing much of their crops and livestock and many families displaced with their shelters either fully or partly damaged.
- (3) The succession of floods has definitely impacted the population that will not be able to get out of the acute food insecurity spiral, as it was hoped. Due to loss of crops, the affected families are currently struggling to meet their food needs and this will increase further as the winter approaches.
- (4) It becomes therefore imperative to provide some support for the population in order for them to be able to cope with the absence of livelihoods and the harsh conditions during the winter.
- (5) To reach populations in need, humanitarian aid should be channelled through Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs). Therefore the European Commission should implement the budget by direct centralised management;
- (6) An assessment of the humanitarian situation leads to the conclusion that humanitarian aid Actions should be financed by the Community for a period of six months;
- (7) It is estimated that an amount of EUR 2,000,000 from budget article 23 02 02 of the general budget of the European Communities is necessary to provide humanitarian assistance to highly food insecure population affected by the floods, taking into account the available budget, other donors' contributions and other factors. The

¹ 1- OJ L 163, 2.7.1996, p. 1.

activities covered by this Decision may be financed in full in accordance with Article 253 of the Implementing Rules of the Financial Regulation;

- (8) 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 2,000,000 for the financing of humanitarian Actions in Afghanistan from budget article 23.02.02 of the 2009 general budget of the European Communities.
2. In accordance with Article 2 of Council Regulation No.1257/96, the principal objective of this Decision is:
 - To provide humanitarian food assistance to extremely vulnerable people affected by natural disasters in Afghanistan

The humanitarian Actions shall be implemented in the pursuance of the following specific objective:

- To provide food assistance to highly food insecure populations affected by the floods in the Northern region of Afghanistan.

The full amount of this Decision is allocated to this specific objective.

Article 2

1. The period for the implementation of the Actions financed under this Decision shall start on 1st September 2009 and shall run for six months. Eligible expenditure shall be committed during the implementing period of the Decision.
2. If the implementation of individual actions is suspended owing to force majeure or other exceptional circumstances, the period of suspension shall not be taken into account in the implementing period of the Decision in respect of the Action suspended.
3. In accordance with the contractual provisions ruling the Agreements financed under this Decision, the Commission may consider eligible those costs arising and incurred after the end of the implementing period of the Action which are necessary for its winding-up.

² 2- OJ L 248, 16.9.2002, p.1.

³ 3- OJ L 357, 31.12.2002, , p.1.

⁴ 4- Commission Decision of 5.3.2008, C/2008/773

4. The Authorising Officer may, where this is justified by the humanitarian situation, extend the duration of the Decision for a maximum of 6 months provided that the total duration of the Decision does not exceed 18 months, in accordance with Article 90.4 of the Implementing Rules of the Financial Regulation.

Article 3

1. In accordance with Article 253 of the Implementing Rules and having regard to the urgency of the Action, the availability of other donors and other relevant operational circumstances, funds under this Decision may finance humanitarian Actions in full.
2. Actions supported by this Decision will be implemented by Non-profit-making organisations which fulfil the eligibility and suitability criteria established in Article 7 of Council Regulation (EC) No 1257/96.
3. The Commission shall implement the budget by direct centralised management, with Non-governmental Organisations.

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 02

Title: Commission Decision on the financing of humanitarian Actions in Afghanistan from the general budget of the European Communities

Description: Food assistance for floods affected populations in the Northern region of Afghanistan

Location of Action: Afghanistan

Amount of Decision: EUR 2,000,000

Decision reference number: ECHO/-FA/BUD/2009/07000

Supporting Document

1 – Rationale, needs and target population.

1.1. - Rationale:

Afghanistan is a land-locked country with a high frequency of natural hazards such as earthquakes, landslides, avalanches, sandstorms and floods. Secondary or social impacts of the creeping effects of drought also take a sustained toll in large parts of the country, with prolonged years drought just coming to an end in 2009. Extreme winter is another phenomenon having a large scale impact. The level of communities to cope with the impact of such hazards would have been problematic at best in most circumstances, but the events of the last thirty years on Afghanistan has left the population with extremely low coping capacities and skills. The prolonged war has not only left the nation with direct casualties, but it has also destroyed the coping capacity of the government as well as the communities.

The North, North-East and West were severely hit in 2008 by a cold wave, then a drought, all being exacerbated by the impact of the global soaring food prices. The rural population groups were thus in a situation where resources and coping capacity were pretty well exhausted and they were hoping to start recovering in 2009, anticipating a good harvest.

Unfortunately, the North and North-east provinces of Afghanistan were severely affected by successive waves of flash floods in May – June 2009 resulting from unusually long and strong rains overwhelming the coping capacities of many communities. Livelihoods were destroyed with farmers losing much of their crops and livestock and many families displaced with their shelters either fully or partly damaged. DG ECHO responded to the first needs in the framework of its 2009 Global plan by providing NFIs¹, shelters, some food assistance and livelihood support for the most affected people.

The flash-floods were then followed in July and August by recurrent floods of a smaller scale punctually hitting areas where the important rains and cumulated snow's cover led to significant amounts of water while melting. This was particularly the case in areas neighbouring the Amu Dariya river basin that marks the Afghan Northern border.

Afghanistan mostly shows a dry, deforested and eroded environment where water is barely retained by the vegetation and absorbed by the soil in cases of important rains. Usually, rain water is progressively accumulating in narrow valleys and eventually transform in floods that can be devastating. In rural parts of Afghanistan, villages are mostly located in the lower parts of valleys, where agricultural land is usually concentrated for irrigation purpose. This makes communities quite exposed to floods, while no infrastructures have been developed to contain floods and protect housing or productive assets.

Floods have affected standing crops of wheat, cotton, rice and barley. The succession of floods has definitely impacted the population that will not be able to get out of the acute food insecurity spiral, as it was hoped. Due to loss of crops, the affected families are currently struggling to meet their food needs and this will increase further as the winter approaches.

It becomes therefore imperative to provide some support for the population in order for them to be able to cope with the absence of livelihoods and the cold conditions in case their shelter would not be reconstructed for the winter. As there is no alternative livelihood option, many are planning to migrate to urban centres, other provinces and some to other countries. The communities are waiting to get work in the villages that would cover family needs for winter periods especially in peak period of food insecurity which in average occurs from Mid December to Mid-March.

1.2. - Identified needs :

Following the first wave of floods in May and June, a large mobilisation, although insufficiently coordinated, has taken place. A significant part of the most urgent needs have been covered at that time, but the humanitarian efforts had since been stopped due to the lack of adequate funds available as well as the slow reaction of actors.

The needs related to the second wave of floods remain to date mostly unmet. There is an indication that the affected families in the surveyed village are currently struggling for food and that the situation might worsen during the winter months (from mid-December to mid-March) as they do not have sufficient employment opportunities in

¹ Non Food Items

the coming months to be able to stock food for winter months. The affected families also had to invest in creating temporary shelter to survive after their houses got damaged or washed away.

Wage labour is a major source of income (beside agriculture activities) which has been affected due to loss of agriculture land by river bank erosion in the flood affected villages. Other remaining lands are also sand casted due to floods and have become unsuitable for agriculture.

The needs identified at this stage are essentially linked to the acute food insecurity situation. Unfortunately, no updated and cumulated figures are available to show the whole impact of the successive floods. However, ECHO has mobilized its partners, present in the northern and north-eastern regions, to collect accurate figures in the most hit areas.

Acute food insecurity is resulting from the loss of harvests and / or food stocks. Indirectly, the fact that harvests were washed away by floods led to reduced job opportunities for those that do not own any land and strictly rely on casual labour, usually among the poorest in rural Afghanistan.

Some households are in dire need of food assistance to cover their basic food requirements over the winter and in the immediate aftermath. Food assistance shall materialise through cash for work, food for work and free food distributions in extreme cases.

The hunger gap identified within the diverse targeted areas ranges from 3 months to 9 months. While winter is approaching and livelihood opportunities are reducing, there will be no alternative to food assistance to meet basic food requirements.

1.3. - Target population and regions concerned :

The people that will be targeted by this funding decision are the most vulnerable of flood affected households in all targeted areas, using vulnerability criteria for selection. Main indicators to be taken into account will be the level of impact of flooding (destruction of shelter, land, loss of assets and livelihood) and households' capacity to cope. Other factors will be taken into consideration such as disabled persons within family, elderly, children and women-headed households.

The regions concerned are the provinces of Faryab, Jawzjan, Balkh, Baghlan, Takhar and Badakhshan. The province of Khunduz was among those most hit but as the humanitarian mobilisation has mostly focused on this province, it is considered that remaining needs are not as significant as for the other Provinces.

1.4. - Risk assessment and possible constraints :

While winter time is approaching, needs keep on increasing with available food stocks being depleted and livelihood opportunities reducing. By the end of December, temperatures will be increasingly low and minimum food stocks as well as a decent shelter will be the primary concern of the targeted populations.

The security situation in some of the targeted provinces / districts is the main obstacle to the proper implementation of required assistance. In mountainous areas, the field access might be hindered earlier than in lower ones due to the usual heavy snow falls. In such cases, the only solution to cope with the time constraint could be to implement distributions of food, NFIs, and shelter materials. In other cases, Cash for Work (CFW) or Food for Work (FFW) activities could be foreseen given the time window available.

2 - Objectives and components of the humanitarian intervention proposed:

2.1. - Objectives :

Principal objective:

To provide humanitarian food assistance to extremely vulnerable people affected by natural disasters in Afghanistan

Specific objective:

To provide food assistance to highly food insecure populations affected by the floods in the Northern region of Afghanistan.

2.2. - Components :

- 1. Food assistance through Cash For Work (CFW)/ Food For Work (FFW):** The primary purpose of this component is to cover basic food requirements of the food insecure households before the targeted areas are landlocked by the winter. The hunger gap has been estimated at approximately 6 months in average and subsequent needs will be met through the creation of temporary job opportunities of 45 to 60 days in average. CFW / FFW activities will also aim at repairing housing in view of the coming winter and/or community productive assets (irrigation channels, essentials road sections...) that were heavily damaged by floods.
- 2. Food assistance through direct distributions of food and/or cash:** In specific cases, where targeted households do not have any adult manpower available (mostly female or disabled headed households), free distributions of food or cash will be envisaged. This shall also apply in areas where the time and weather constraints would not allow implementing CFW or FFW.

3 - Duration expected for Actions in the proposed Decision:

The duration for the implementation of this Decision shall be 6 months.

Humanitarian Actions funded by this Decision must be implemented within this period. The 6 months duration is deemed sufficient as the present decision aims at covering urgent humanitarian needs before the winter.

Expenditure under this Decision shall be eligible from 1st September 2009. This is justified by the need to cover expenditures made by partners in order to conduct field assessments.

Start Date: 1st September 2009

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 AFGHANISTAN the last 12 months					
1. EU Members States (*)		2. European Commission		3. Others	
	EUR		EUR		EUR
Austria	250,000	DG ECHO	33,850,000		
Belgium	3,000,000	Other services			
Bulgaria					
Cyprus					
Czech republic	260,000				
Denmark	5,231,045				
Estonia					
Finland	4,350,000				
France	4,690,000				
Germany	18,225,223				
Greece					
Hungary					
Ireland	3,729,000				
Italy	7,366,750				
Latvia					
Lithuania					
Luxemburg	1,098,000				
Malta					
Netherlands	11,500,000				
Poland					
Portugal					
Romania					
Slovakia					
Slovenie					
Spain	500,000				
Sweden	6,001,972				
United kingdom					
Subtotal	66,201,990	Subtotal	33,850,000	Subtotal	0
		Grand total	100,051,990		

Dated : 23 September 2009

(*) 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 2,000,000

6.2. - Budget breakdown by specific objectives

Principal objective: <i>To provide humanitarian food assistance to extremely vulnerable people affected by natural disasters in Afghanistan</i>				
Specific objectives	Allocated amount by specific objective (EUR)	Geographical area of operation	Activities	Potential partners²
To provide food assistance to highly food insecure populations affected by the floods in the Northern region of Afghanistan.	2,000,000	Afghanistan (North and North eastern Provinces)	CFW – FFW – cash and food distribution	<u>Direct centralised management</u> - ACTED - ACTIONAID - AGA KHAN - GERMAN AGRO ACTION - MEDAIR UK - PEOPLE IN NEED
TOTAL:	2,000,000			

² ACTIONAID, AGA KHAN FOUNDATION (United Kingdom), AGENCE D'AIDE A LA COOPERATION TECHNIQUE ET AU DEVELOPPEMENT, (FR), PEOPLE IN NEED - Clovek v tísní, o.p.s., GERMAN AGRO ACTION - DEUTSCHE WELTHUNGERHILFE e.V., MEDAIR UK (GBR)

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/policies/evaluation/introduction_en.htm.

8. Management issues

Humanitarian aid Actions funded by the Commission are implemented by NGOs and the Red Cross National Societies on the basis of Framework Partnership Agreements (FPA), by Specialised Agencies of the Member States 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/about/actors/partners_en.htm.

For NGOs, Specialised Agencies of the Member States, Red Cross National Societies and International Organisations not complying with the requirements set up in the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the European Communities for joint management, actions will be managed by direct centralised management.

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.