



COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

Brussels
C(2009)

COMMISSION DECISION

of

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

(ECHO/IND/BUD/2009/01000)

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

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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, Euratom) No.1257/96 of 20 June 1996 concerning humanitarian aid ¹, and in particular Article 2 and Article 15(2) thereof:

Whereas:

- (1) On 18 August 2008 the Koshi River broke through a bank changing its course and flooding 1000 villages in the Indian State of Bihar, affecting over 33 million people.
- (2) The river, in its new course, is 15 to 20 km wide (and 150 km long) and social infrastructure, crops and private property in its path were destroyed. Local and national authorities responded to the most immediate needs and the State of Bihar has recently approved a Rehabilitation and Reconstruction Policy, to address the aftermath of the catastrophe.
- (3) 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.
- (4) The European Commission allocated over 3 MEUR under a Humanitarian Emergency Decision on 7 October 2008, following an earlier 1 MEUR contracted from existing funds. All these resources have been contracted and contributed effectively to addressing the most immediate needs, but the magnitude of the flooding and the number of vulnerable communities affected are such, that the un-met needs are still vast.
- (5) There are serious concerns about the coping capacities of the poorest, as crops were destroyed and livestock killed, these people will remain highly dependent on external assistance for food and other basic necessities, until the next harvest. Reports from the field alert us that the most vulnerable families are being led to resort to irreversible coping mechanisms, such as the sale of remaining household assets and livestock, distress migration and other critical measures. Even in normal times, the affected area is known for its high prevalence of human trafficking.

¹ OJ L 163, 2.7.1996, p. 1.

- (6) There are also special concerns relating to access of marginalised communities, low caste people, people living with disabilities and religious minorities, to government assistance.
- (7) An assessment of the humanitarian situation leads to the conclusion that humanitarian aid operations should be financed by the Community for a period of 12 months.
- (8) It is estimated that an amount of EUR 2,000,000 from budget line 23 02 01 of the general budget of the European Communities is necessary to provide humanitarian assistance to up to 300,000 vulnerable persons affected by the Koshi River flooding in Bihar (India), taking into account the available budget, other donors' contributions and other factors. Therefore the activities covered by this Decision may be financed in full in accordance with Article 253 of the Implementing Rules of the Financial Regulation;
- (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 2,000,000 for humanitarian aid Actions Humanitarian assistance for the early recovery of communities in India affected by monsoon flooding by using line 23 02 01 of the 2009 general budget of the European Communities.
2. In accordance with Article 2 and 4 of Council Regulation No.1257/96, the humanitarian Actions under this Decision shall be implemented in the pursuance of the following specific objective:
 - To provide early recovery assistance to the most vulnerable flood-affected families in Bihar

Article 2

1. The duration for the implementation of this Decision shall be for a maximum period of 12 months, starting on 15 May 2009.
2. Expenditure under this Decision shall be eligible from 15 May 2009.

² OJ L 248, 16.9.2002, p.1.

³ OJ L 357, 31.12.2002, , p.1.

⁴ Commission Decision of 5.3.2008, C/2008/773

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.

Article 3

1. The Commission shall implement the budget by direct centralised management or by joint management with international organisations.
2. Actions supported by this Decision will be implemented either by: Non-profit-making organisations which fulfil the eligibility and suitability criteria established in Article 7 of Council Regulation (EC) No. 1257/96 or International organisations.
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 for the early recovery of communities in India affected by monsoon flooding

Location of Action: India

Amount of Decision: EUR 2,000,000

Decision reference number: ECHO/IND/BUD/2009/01000

Supporting Document

1 - Rationale, needs and target population.

1.1. - Rationale:

On 18 August 2008 the Koshi River, a tributary of the Ganges, broke through a bank changing its course and flooding approximately one thousand villages in the Indian State of Bihar¹. The total population affected is estimated at over 33 million people².

The river, in its new course, is 15 to 20 km wide and 150 km long. Social infrastructure, crops and private property lying in its path was destroyed (est. over 340,000 houses were damaged or destroyed³). Local and national authorities responded to the most immediate needs and the State of Bihar has recently approved a Rehabilitation and Reconstruction Policy, to address the aftermath of the catastrophe.

DG ECHO⁴ allocated over 3 MEUR under an Emergency Decision, following an earlier 1 MEUR contracted from existing Decisions. All these funds have been contracted, the projects were monitored and have indeed contributed to addressing the most immediate needs.

However there are serious concerns about the coping capacity of the most vulnerable, now that the emergency relief is coming to an end and the State's Rehabilitation and Reconstruction plan has not yet started to be implemented. As crops were destroyed and livestock killed, these people remain highly dependant on external assistance for food and

¹ Source: Government of Bihar, Department of Planning and Development

²Source: Government of Bihar, Department of Planning and Development

³Source: Government of Bihar, Department of Planning and Development

⁴Directorate-General for Humanitarian Aid - ECHO

other basic necessities, until the next harvest. Much of the flooded agricultural land is sand casted and will need extensive labour to become arable again. Some areas may become permanently waterlogged and people will have to look for resettlement locations, with all the challenges that entails. There are also special concerns relating to marginalised communities, low caste people, people living with disabilities, the elderly and religious minorities.

1.2. - Identified needs⁵ :

Livelihood support – agriculture inputs, including the replacement of lost livestock, and the replacement of professional tools for farmers and other professions.

The flood damaged large areas of crops, seedbeds and livestock. Long-term flood damage 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 washed away and livestock killed; these must be replaced because without assistance many people will be forced into selling, at bargain price, what remaining assets they have, a disinvestment for the future. Sand-casting further reduces the productive potential of farmland. In some cases alternative livelihoods must be sought. High malnutrition rates and poor food security levels have been further worsened by the loss of harvests and livestock, and the destruction of livelihoods

Given the extensive damage to basic social infrastructure and the fact that local markets are operating normally, cash for work is an option to be considered, as it allows for some communal work to be done (pedestrian bridges providing access to villages, clearing sand-casted fields, etc.) while providing cash to daily labourers who have no other income alternative, given that the fields where they usually work were flooded and the crops destroyed.

Some particularly vulnerable people (such as pregnant and lactating women, children, the sick and elderly) may need supplementary food.

The surviving livestock may also need fodder.

Shelter and items to protect the victims from the rain and other weather conditions – DG ECHO's assessments have shown that recent flood response has been successful in raising homesteads above flood level, making a significant difference to those who are assisted. Standardisation of partners' approaches will be sought.

Water and sanitation – pumps were contaminated by the flood and need to be cleaned and repaired. Latrines need to be repaired or constructed in a hygienic and safe way. Public health campaigns are needed, focusing mainly on hygiene promotion and nutrition.

Protection – Bihar is known for its high incidence of human trafficking at the best of times. In times of crisis the risk becomes higher. It is also a very traditional society, from which some groups find themselves excluded. Special measures, including healthcare, may be needed for these groups (low caste people, in particular women and children, people living with disabilities, people living with HIV, the elderly and religious minorities).

⁵ Sources: partners' and ECHO field reports

Disaster preparedness and mitigation measures will be mainstreamed into the operations, to build these communities' future resilience against flooding.

1.3. - Target population and regions concerned :

Victims of flooding in Bihar (India). The total population affected by this flood is estimated at over 33 million people. The operations financed under this Decision will benefit up to 300,000 people.

1.4. - Risk assessment and possible constraints :

The destruction of main roads and railroads and the poor conditions of surface communications, in Bihar, constitute a major constraint to the delivery of humanitarian assistance.

Security is also a concern, as there are reports⁶ of criminal gangs operating, including in terms of human trafficking.

The embankment breach is being repaired, but it is over 1 km long and challenging to repair. The Koshi River is currently flowing at its lowest and will normally remain so until the Himalayan ice melts, in the Spring. It will rise to its highest, with strongest current, when the monsoon starts in June. If the embankment is not fully repaired by then, a flood similar to the one that occurred in August 2008 is to be feared. However, the governments of India and Nepal (the Koshi is an international river and the breach occurred in Nepal, although close to the Indian border) are confident that the repair will be concluded on time.

2 - Objectives and components of the humanitarian intervention proposed:

2.1. - Objectives:

Principal objective:

To respond to humanitarian needs of the communities of Bihar (India) most affected by floods.

Specific objectives:

To provide early recovery assistance to the most vulnerable flood-affected families in Bihar

2.2. - Components:

DG ECHO will focus on livelihood recovery, shelter and water-sanitation, together with hygiene education to help avoiding disease outbreaks. As some 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 have a solid knowledge of the local socio-cultural environment.

The objectives will be met through the following activities:

- Provision of seeds, tools and essential agricultural inputs.
- Agricultural land rehabilitation and reclamation.
- Provision of farm and non-farm livelihood support and recovery, including skills training.
- Provision of livestock fodder and veterinary assistance.
- Cash for work for rehabilitation of land and community infrastructure
- Distribution of targeted food rations to highly vulnerable groups.

⁶ Sources: local media, partners' reports, ECHO field report

- 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, awareness raising on disability and provision of adequate hygiene materials.
- Improved environmental sanitation.
- Provision of targeted medical assistance, prevention of outbreaks of diseases and emergency response, disease surveillance.
- Provision of materials for house rehabilitation and provision of temporary /intermediate shelter for vulnerable families whose house was destroyed beyond repair.
- Provision of basic non-food items.
- Logistics, including the provision of boats to enable access to remote and marooned populations.
- Protection, including family reunification, child-safe areas and reintegration of children in school, special measures for particularly vulnerable people (low caste people, in particular women and children, people living with disabilities, people living with HIV, the elderly and religious minorities).
- Mainstreaming of disaster preparedness and mitigation measures to improve the communities' resilience to future flooding cycles.

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 15 May 2009.

Start Date: 15 May 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.

4 - Previous interventions/Decisions of the Commission within the context of the current crisis

List of previous DG ECHO operations in INDIA				
Decision Number	Decision Type	2007 EUR	2008 EUR	2009 EUR
ECHO/-SA/BUD/2007/01000 (*)	Global Plan	500,000		
ECHO/-SA/BUD/2007/02000 (*)	Emergency	5,000,000		
ECHO/-SA/BUD/2007/03000 (*)	Non Emergency	6,000,000		
ECHO/DIP/BUD/2007/04000 (*)	Non Emergency	0		
ECHO/IND/BUD/2007/01000	Non Emergency	2,000,000		
ECHO/IND/BUD/2007/02000	Non Emergency	630,000		
ECHO/-FA/BUD/2008/01000 (*)	Non Emergency		3,140,000	
ECHO/-SA/BUD/2008/01000 (*)	Global Plan		500,000	
ECHO/-SA/BUD/2008/02000 (*)	Emergency		3,500,000	
ECHO/IND/BUD/2008/01000	Non Emergency		2,000,000	
ECHO/IND/BUD/2008/02000	Non Emergency		850,000	
ECHO/DIP/BUD/2009/02000 (*)	Non Emergency			2,600,000
	Subtotal	14,130,000	9,990,000	2,600,000
	Grand Total	26,720,000		

Dated : 29 January 2009

Source : HOPE

(*) decisions with more than one country

5 - Overview of donors' contributions

Donors in INDIA the last 12 months					
1. EU Members States (*)		2. European Commission		3. Others	
	EUR		EUR		EUR
Austria		DG ECHO	12,590,000		
Belgium	521,449	Other services			
Bulgaria					
Cyprus					
Czech republic					
Denmark					
Estonia					
Finland					
France	100,000				
Germany	639,000				
Greece					
Hungary					
Ireland	285,097				
Italy	100,000				
Latvia					
Lithuania					
Luxemburg	371,409				
Malta					
Netherlands					
Poland					
Portugal					
Romania					
Slovakia					
Slovenie					
Spain					
Sweden	745,658				
United kingdom					
Subtotal	2,762,613	Subtotal	12,590,000	Subtotal	0
		Grand total	15,352,613		

Dated : 29 January 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 respond to humanitarian needs of the communities of Bihar (India) most affected by floods</i>				
Specific objectives	Allocated amount by specific objective (EUR)	Geographical area of operation	Activities	Potential partners⁷
Specific objective 1: To provide early recovery assistance to the most vulnerable flood-affected families in Bihar	2,000,000	Bihar	Early recovery Livelihood Shelter Disaster Preparedness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ACTED - ACTIONAID - ADRA - DEU - CARE - UK - CARITAS - DEU - CHRISTIAN AID - UK - DANCHURCHAID - DNK - GERMAN AGRO ACTION - HANDICAP (FR) - HELPAGE INTERNATIONAL - UK - MALTESER HILFSDIENST - MSF - ESP - MSF - NLD - OXFAM - UK - SAVE THE CHILDREN - UK - TROCAIRE
TOTAL:	2,000,000			

⁷ ACTIONAID, AGENCE D'AIDE A LA COOPERATION TECHNIQUE ET AU DEVELOPPEMENT, (FR), ARTSEN ZONDER GRENZEN (NLD), Adventistische Entwicklungs- und Katastrophenhilfe e.V., CARE INTERNATIONAL UK, CHRISTIAN AID (GBR), DEUTSCHE WELTHUNGERHILFE e.V., DEUTSCHER CARITASVERBAND e.V, (DEU), FOLKEKIRKENS NODHJAELP, (FKN), HANDICAP INTERNATIONAL (FR), HELPAGE INTERNATIONAL (GBR), MALTESER HILFSDIENST e.V., (DEU), MEDICOS SIN FRONTERAS, (E), OXFAM (GB), THE SAVE THE CHILDREN FUND (GBR), Trocaire, (IRL)

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, 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/about/actors/partners_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.