



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Brussels
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COMMISSION DECISION

of

**on the financing of Public Awareness, Information and Communication actions in the
Humanitarian field from the general budget of the European Union**

(ECHO/INF/BUD/2010/01000)

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on the financing of Public Awareness, Information and Communication actions in the Humanitarian field from the general budget of the European Union

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THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION,

Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,

Having regard to Council Regulation (EC) No.1257/96 of 20 June 1996 concerning humanitarian aid¹, and in particular Article 4 and 15(3) thereof,

Whereas:

- (1) The European Commission has a duty of transparency towards the citizens of the European Union;
- (2) There is a need to increase understanding of humanitarian issues and awareness of EU-funded humanitarian interventions, especially in Europe and in third countries where the European Commission is funding major humanitarian operations.
- (3) Public awareness, information and communication actions complement and highlight the humanitarian assistance provided by the European Commission:
- (4) The European Commission's communication approach for humanitarian aid has been developed to take account of the specificity of humanitarian aid, with a view to preserving a distinct identity for impartial, needs-based humanitarian action. It aims at enhancing knowledge and understanding, in the EU and in the field, of EU-funded humanitarian aid through awareness, information and communication actions implemented in the framework of the partnership between the Commission and humanitarian actors. This approach does not cover communication actions implemented directly by the Commission.
- (5) To reach target audiences, such actions should be undertaken by Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and International Organisations including United Nations (UN) agencies. Therefore the European Commission should implement the budget by direct centralised management or by joint management;
- (6) An assessment of how the communication impact can be maximized leads to the conclusion that the actions under this decision should be financed by the Union for a period of 18 months;
- (7) For the purpose of the implementation of this Decision, individual actions in the field may be subject to risks and conditions equivalent to those affecting humanitarian aid actions. Therefore, the suspension of individual actions owing to force majeure or other exceptional circumstances should be provided for in this Decision,.

¹- OJ L 163, 2.7.1996, p. 1.

- (8) It is estimated that an amount of EUR 1,000,000 from budget article 23 02 01 of the general budget of the European Union is necessary for communicating on humanitarian issues. The activities covered by this Decision may be financed in full in accordance with Article 253, point (e) of the Implementing Rules of the Financial Regulation;
- (9) To ensure the effective implementation of the present Decision at the beginning of the 2010 budgetary exercise, it could exceptionally be adopted in 2009.
- (10) 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 Union⁴;

HAS ADOPTED THIS DECISION:

Article 1

1. The Commission hereby approves a total amount of EUR 1,000,000 for the financing of public awareness, information and communication actions in the field of humanitarian aid from budget article 23.02.01 of the 2010 general budget of the European Union.

2. In accordance with Article 4 of Council Regulation No.1257/96, the principal objective of this Decision is to increase understanding of humanitarian issues and awareness of EU-funded humanitarian intervention, especially in Europe and in third countries where the Union is funding major humanitarian operations.

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

To organise cost-effective public communication actions designed to enhance knowledge and understanding of humanitarian issues and of EU funding in this area, and to highlight the partnership between the Commission and DG ECHO partners in delivering relief assistance to people affected by humanitarian crises.

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 1 January 2010 and shall run for 18 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- 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

Article 3

1. In accordance with point (e) of Article 253 of the Implementing Rules, funds under this Decision may finance Actions in full.

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 by international organisations.

3. The Commission shall implement the budget:

* either by direct centralised management, with non-governmental organisations,

* or by joint management with international organisations that are signatories to the Framework Partnership Agreements (FPA) or the EC/UN Financial Administrative Framework Agreement (FAFA) and which were subject to the four pillar assessment in line with Article 53d of the Financial Regulation;

Article 4

1. The amount of EUR 1,000,000 shall be conditional upon the necessary funds being available under the 2010 general budget of the European Union.

2. This Decision will take effect either on the date of its adoption or on 1 January 2010, whichever ever occurs the latest.

Article 5

This Decision is addressed to the delegated authorising officer.

Done at Brussels,

For the Commission
Peter ZANGL
Director-General



Humanitarian Aid Decision
23 02 01

Title: Commission decision on the financing of public Awareness, Information and Communication actions in the Humanitarian field from the general budget of the European Union

Description: To increase understanding of humanitarian issues and awareness of EU-funded humanitarian intervention, especially in Europe and in third countries where the Union is funding major humanitarian operations.

Location of Action: Europe and in third countries where the Union is funding major humanitarian operations

Amount of Decision: EUR 1,000,000

Decision reference number: ECHO/INF/BUD/2010/01000

Supporting Document

1 - Rationale, needs and target population.

1.1. - Rationale :

The European Commission's communication approach for humanitarian aid has been developed to take account of the specificity of humanitarian aid, with a view to preserving a distinct identity for impartial, needs-based humanitarian action. It aims at enhancing knowledge and understanding, in the EU and in the field, of EU-funded humanitarian aid through awareness, information and communication actions implemented in the framework of the partnership between the Commission and humanitarian actors. This approach does not cover communication actions implemented directly by the Commission.

Effective communication about the values and impact of humanitarian aid is key to the continuing deployment of relief assistance in saving lives and alleviating suffering. The actions proposed in this decision relate to public information and awareness actions in accordance with the fifth indent of Article 4 of Council Regulation (EC) N° 1257/96 of 20 June 1996.

Such actions are also in conformity with the last indent of point 97 of the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid (COM(2007) 317 final) that envisages communication, on the impact and importance of European humanitarian aid, to the European public.

1.2. - Identified needs :

To boost transparency and to increase understanding of humanitarian issues, especially in Europe and in third countries where the Union is funding humanitarian operations.

1.3. - Target population and regions concerned :

European Union citizens and populations of third countries where the Union is funding humanitarian operations.

1.4. - Risk assessment and possible constraints :

The implementation of the objectives of the decision requires a high degree of technical specialisation, a good knowledge of DG ECHO¹ procedures, and appropriately qualified staff available during the whole project lifetime. To maximise the possibility of success in achieving the project objectives, prospective partners are requested to have proven technical experience in the chosen area of intervention. The above requirements are likely to have an impact not only on the selection of projects but also on the timeframe of project implementation.

2 - Objectives and components of the humanitarian intervention proposed:

2.1. - Objectives :

Principal objective:

To increase understanding of humanitarian issues and awareness of EU-funded humanitarian intervention, especially in Europe and in third countries where the Union is funding major humanitarian operations.

Specific objective:

To organise cost-effective public communication actions designed to enhance knowledge and understanding of humanitarian issues and of EU funding in this area and to highlight the partnership between the Commission and DG ECHO partners in delivering relief assistance to people affected by humanitarian crises.

¹ Directorate-General for Humanitarian Aid - ECHO

2.2. - Components :

Communication actions by DG ECHO partners designed to achieve the aforementioned objectives.

Actions proposed should have a strong multiplier effect with the potential to reach the largest possible audiences.

Proposals that:

- actively involve and target young people in the 15-25 age range in the EU;
 - highlight humanitarian principles and the issue of the threat to the humanitarian space; or
 - feature the humanitarian consequences of climate change (including disaster preparedness),
- are particularly encouraged in line with DG ECHO's current communication approach.

The following is a non-exhaustive list of examples of communication actions that could be financed under this decision:

- (1) Humanitarian days involving events open to public;
- (2) Roadshows;
- (3) School, college or university-based activities;
- (4) Direct media actions, assuming these are high impact, including audiovisual projects, cinema spots, billboards and web-based projects.

Where possible, significant interactive elements such as competitions, exhibitions or simulations should be incorporated into the action, with an innovative or creative component likely to attract media interest.

Partners should include in their proposals, arrangements for assessing the communication impact of the proposed activities, for example: media monitoring and reviews, statistics relating to web hits, sample surveys of participants.

3 - Duration expected for Actions in the proposed Decision:

The duration for the implementation of this Decision shall be 18 months

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

An 18-month period for implementation of the above mentioned decision is justified for three reasons:

- In general terms, it is recognised that the effectiveness of communication actions is greater with the delivery of "repeat" messages over a period of time. This implies relatively long implementation periods for communication projects. If one adds the "creativity time" needed to devise and assess proposals, a 12-month implementation phase would be very limiting.
- With young people a particular target group, it is likely that some actions funded under this decision will be based on schools or institutes of higher

education. Allowing time for assessing proposals and project launches and with May-June being the typical examination period, actual implementation is only likely to be feasible in the 2010-2011 academic year. For a 12-month decision, all activities would have to be completed by the end of the first term (31 December) which is unduly restrictive.

- Competitions designed to attract entries through media coverage and visibility are more likely to take off if they "run" for a period of some months. Again, a December 31 deadline would restrict the possibility of building up momentum in such projects.

Expenditure under this Decision shall be eligible from 1 January 2010.

Start Date : 1 January 2010.

For the purpose of the implementation of this Decision, individual actions in the field may be subject to risks and conditions equivalent to those affecting humanitarian aid actions . Therefore, if the implementation of such 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.

6.2. - Budget breakdown by specific objectives:

| Principal objective: <i>To increase understanding of humanitarian issues and awareness of EU-funded humanitarian intervention, especially in Europe and in third countries where the Union is funding major humanitarian operations.</i> | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|
| Specific objectives | Allocated amount by specific objective (EUR) | Geographical area of operation | Activities | Potential partners |
| <p>Specific objective :</p> <p>To organise cost-effective public communication actions designed to enhance knowledge and understanding of humanitarian issues and of EU funding in this area and to highlight the partnership between the Commission and DG ECHO partners in delivering relief assistance to people affected by humanitarian crises.</p> | 1,000,000 | EU countries and third countries where the Union is funding humanitarian operations | <p>Communication actions such as: (1) humanitarian days involving events open to public; (2) roadshows; (3) school, college or university-based activities; (4) direct media actions, assuming these are high impact, including audiovisual projects, cinema spots, billboards and web-based projects.</p> <p>Where possible, significant interactive elements such as competitions, exhibitions or simulations should be incorporated with an innovative or creative component likely to attract media interest.</p> <p>Proposals that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - actively involve and target young people in the 15-25 age range in the EU; - highlight humanitarian principles and the issue of the threat to the humanitarian space; or - feature the humanitarian consequences of climate change (including disaster preparedness), are particularly encouraged. | <p><u>Under direct centralised management :</u> All signatories of the Framework partnership Agreement (FPA) for non-governmental organisations.</p> <p><u>Under joint management</u> International organisations that are signatories to the Framework Partnership Agreements (FPA) or the EC/UN Financial Administrative Framework Agreement (FAFA)</p> |
| TOTAL: | 1,000,000 | | | |

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 Union 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), 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 and Red Cross National Societies not complying with the requirements set up in the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the European Union 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