



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

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COMMISSION DECISION

of

on the financing of Policy Support to improve the quality and effectiveness of humanitarian aid from the general budget of the European Union

(ECHO/POS/BUD/2011/01000)

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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 Articles 4 and 15(2) and (3) thereof;

Whereas:

- (1) Article 4 of Council Regulation (EC) No 1257/96 provides that humanitarian aid financed by the European Union may be used to finance small-scale training schemes and general studies in the field of humanitarian operations, as well as measures to strengthen the Union's coordination with, inter alia, non-governmental organisations and organisations representing them;
- (2) The European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid² and its action plan³ call for actions which promote humanitarian principles and law, and implement quality aid approaches which strengthen partnership, coherence and coordination;
- (3) The financing of expertise and networks to contribute to the quality and coherence of policy initiatives in a number of focused humanitarian sectors, will contribute to improving the effectiveness and overall impact of humanitarian aid;
- (4) Actions supported by this Decision will be implemented through direct centralised management by humanitarian aid organisations that are signatories to the Framework Partnership Agreement; by non-profit organisations which fulfil the eligibility and suitability criteria established under Article 7 of Council Regulation (EC) No 1257/96; and by European research institutes, universities, academic and policy institutions active in the area of humanitarian aid, and networks of non-profit humanitarian organisation; or directly by the Commission;
- (5) An assessment of the needs and the capacity building context leads to the conclusion that the Actions should be financed by the European Union for a period of 24 months ;

¹ 1- OJ L 163, 2.7.1996, p. 1.

² OJ C 25 of 30.01.2008,p1 (adopted by the Council, European Parliament and the Commission on 18 December 2007)

³ SEC(2008)1991 of 29.5.2008

- (6) It is estimated that an amount of EUR 2,000,000 from budget article 23 02 01 of the general budget of the European Union is necessary to realise the objectives of the Decision, taking into account the available budget, other donors' contributions and other factors;
- (7) Since the amount does not exceed EUR 2,000,000, an opinion of the responsible committee is not necessary pursuant to Article 15(2) in conjunction with Article 15 (3) of Council Regulation (EC) No 1257/96;
- (8) The present Decision constitutes a financing Decision within the meaning of Article 75 of the Financial Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1605/2002⁴, Article 90 of the detailed rules for the implementation of the Financial Regulation determined by Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 2342/2002⁵, and Article 15 of the internal rules on the implementation of the general budget of the European Union⁶;
- (9) This financing decision may also cover the payment of interest due for late payment on the basis of Articles 83 of the Financial Regulation and 106(5) of the Implementing Rules.
- (10) This decision should include a definition of the terms “substantial change” in the meaning of Article 90 (4) of the Implementing Rules to ensure that any substantial change in this decision shall follow the same procedure as the initial decision.

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 improving quality and effectiveness of humanitarian aid through policy support from budget article 23 02 01 of the 2011 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 the coherence, quality and effectiveness of humanitarian aid. The actions shall be implemented in the pursuance of the following specific objectives:

- Provision of expertise to assist policy development in support to humanitarian aid actions

A total of EUR 1,600,000 is allocated to this specific objective.

- Reinforce networking between humanitarian non-governmental organisations

A total of EUR 400,000 is allocated to this specific objective.

These appropriations shall also cover any interests due for late payment.

⁴ OJ L 248, 16.9.2002, p.1.

⁵ OJ L 357, 31.12.2002, p.1.

⁶ Commission Decision of 6.4.2009, C/2009/2105

Article 2

1. The period for the implementation of the actions financed under this Decision shall start on 1st January 2011 and shall run for 24 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.

Article 3

The Commission shall implement the budget:

- Either by direct centralised management with humanitarian aid organisations that are signatories to the Framework Partnership Agreement; by non-profit organisations which fulfil the eligibility and suitability criteria established under Article 7 of Council Regulation (EC) No 1257/96; European research institutes, universities, academic and policy institutions active in the area of humanitarian aid, and networks of non-profit humanitarian organisations.
- or directly within its services by awarding service or procurement contracts.

Article 4

Cumulated changes to the allocations to specific actions not exceeding 20% of the maximum contribution authorised by this Decision shall not be considered substantial, provided that they do not significantly affect the nature and objective of the Decision.

The relevant authorising officer may amend the present Decision to introduce non substantial changes in accordance with the principles of sound financial management and of proportionality.

Article 5

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**

<u>Title:</u>	Commission decision on the financing of Policy Support to improve the quality and effectiveness of humanitarian aid
<u>Description:</u>	Policy Support Decision
<u>Location of action:</u>	European Union and third countries in receipt of EU humanitarian aid
<u>Amount of Decision:</u>	EUR 2,000,000
<u>Decision reference number:</u>	ECHO/POS/BUD/2011/01000

Supporting document

1. Humanitarian context, needs and risks

1.1 Situation and context

In order to improve the coherence, quality, effectiveness and overall impact of EU funding, the European Commission's Directorate-General for Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection (DG ECHO), is developing a range of policy products. To ensure the highest quality for these products requires the engagement of expertise in the areas concerned, and reinforced networking between humanitarian NGOs signatories of the Framework Partnership Agreement (FPA) with DG ECHO.

1.2 Identified humanitarian needs

The increasing scale of humanitarian needs requires the most effective use of the limited resources available. The diversity of actors and approaches requires clear guidance regarding the best approaches to take to meet the needs of the beneficiaries.

The need for policy products to improve coherence, quality and efficiency applies both directly to DG ECHO funding, and more broadly to global approaches to humanitarian funding. This need exists for both sector policy areas (such as WASH,

and Health) and horizontal policy areas (such as Gender), as well as overall humanitarian principles (such as International Humanitarian Law (IHL), and Civil-military coordination). Such broad application requires drawing upon specific expertise from dedicated centres of excellence, as well as informed best practise in the ongoing practise of humanitarian aid delivery.

1.3 Risk assessment and possible constraints

Extensions of the initial duration of projects or suspensions might become necessary due to technical constraints or in case of sudden onset crises diverting key staff involved.

2 Proposed DG ECHO response

2.1 Rationale

Article 4 of Council Regulation (EC) No 1257/96 lays down that humanitarian aid financed by the European Union may be used to finance general studies in the field of humanitarian operations, as well as measures to strengthen the Union's coordination with, inter alia, non-governmental organisations and organisations representing them.

In addition, article 1.2.(b) of the 2008-2012 Framework Partnership Agreement (hereinafter "FPA") mentions that the Commission will support initiatives and other activities that aim to improve the quality of the humanitarian response of its partners.

Furthermore, the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid¹, adopted by the Council, European Parliament and the Commission on 18 December 2007 and its successive action plan² and mid-term review³, calls for actions which promote humanitarian principles and law and implement quality aid approaches and which strengthen partnership, coherence and coordination.

Considering the above, DG ECHO is proposing for the 2011 Policy Support decision the financing of expertise and networks to contribute to the quality and coherence of policy initiatives in a number of focused sectors (for example WASH⁴, Gender, Health, Disaster Risk Reduction, Logistics, Shelter, IHL and Civil-military coordination) with the overall aim to improve the effectiveness of humanitarian aid.

2.2 Objectives

Principal objective: To increase the coherence, quality and effectiveness of humanitarian aid.

¹ OJ C 25 of 30.01.2008, p1

² SEC(2008)1991 of 29.5.2008

³ COM (2010) 722, adopted on 8/12/2010

⁴ WASH is the water, sanitation and hygiene sector

Specific objectives:

- 1) Provision of expertise to assist policy development in support to humanitarian aid actions
- 2) Reinforce networking between humanitarian non-governmental organisations

2.3 Components

- 1) Provision of expertise to assist policy development.

This would include contributions to, recommendations for and review of policy products under development, and undertaking specific studies and/or analysis to inform the development of policy linked to the achievement of the objectives of the policy area. This may extend to organising workshops with relevant stakeholders to feed the policy making process; studies to review policy implementation or present 'state of the art' thinking in a given policy area; and contributions to the elaboration of training modules in policy related matters.

Identified areas for the development of policy products include WASH⁵, Gender, Health, Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), Logistics, Shelter, IHL and Civil-military coordination.

Eligible organisations would be humanitarian aid organisations that are signatories to the Framework Partnership Agreement; non-profit organisations which fulfil the eligibility and suitability criteria established under Article 7 of Council Regulation (EC) No 1257/96; European research institutes, universities, academic and policy institutions active in the area of humanitarian aid.

This specific objective will be implemented through service contracts, and/or grant agreements.

- 2) Reinforce networking between DG ECHO's NGO partners.

The broad application foreseen for DG ECHO policy products requires drawing upon informed best practise in the ongoing practise of humanitarian aid delivery. Reinforcing networking between partners is an important part of this. Further, such reinforced networking is important both for pursuing issues of humanitarian principles, as well as for broader policy dissemination with a view to improving operational implementation.

- *Eligible network organisations: who may apply?*

European networks of non-profit humanitarian organisations:

- which are a non-profit legal person; and
- which have their main headquarters in a Member State of the European Union; and
- with a minimum of 4 FPA-partners as active member of the network; and

⁵ WASH is the water, sanitation and hygiene sector

- with a minimum of 1 FPA-partner as a member of the steering board or committee of the network.
- *Aim of the organisation:* eligible networks will aim to:
 - improve the quality and effectiveness of humanitarian aid actions; and / or
 - contribute to one or several of the priorities identified in the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid or the Hyogo Framework for action 2005-2015 related to disaster risk reduction; and / or
 - enhance the cooperation and coordination between European NGOs.

Grants awarded under specific objective 2 shall, in principle, be between EUR 100,000 and EUR 400,000.

- *Eligible beneficiaries:* global humanitarian community – the results of the network activities, funded by DG ECHO, will be made accessible to all NGOs signatory to the Framework Partnership Agreement with DG ECHO.

This specific objective will be implemented through operating grant agreements with an aim to enhancing the cooperation and coordination between European NGOs, reinforcing networking and strengthening the collective influence of NGOs to improve implementation of humanitarian aid projects, and to raising awareness of and engagement with the EU Consensus on Humanitarian Aid.

2.4 Complementarity and coordination with other EU services, donors and institutions

The policy development process includes inter-service consultation, as well as consultation and coordination with main stakeholders.

2.5 Duration

The duration for the implementation of this Decision shall be 24 months. Actions funded by this Decision must be implemented within this period. The 24 month duration for this Decision is necessary, since, as a general rule, the nature of the activities proposed requires sustained commitment for an average period of over 12 months. In addition, sufficient time has to be foreseen to complete the evaluation and selection procedure of proposals. The 24 month timeframe takes also into account possible delays in implementation linked to the constraints mentioned under section 1.3.

Expenditure under this Decision shall be eligible from 1/1/2011.

Start Date: 1/1/2011

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.

3 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.

4 Management Issues

Actions funded by the Commission under this Decision will be implemented by direct centralised management or by the European Commission directly within its services, by awarding procurement or service contracts.

After the adoption of this Decision, guidelines for the exclusion, selection and award of agreements will be published on the Commission's website providing maximum publicity among potential organisations and an information meeting will be organised with all interested organisations.

Grants will be awarded after recommendation of a specialised evaluation committee, on the basis of the criteria enumerated in Article 7.2 of the Humanitarian Aid Regulation, such as the technical and financial capacity, readiness, experience and results of previous interventions.

Under specific objective 1 service contracts or grants may be awarded. Under specific objective 2 the European networks of non-profit humanitarian organisations will benefit through operating grant agreements.

5 Annexes

Annex 1 - Summary decision matrix (table)

Principal objective: To increase the coherence, quality and effectiveness of humanitarian aid.			
Specific objectives	Allocated amount by specific objective (EUR)	Geographical area of operation	Potential partners
Provision of expertise to assist policy development in support to humanitarian aid actions	1,600,000	European Union and third countries in receipt of Community humanitarian aid	<u>Direct centralised management</u> Humanitarian aid organisations that are signatories to the Framework Partnership Agreement; non-profit organisations which fulfil the eligibility and suitability criteria established under Article 7 of Council Regulation (EC) No 1257/96; European research institutes, universities, academic and policy institutions active in the area of humanitarian aid.
Reinforce networking between humanitarian non-governmental organisations	400,000	European Union and third countries in receipt of Community humanitarian aid	<u>Direct centralised management</u> European networks of non-profit humanitarian organisations.
TOTAL	2,000,000		