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COMMISSION DECISION

of 12.5.2014

financing humanitarian actions in the Sahel region from the Bridging Facility

(ECHO/-WF/EDF/2014/01000)

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THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION,

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

Having regard to Council Decision 2013/759/EU of 12 December 2013 regarding transitional EDF management measures from 1 January 2014 until the entry into force of the 11th European Development Fund¹, ('Bridging Facility'), and in particular Article 2 thereof,

Having regard to Council Regulation (EC) No 617/2007 of 14 May 2007 on the implementation of the 10th European Development Fund under the ACP-EC Partnership Agreement², and in particular Articles 5.4 and 8 thereof;

Whereas:

- (1) According to the latest data from countries of the region, almost 4.1 million people require emergency food assistance immediately and it is foreseen that the number will increase up to 7.1 million from June according to current trend. In addition, about 15 million people are already facing a moderate form of food insecurity. Many of them will become severely food insecure while progressing towards the lean season if mitigation and emergency measures are not taken at scale.
- (2) In the meantime, in the framework of the Sahel Strategic Response Plan (SRP), Humanitarian Country Teams, together with Government partners, have established estimates concerning the number of people requiring emergency food assistance over 2014 which currently stands at 11.7 million people.
- (3) The burden of Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM) is estimated to be higher than 2013 with 5.7 million people affected by acute malnutrition (5.3 million children under five) including 1.6 million children with Severe Acute Malnutrition. This increase is mainly due to the high population growth in the region and the persistence of high GAM rates
- (4) While some Governments of the region (Niger, Burkina Faso, Mali and Mauritania) are working on a national response plan to respond to food and nutrition crisis in their respective countries, complementary and coordinated actions from humanitarian actors will be critical to face massive number of affected households.
- (5) To reach populations in need, aid should be channelled through non-governmental organisations (NGOs) or international organisations including United Nations (UN) agencies. Therefore the European Commission should implement the budget by direct centralised management or by joint or indirect management, as the case may be.

¹ OJ L 335, 14.12.2013, p. 48.

² OJ L 152, 13.06.2007, p. 1.

- (6) An assessment of the humanitarian situation leads to the conclusion that humanitarian aid actions should be financed by the European Union for a period of 12 months.
- (7) The use of the Bridging Facility, composed of uncommitted balances from previous EDFs and from funds decommitted from projects or programmes under those EDFs, is necessary as all the funds for ACP countries in the general budget are entirely allocated.
- (8) It is estimated that an amount of EUR 25 million from the Sahel region's allocation for unforeseen needs (B-envelope) pursuant to Article 9 (2) b) of Annex IV to the ACP-EC Partnership Agreement signed in Cotonou on 23 June 2000³, as first amended in Luxembourg on 25 June 2005⁴ and as amended for the second time in Ouagadougou on 22 June 2010⁵ is necessary to provide humanitarian assistance to populations directly affected by food and nutrition crisis . Although as a general rule actions funded by this Decision should be co-financed, the Authorising Officer, in accordance with Article 103.3 of the Financial Regulation applicable to the 10th EDF⁶, together with Article 277 of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1268/2012 of 29 October 2012 on the rules of application of Regulation No 966/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union (hereinafter referred to as 'the Rules of Application'⁷), may agree to the full financing of actions;
- (9) The measures provided for in this Decision are in accordance with the opinion of the European Development Fund Committee set up by Article 8 of the Internal Agreement of 17 July 2006.

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 25 million from the Bridging Facility for humanitarian aid actions to reduce malnutrition-related mortality among children under five in the Sahel
2. In accordance with Article 72 of the ACP-EC Partnership Agreement, the principal objective of this Decision is to reduce malnutrition-related mortality among children under five in the Sahel. The humanitarian aid actions shall be implemented in pursuance of the following specific objective:
 - To ensure a coordinated and effective food and nutritional assistance for those most affected by the current food crisis in the Sahel region.

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

³ OJ L 317, 15.12.2000, p. 3.

⁴ OJ L 209, 11.08.2005, p. 27.

⁵ OJ L 287, 4.11.2010, p. 3.

⁶ OJ L 78, 19.03.2008, p. 1.

⁷ OJ L 362 31.12.2012, p.1.

Article 2

1. The period for the implementation of the actions financed under this Decision shall start on 1 April 2014 and shall run for 12 months. Eligible expenditure shall be incurred 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.
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.

Article 3

1. As a general rule, actions funded by this Decision should be co-financed.
The Authorising Officer by delegation, in accordance with Article 103.3 of the Financial Regulation applicable to the 10th EDF, together with Article 277 of the Rules of Application applicable to the general budget of the Union, may agree to the full financing of actions when this will be necessary to achieve the objectives of this Decision and with due consideration to the nature of the activities to be undertaken, the availability of other donors and other relevant operational circumstances.
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 and international organisations.
3. The Commission shall implement the budget:
 - * either by direct centralised management, with non-governmental organisations;
 - * or by joint or indirect management, as the case may be, with international organisations that are signatories to the Framework Partnership Agreements (FPA) or the Financial Administrative Framework Agreement with the UN (FAFA) and which were subject to an assessment by the Commission.

Article 4

The Decision shall take effect on the date of its adoption.

Done at Brussels, 12.5.2014

For the Commission
Kristalina GEORGIEVA
Member of the Commission