



Brussels, 16.7.2019
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COMMISSION DECISION

of 16.7.2019

**adopting a special measure on the financing of humanitarian actions in favour of
Zimbabwe to be financed from the European Development Fund (EDF) -
ECHO/ZWE/EDF/2019/01000**

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adopting a special measure on the financing of humanitarian actions in favour of Zimbabwe to be financed from the European Development Fund (EDF) - ECHO/ZWE/EDF/2019/01000

THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION,

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

Having regard to Council Regulation (EU) 2015/322 of 2 March 2015 on the implementation of the 11th European Development Fund¹, and in particular Article 9(3) thereof,

Having regard to Council Regulation (EU) 2018/1877 of 26 November 2018 on the financial regulation applicable to the 11th European Development Fund, and repealing Regulation (EU) 2015/323², and in particular Article 24 thereof,

Whereas:

- (1) The humanitarian situation in Zimbabwe is critical. A combination of climatic shocks, including drought and cyclone Idai, compounded by the protracted and deteriorating economic situation, has led to increasing multi-sectoral humanitarian needs profoundly affecting vulnerable households across the country.
- (2) Overall, 5.3 million people (excluding the cyclone-affected people) are in need of humanitarian assistance. 2.9 million of these are severely food insecure (IPC 3 or above), and a further 900 000 people have received humanitarian assistance until the end of the lean season period (May 2019), without which they would have probably been in IPC phase 3 or above. The food insecurity is, in part, a result of drought as well as crop pests affecting all the country. Moreover, an increase in livestock deaths has been reported due to different disease outbreaks. According to the preliminary findings from the May 2019 ZIMVAC (Zimbabwe Vulnerability Assessment Comitee) survey, rural food insecurity prevalence is projected to peak at 52% in the 2019/20 consumption year. An update of the IPC is being urgently considered.
- (3) With the ongoing macro-economic crisis, there is a high likelihood that the situation will continue to deteriorate. At the heart of the economic problem is a USD 17 billion domestic and foreign debt and a 1.8 billion trade deficit that has worsened foreign exchange shortages. Sharp increases in prices of food, agricultural inputs and fuel have a direct negative impact on poverty and hunger. Unemployment rates are rising, too. This has led to civil unrest, and during these events there have been reports of human rights violations.
- (4) Health needs are also high in Zimbabwe. Cholera and typhoid outbreaks are recurrent, and the country's HIV prevalence is high, affecting 13% of the population. Food insecurity for people taking HIV medicines is a particular risk, as these drugs must be

¹ OJ L 58, 3.3.2015, p. 1.

² OJ L 307, 3.12.2018, p. 1

taken with food. In the face of rising needs, Zimbabwe's healthcare budget is chronically underfunded and stocks of essential medicines, diagnostics and supplies have been depleted due to foreign currency shortages.

- (5) Access to safe drinking water is likewise being affected by foreign currency shortages, making it difficult for local authorities to procure water treatment chemicals. The October 2018 report from the Rural WASH Information Management System (RWIMS) described that less than 50% of water points across the country were fully functional (before cyclone Idai hit). An estimated 780 000 people remain at risk of WASH-related disease outbreaks
- (6) Vulnerable households employ negative and unsustainable coping mechanisms, many of which increase the protection needs of women and girls – transactional sex, domestic violence or early marriage. School attendance risks to be compromised, as families prioritize food and income-generating activities over school fees. School drop-outs are also especially affecting girls.
- (7) This already fragile humanitarian situation has been exacerbated by tropical cyclone Idai, which hit the eastern part of the country on 15 March 2019. Cyclone Idai caused flooding and landslides in Manicaland, Masvingo and Mahonaland East provinces. The districts of Chipinge and Chimanimani (Manicaland province) were by far the hardest hit. According to the UN Flash Appeal for Zimbabwe, 270 000 people are in need of urgent humanitarian assistance in these areas.
- (8) The cyclone hit just before the harvest, and approximately 4 700 hectares of crops were destroyed in Chipinge and Chimanimani alone. Many families lost livestock. Moreover, access to markets to buy food or sell products has become difficult or impossible in many areas. The majority of the people affected were already very vulnerable and living in IPC 3 or IPC 4 areas.
- (9) Under the present situation, there are unforeseen and manifestly justified needs of a humanitarian nature in Zimbabwe due to exceptional circumstances. Such humanitarian needs may be addressed through the adoption of special measures to provide funding under the 11th European Development Fund (EDF), in line with Article 9 of Regulation (EU) 2015/322.
- (10) In order to ensure the implementation of humanitarian actions in favour of Zimbabwe, it is necessary to adopt a financing decision. Article 110 of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046, applicable in accordance with Article 24(1) of Regulation (EU) 2018/1877, establishes detailed rules on financing decisions.
- (11) Actions to be funded under this Decision should address the essential food needs of the most severely affected populations. The Union's humanitarian response should seek to strengthen the resilience of the most vulnerable communities to mitigate against the impact of the food insecurity crisis and to restore livelihoods in communities affected by the cyclone.
- (12) The envisaged assistance is to comply with the conditions and procedures set out by the restrictive measures adopted pursuant to Article 215 TFEU³. The needs-based and impartial nature of humanitarian aid implies that the Union may be called to finance humanitarian assistance in crises and countries covered by Union restrictive measures. In such situations, and in keeping with the relevant principles of international law,

³ www.sanctionsmap.eu. Note that the sanctions map is an IT tool for identifying the sanctions regimes. The source of the sanctions stems from legal acts published in the Official Journal (OJ). In case of discrepancy, the OJ prevails.

which include the fundamental humanitarian principles of humanity, impartiality, independence and neutrality, the Union should allow and facilitate rapid and unimpeded access to humanitarian relief by civilians in need. The relevant Union restrictive measures should therefore be interpreted and implemented in such a manner as not to preclude the delivery of humanitarian assistance to the intended beneficiaries.

- (13) Pursuant to Article 195 of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046, applicable in accordance with Article 32 of Regulation (EU) 2018/1877, it is appropriate to authorise the award of grants without a call for proposals and to provide for the conditions for awarding those grants in light of the humanitarian nature of the assistance to be provided under this Decision.
- (14) The Commission is to ensure a level of protection of the financial interests of the Union with regards to entities and persons entrusted with the implementation of Union funds by indirect management as provided for in Article 154(3) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046 applicable in accordance with Article 30(1) of Regulation (EU) 2018/1877. To this end, such entities and persons are to be subject to an assessment of their systems and procedures in accordance with Article 154(4) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046⁴ and, if necessary, to appropriate supervisory measures in accordance with Article 154(5) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046 before a contribution agreement can be signed.
- (15) It is necessary to allow for the payment of interest due for late payment on the basis of Article 116(5) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046 applicable in accordance with Article 24(2) and Article 25 of Regulation (EU) 2018/1877.
- (16) In order to allow for flexibility in the implementation of the measure, it is appropriate to allow changes which should not be considered substantial for the purposes of Article 110(5) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046.
- (17) The measure provided for in this Decision does not fall within the categories of measures for which the prior opinion of the Committee is required. The EDF Committee, established under Article 8 of the Internal Agreement, should be informed of this Decision within one month following its adoption,

HAS DECIDED AS FOLLOWS:

Article 1
The measure

The financing decision, constituting a special measure for the implementation of humanitarian actions in favour of Zimbabwe, as set out in the Annex, is hereby adopted.

Article 2
Union contribution

The maximum Union contribution for the implementation of the measure is set at EUR 10 000 000, and shall be financed from the 11th European Development Fund.

The appropriations provided for in the first paragraph may also cover interest due for late payment.

⁴ Except for the cases of Article 154(6) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046, where the Commission may decide, not to require an ex-ante assessment

Article 3
Methods of implementation and entrusted entities or persons

The implementation of the actions carried out by way of indirect management, as set out in the Annex, may be entrusted to the entities or persons referred to or selected in accordance with the criteria laid down in point 5 of the Annex.

Article 4
Flexibility clause

Increases or decreases of up to EUR 10 000 000 not exceeding 20% of the contribution set in the first paragraph of Article 2, or cumulated changes⁵ to the allocations of specific actions not exceeding 20% of that contribution shall not be considered substantial for the purposes of Article 110(5) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046, applicable in accordance with Article 24(2) of Regulation (EU) 2018/1877, provided that these changes do not significantly affect the nature and objectives of the actions.

The authorising officer responsible may apply the changes referred to in the first paragraph. Those changes shall be applied in accordance with the principles of sound financial management and proportionality.

Article 5
Grants

Grants may be awarded without a call for proposals in accordance with the conditions set out in the Annex. Grants may be awarded to the bodies referred to in the Annex.

Done at Brussels, 16.7.2019

For the Commission
Christos STYLIANIDES
Member of the Commission

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