



Commission of the European Communities

Cambodia: Commission allocates 3.5 million Euros in humanitarian aid in response to 'child survival crisis'

Reference: IP/04/1351 Date: 10/11/2004

IP/04/1351

Brussels, 10 November 2004

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The European Commission has allocated € 3.5 million to improve the health situation of vulnerable children in Cambodia. Activities will promote access to safe water and improve hygiene conditions for vulnerable groups thereby reducing infant and child mortality which remains very high in Cambodia. Demining activities will also be funded. Funds will be channelled through the European Commission's Humanitarian Aid Directorate General (ECHO) under the responsibility of Commissioner Poul Nielson.

Cambodia has the highest rates of infant and child mortality in South East Asia and this has led the World Health Organisation to qualify the situation as a 'child survival crisis'. Lack of access to safe water is one of factors contributing to an infant mortality rate of 98 per 1000 live birth and an under-five mortality of 124 per 1000 live birth.

ECHO funds will be used to provide access to safe water and to improve hygiene conditions for mostly children living in post conflict areas or in regions largely populated by ethnic minorities. ECHO's financial support will cover the provision of:

- **Water and sanitation:** activities in this area include the construction of wells or ponds for community and school use, water quality testing, and the construction of sanitation facilities in schools and households. Rain catchments systems, water storage jars and filters will be distributed. Training in water use as well as hygiene education will be provided.
- **Health:** these funds will enable a vaccination campaign and mass de-worming of children. Community health workers will be trained, essential drugs will be distributed and there will be awareness rising about the importance of breastfeeding.

Demining activities will also be funded.

It is estimated that at least 250,000 people will directly benefit from this aid over the next 18 months.

ECHO has provided more than € 26 million to Cambodia since 2000, mainly assisting returnees and displaced people with support in health, water and sanitation sectors as well as humanitarian mine actions.

More information on ECHO activities:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/echo/index_en.htm