

WHAT SHOULD BE THE PRIORITIES OF SPANISH DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION IN HUMANITARIAN ACTION STRATEGY?

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Currently, the government is preparing two documents, *Strategies for Humanitarian Action and Food Sovereignty* and *Spanish Development Cooperation's Fight against Hunger*, which will provide guidelines for the work of the Spanish Agency for International Cooperation (AECI) over the coming years. Meanwhile, the document of reference is the Master Plan 2005-2008 which contains very precise and ambitious guidelines for humanitarian aid.

In terms of food assistance, the consensus reached limits its use to emergencies and to help the most vulnerable population sectors, strengthening the concept of food sovereignty in the fight against poverty. Financial aid will be the mechanism used to purchase items in local markets in recipient countries without obviating the multilateral commitment to make greater contributions to the UN World Food Programme (WFP).

With respect to Humanitarian Action (HA), the concept is broadened to include other facets, especially protecting victims and reestablishing their rights.

At the operative level, questions such as disaster prevention and preparation and the development of logistical infrastructure for more rapid responses.

Tracking and evaluating our actions, especially those projects financed abroad as part of an active, selective, and strategic multilateralism policy, is the other area we are beginning to develop. To this end, the department staff has been strengthened with the incorporation of a head of services.

Coordination with non-governmental organisations (NGOs) is another area to reinforce, thereby allowing for a more active participation of civil society.

How do we guarantee that the quantitative increase in HA is coherent with humanitarian priorities?

Historically, Spanish humanitarian action has represented approximately 2% of the total Official Development Aid (ODA) compared to approximately the 7% average of member countries of the Development Assistance Committee (DAC). In this sense, our objective is to reach that figure. This would not only imply a relative increase with respect to total ODA, but also a significant increase in ODA as a whole, representing 0.5% of the total budget at the end of this legislature and 0.7% in 2012.

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This budget increase has permitted official humanitarian action to participate in “new” areas, as has happened over the last two years, for example, in Darfur, Sudan, and Sudanese refugee camps in Chad. The numerous projects financed in 2004 and 2005 totaled 7 million Euros and involved organisations such as the Spanish Red Cross, Action against Hunger, Intermón Oxfam, Doctors Without Borders, the World Food Programme, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), and UNICEF.

In 2006, two noteworthy contributions under the auspices of the Inter-ministerial Commission for International Development Cooperation (CIFAD) have included:

- 10 million dollars (8.2 million Euros) to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) Central Emergency Relief Fund (CERF); and
- 12 million Euros to the World Food Programme ad hoc Trust Fund.

CERF

CERF is the UN’s former Central Revolving Emergency Fund created in 1991 as a financial tool which UN agencies could turn to in order to respond to emergencies. The need to promote rapid and effective responses to the loss of human lives due to natural disasters and/or armed conflict as well as supporting chronic or forgotten crises mobilised the international community into creating a new fund, the United Nations Central Emergency Relief Fund (CERF), which was approved by the UN General Assembly on 15 December 2005. The current CERF still has a ‘revolving’ component representing 10% (50 million dollars) of its total budget, but the fund’s general nature (90% of the total budget) is fundamentally based on grants (450 million dollars). According to former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, ‘instead of waiting for the funds to arrive slowly, CERF funds will permit us to have the necessary personnel, goods and services available immediately wherever there are lives at risk’.

For this reason, the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation (MAEC) through the State Secretariat for International Cooperation (SECI) proposed financing Spain’s financial obligation to CERF (10 million dollars) through this year’s Development Aid Fund (DAF). The proposal was approved by the Council of Ministers on 28 July and took effect on 18 August of the same year.

Spain’s contribution to CERF is the seventh largest (behind the United Kingdom, Sweden, Norway, the Netherlands, Canada, and Ireland) and matches the amount announced by the United States. CERF is managed by OCHA on behalf of the UN Secretary General.

WFP TRUST FUND

SECI, as an adjunct organism to MAEC, proposed to the DAF Inter-ministerial Commission financing 12 million Euros through the FAD, this amount corresponding to Spain’s 2006 contribution to the WFP Trust Fund. This proposal was also approved by the Council of Ministers on 27 July and took effect on 18 August of the same year.

All of the above represents a change in trends. The essential criteria used to allocate funds now is to alleviate suffering among victims. Nevertheless, the legal guarantee to fulfil humanitarian principles is represented by the country’s signing of the 23 principles outlined in the “Good Humanitarian Donorship” (GHD) initiative as the backbone of our policies. Spain adhered to the GHD initiative in Ottawa in October 2004.

What mechanisms should be launched to harmonise the HA policies promoted by the different Public Administrations to guarantee that humanitarian principles are respected?

Over the last few years, Humanitarian Action has undergone many changes, especially HA's importance increase, coinciding with the appearance of decentralised local structures specialised in this area. The combination of these factors only reinforces the need to bolster coordination between all the actors. AECI is aware of this challenge and has mechanisms in place that contribute to the quality of HA. The Humanitarian Action Strategy takes this matter into account and urges steps be taken to improve this coordination.

AECI, as the agency responsible for coordinating Spanish Humanitarian Action, regularly collaborates with other actors, such as NGOs and Public Administrations. Meetings are systematically convened to prepare operations and, depending on the situation, these actors are involved in the actual implementation of operations.

One of the permanent structures created to guarantee co-participation among all the institutional actors is the Humanitarian Action Working Group of the Inter-territorial Commission, in which city halls, the Autonomous Communities, and provinces are all represented.

Lastly, we should not forget that for this cooperation to be more than just a programmatic declaration, the express commitment by the different agents, coordinators, and those being coordinated is needed in addition to their active participation.

Under what circumstances should military resources be used?

The existing doctrine in this matter is both broad and clear, especially as outlined in the "Oslo Guidelines" and the "Good Humanitarian Donorship Principles". The AECI can only assume these principles and adopt them to the specific actions it carries out. In the ordinary management of catastrophes, two areas of collaboration between the Ministry of Defence and AECI worth noting include:

- AECI's hangar in the Torrejón de Ardoz Air Force base, ceded by the Ministry of Defence: these facilities permit Humanitarian Aid to be managed more quickly and effectively in emergency situations in which AECI is directly involved. At the same time, this facility is cost effective, allowing the Agency to greatly reduce its costs.
- The use of Air Force transport facilities: this model is historically constant in AECI emergency operations. Recently, international charter services have also been used with good results in terms of cost and airplane capacities.

We are aware of the ongoing debate at the international level regarding the need to define and protect the limits of the humanitarian area. AECI, by its actions, aims to deepen the respectful coexistence between humanitarian and military factors by faithfully applying the relevant international agreements. At the same time, the Agency foments internal debate on the matter by participating in working groups created to this end and by organising seminars on civilian-military cooperation.

Creating a logistics hangar in Panama and giving the Technical Cooperation Offices (OTCs) a greater role will help harmonise even more, if possible, the participation of military planes in humanitarian operations.

Should NGOs meet specific requirements to receive funds specifically aimed at HA?

Humanitarian aid financed by AECI is financially linked to the Technical Office's funds and, within these, those belonging to the Food and Emergency Assistance Department.



In this sense, institutions (Spanish and/or foreign) have various funding options to carry out their humanitarian actions:

1. State Subventions:

Due to the increasing importance given to 'active, selective, and strategic' multilateralism within Spanish development cooperation, this instrument has been designed especially to finance multilateral institutions.

At the same time, public organisations in aid recipient countries can also receive state subventions. These organisations can belong to the recipient country's public administration or be managed locally, as well as local NGOs or other local (non-profit) institutions which carry out humanitarian aid actions in their countries of origin.

2. Permanent Open Tender Process (CAP):

This is the most commonly used means of financing for Spanish NGOs carrying out Humanitarian Action. Currently, it is complemented by other financial tools. The yearly process establishes the conditions required to participate, though these are not very restrictive.

3. AECI–Development NGO Agreement Tenders:

According to the AECI's presidency resolution of 28 February 2006 (published in the government's *Boletín Oficial del Estado* on 14 March 2006), 'subventions for development non-governmental organisations to carry out development agreements' will be convened, three of these being framed within humanitarian aid (despite being development agreements).

Later in the same year, the Order of 27 April (published in the *Boletín Oficial del Estado* on 12 May), establishes the bases for giving 'grants to development non-governmental organisations for their intervention in international development issues', thereby regulating both 'development cooperation agreements' and 'development cooperation projects'.

With respect to these agreements, the Order establishes that 'those development NGOs accredited by AECI as "qualifying NGDOs"' (5th requirement) and specifying the 'Procedures to be accredited as a qualifying development NGO' (6th requirement) in the following requirement may access this type of subvention.

After the initial period for NGOs to present their proposals to the AECI and their evaluation, at the moment these agreements between NGOs and the Agency are being defined.

4. Ordinary NGO Tenders:

While it is true that this annual process does not specifically identify a sectoral focus to finance humanitarian projects, the Spanish Master Plan Development Cooperation 2005-2008 does give greater relevance to fomenting social awareness and training and, in this respect, there are frequently more awareness and education projects (both formal and informal) in different areas of humanitarian aid (health, food assistance and security, among others).

5. Payment Orders to be Justified (MPJ):



This is an internal management procedure by which funds are transferred to an OTC for the latter to contract services or purchase goods locally which the AECI will then use to respond to humanitarian crises (faster and more effective than operations carried out from the Agency's headquarters). NGOs can access these funds through relevant contracts.

What functions should the AECI's new HA Unit have?

Two aspects will be reinforced with the reform process:

- Follow-up and evaluation, and
- Prevention, and, especially, preparation for and response to emergencies.

All this requires a profound change in the administrative structure managing humanitarian aid which will coincide with adapting AECI to the renewed concept of state agencies. Along with these radical changes, the Agency's logistical abilities will continue to be reinforced in order to be ever more autonomous and effective in its responses.

Foroaod – Spanish Development Aid

FRIDE organised the project "Spanish Development Aid - Mid-term Review and a Proposal for a Participative Consultation" between June 2006 and April 2007. This project aims to develop a consultation process about the current Spanish government's development cooperation policy. We have created a forum for participation and debate, in order to assess the Spanish development cooperation reform agenda and to identify the main achievements and shortcomings in operationalising the initiatives based on the principle of "More Aid, Better Aid". A set of recommendation guidelines were developed, through participative methods, with the objective of putting into practice the aspirations of the Spanish development cooperation policy.

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