

Introduction

Nature and more recently man often exhibits erratic, unpredictable behaviour. Volcanoes, earthquakes, hurricanes, floods, droughts, civil unrest's or wars can occur, sometimes striking swiftly and violently anywhere in the world and undermines entire populations. Such events and situations become realities time and time again, leaving helpless victims who must mend fractured communities and rebuild shattered lives. Rotarians recognise a shared responsibility to aid those who have suffered.

RIBI has a history of responding to the plight of disaster victims world wide providing relief funds, aid shipments and by working with other groups to help diffuse chaos in the emergency phase of the disaster and providing on- going assistance during the recovery and reconstruction phases that follow.

This information sheet concentrates on the practical aspects that can help Rotarians maximise the response to disasters. It also includes man-made disasters and famine type situations. It is specific to RIBI actions via the RIBI International Service Committee.

It includes information regarding prevention, being prepared and response (*including what not to do when disaster strikes*) and the post – disaster recovery stage.

Aid Agencies

As this document is directed to RIBI those Aid Agencies with contacts within Great Britain and Ireland that can be contacted to help with relief efforts have been included at the end of this information sheet.

Prevention

The concept of disaster prevention may be hard to imagine as they are usually caused by nature and can rarely be brought under human control.

Disaster prevention, does not address prevention of the disaster itself, but the prevention or reduction of the damage that follows.

Until a disaster occurs it is a "potential" occurrence that usually means there is ample time to organise or mobilise various factors that could alleviate the damage and save lives.

Planning in Cities and Rural Areas

Entire cities and towns have been totally destroyed when they are built in locations prone to disasters.

- Governments must be aware of particular areas where the risk of occurrence is high.
- Land developers must take into account topographic and climatic conditions when embarking on rural planning.

Improving Structural quality

The geography, topography and climate of specific types of region dictate that these will often be battered by the same natural phenomena.

- Structures should be built to withstand the elements where they are extreme.
- Community members can be taught the techniques for creating structures and enforcing building codes so that buildings will stand the extremes.

Government intervention and the state of the economy

Through legislation Governments can improve the living conditions and the infrastructure of their areas.

- A strong economy plays a major role in disaster prevention. Improved living conditions prior to the onset of a disaster can enable it to be dealt with more ably and quickly.
- It is essential that economies can be diversified. A community that depends on the profits of a single industry can find its economy destroyed by a single disaster.

Preparedness and Response

Being prepared and response go together, since being prepared means that you already have a chosen course of action in response to the situation that may arise. We offer suggestions that can be taken prior to and in the immediate aftermath of a disaster. They will also consider two perspectives: that of Rotarians whose own communities have been affected and that of Rotarians who wish to help other communities.

Within RIBI we have our limitations so whenever a disaster occurs, it is important to remember that the established relief organisations usually make assessments of damage and/or injury. Our response during the emergency phase or immediate aftermath should be gauged according to their assessments.

When your community has been affected

In the RIBI zones this will be dealt with by Community and Vocational Service

- Know in advance which organisations you will be working with. These may include health, humanitarian, government, or volunteer groups, at local, national or international level.
- Keep updated lists of the contacts for these organisations.
- Find out as soon as possible from these organisations what type of help is needed and how Rotary with our network of contacts can assist.

Have a procedure for communicating with other Rotary Clubs

- Establish a disaster group / committee to manage incoming funds and donations to ensure accountability.
 - Establish a liaison contact with other organisations, and help preparedness and response in the event of future disasters. In geographic areas where there is an on-going risk of disasters you may consider establishing a Disaster Relief Committee or becoming a representative for Rotary.
 - on a local committee which already exists.

When another community is affected

The first indication of a disaster will possibly come from the media or notification from an aid agency. It is important to establish what action is being taken through Rotary channels. This will, in the case of RIBI, come from the RIBI President, Chairman of the RIBI International Service Committee, or the RIBI Disaster Response Co-ordinator after having established information from the Aid Agencies who will quickly carry out an assessment of the immediate needs.

- It is at this stage when organisations such as International Rescue Corps could be involved and the Rotary Aqua, Emergency and Shelter Box organisations can start establishing needs and transport.
- Districts within RIBI will be notified of the agencies working in the affected area and if there are immediate need of funds or materials.
- Contact if possible will be established with Rotary District Governors in the affected area and given the names and locations of any aid agency that may need local support. This could include help with linguistics, logistics, geographic, transport, accommodation, materials, storage, evacuation plans, emergency shelter, medical assistance, communications or general administration.
- Communications will also be maintained with the aid agencies needing assistance.
- Unless it is a bona fide aid organisation please ensure you check with the International Community Service committee before making a donation.

What Not to Do

"Time is the most valuable and limited resource disaster relief managers have in any major disaster. Every moment counts. Human suffering increases whenever relief work is needlessly delayed The biggest waste of precious time we must invariably deal with in every disaster visible to the public is unsolicited, inappropriate and unneeded relief commodities"

- Andrew Natsios, *US. Officer of Foreign Disaster Assistance (1989 - 91)*

Within Rotary we have limitations and knowing them in relation to Disaster Response is essential. We should not attempt to replace the work done by existing aid agencies whose staff are trained to assess the situations and react to them in a professional manner. We should however maintain close contact with them to ensure we can provide appropriate support when needed.

RIBI International Service statement JULY 2002

No matter where in the world, or type of calamity in the period immediately after a disaster has struck, confusion and chaos reign. Victims may have to cope with loss of or separation from loved ones, destruction of property, displacement from homes and possible absence of services such as electricity, gas, water or sanitation systems.

The prime concern is ensuring survival, safety and health of as many people as possible. The next is to restore or repair the essential services such as electricity, gas, water or sanitation systems.

To achieve this it is imperative that relief workers be both organised and efficient and not hampered by good-hearted volunteers. Misguided actions, albeit well intentioned can cause life threatening delays, incur costs, and waste valuable time.

Do not send medical personnel to assist unless there has been a specific request from the agencies after carrying out their assessments.

Do not send goods when they are no longer needed. Again aid agencies can provide details of current needs and when to stop.

Do not send culturally or climatically inappropriate goods.

Do not send dirty, ripped clothing or unmarked unsorted goods. If items are requested they should be in good usable condition and in boxes clearly marked with the contents. (This is not a time to unload your unwanted rubbish!).

Do not send any goods without establishing the need through the International Service Committee or the aid agencies.

It is often more expensive to transport goods than for the agencies to purchase them locally.

Recovery, Repair and Reconstruction

With the advanced communication systems that transmit vivid images into millions of homes across the world, detailed coverage and reporting elicits an emotional and impulsive response.

After the news coverage stops, relief and rescue teams leave, and aid to victims begins to slow down, those living in the affected zones are left to face the tasks of rebuilding their lives, homes and communities.

For those who survive the initial impact picking up the pieces and trying to restore life to what it had been prior to a disaster is perhaps more difficult to achieve when the emotional from the heart support is gone.

Some of the tasks facing these communities are:

- Formulating plans for rebuilding - including how to rebuild so that vulnerability to future damage caused by the same type of disaster will decrease.
- Accounting for monies and donations
- Deciding how to spend and distribute monies and donations.
- Assessing unmet needs in the community
- Trying to fill in the gaps left by relief organisations.

The recovery phase may take months, even years. The Rotary network and vocations amongst its members, makes it a perfect organisation to aid in this recovery efforts.

Rotarians are encouraged to use RI's World Community Service program and The Rotary Foundations Simplified Grants Programs to support long-term projects to rebuild in the aftermath of a disaster.

Rapid Disaster Response

This is usually within the first 10 days when the risks to lives and suffering are the greatest.

Immediate response is usually action taken by districts/clubs and in the case of RIBI from information co-ordinated by the RIBI International Service Committee.

Information about the situation and needs generally made as a result of communications with the Aid Agencies and WCS.

Disaster Response - Communications and Actions Within RIBI

One member of the RIBI International Service Committee will be responsible for Disaster Response and act as co-ordinator.

The co-ordinator will monitor reports of major disasters via the media and contacts with the major aid agencies.

In the event of a disaster that is felt would benefit from Rotary support, the RIBI International Service Chairman will contact the RIBI President to agree the action to be taken.

This could be to establish an RIBI Appeal or give District Governors and District International Service Chairmen information regarding the action by aid agencies working in the affected area, thereby leaving it to Districts/Clubs to decide how they may contribute.

In the case of an RIBI appeal this will be dealt with by the RIBI Secretariat with the appropriate accountability requirements included.

The District International chairmen will be notified of the aid agencies work by e-mail or telephone as quickly as possible by the co-ordinator/RIBI International Service Committee Chairman.

The Rotary Box organisations will also be informed. However these organisations usually have their own contacts but will be kept informed of any action by the co-ordinator.

The contact with the aid agencies will continue in order to get up-to-date information and wherever possible details of their locations and contacts in the affected area. If specific on-site support is required contact will be made with districts/clubs in the effected area to pass this information on, so they may assist if required.

The International Service Committee and District Chairmen will be kept informed as the situation develops. This will usually be for the first ten days. Following that period consideration then has to be given to the Recovery, Repair and Reconstruction phase.

This will require longer term planning and will be subject to discussions with the RIBI President.

Be Prepared and Keep Safe

Disaster Relief Organisations and Contacts

Details given below are some organisations that provide various types of international aid for disasters.

RIBI neither endorses the organisations nor assumes responsibility for their performance.

Disaster Emergency Committee

The DEC and its members work to improve the standard and best practices in Humanitarian Relief. At the end of each appeal the DEC assesses the performance of its members use of funds received. The membership consists of the following Agencies:-

ActionAID	Help the Aged
British Red Cross	Merlin
CAFOD	Oxfam
Care International	Save the Children
Christian Aid	Tearfund
Concern	World Vision
Christian Children's Fund of GB	

Rotary Organisations

These organisations are also managed by Rotarians. All these boxes save lives and by filling them or making a financial contribution to the organisations you are helping by being prepared.

Rotary Shelter Box

Shelter Box Trust
Unit 1a, Water Ma Trout Estate, Helston, TR13 8TA
Tel: 01326 569782
E-mail: tomh@shelterbox.org
Website: www.shelterbox.org

Rotary Aquabox

Aquabox
PO Box 5398, Matlock, Derbyshire, DE4 4ZP
Tel: 01629 825178 (Helpline)
E-mail: Aquabox@plusnet.com
Website: www.aquabox.org

Rotary Emergency Box

Mike Davies ([General Information](#))
25 Taunton Road, Ashton-under-Lyne, Lancs, OL7 9DP
Tel: 0161 612 6822
E-mail: mikate@ntlworld.com

Contacts/Co-ordinators for clubs A - K

Vince or Brenda Robinson
Two Trees Press, Grey Street
Denton, Manchester, M34 3RU
Tel: 0161 320 8640
Fax: 0161 325 0346
E-mail: print@twotreespress.co.uk

Contacts/Co-ordinators for clubs L - Z

John Steward
Farebrother Group, Millennium House, Progress Way,
Denton, Manchester, M34 2GP
Tel: 0161 320 0056
Fax: 0161 320 5010
E-mail: john.steward@ukonline.co.uk

Disaster Response Organisations

There are many organisations in the field of providing response to disasters, including pre-planning, rapid disaster response, refugee support as well as aspects of repair, rebuilding and restoration. The agencies listed here have a well known record of carrying out their work professionally and effectively in one or more of the aspects of Disaster Relief.

When a disaster occurs contact will be made by RIBI with these organisations to obtain their involvement and provide this information to districts to enable them to consider support they may give.

RIBI Contacts for Disaster Response

Name: Iain Young
Address: 6 Waulkmill, Letham Grange,
ARBROATH, Angus, DD11 4QU
Tel: 01241 890200
Mob: 07798 730296
E-mail: iain.young.rotary@btinternet.com

If you are unable to contact the above please contact:-

Name: To be advised
Address:
Tel:
E-mail:

International Rescue Corps (See also Project Library Sheet)

Provide a fast response search and rescue service to any country, individual or victims of disasters, natural or man-made in the UK and elsewhere in the world, regardless of race, religion or any other consideration. Relieve poverty and promote the health and safety of persons by initiating or supporting humanitarian projects to be offered to foreign countries and/or specialist agencies to enable them to respond swiftly to adversity. Telephone manned 24 hours through any mission.

Contact

Name: Anne Marie MacDonald
Address: International Rescue Corps,
Office 2b, 1Kerse Road,
Grangemouth, FK3 8HW

Tel: 01324 665011
E-mail: Intrescue@aol.com

Merlin (Medical Relief International)

Merlin is a UK-based charity, providing health care to people in crises, regardless of gender, nationality, race, religion or political affiliation.

Formed in 1993, Merlin has worked in 30 countries worldwide, is currently working in 12 countries and has 47 live programmes. Merlin's key objectives are to:-

- promote the provision of healthcare services and advance the skills of UK professionals in the fields of public health, infectious disease control and project management
- provide access to health care for vulnerable people affected by disasters, war, famine and poverty
- help control diseases such as malaria, TB and Lassa fever, which may have serious detrimental effects on economic development

- work with local health providers to improve health care through training, use of appropriate clinical resources and provision of social and psychological support
- help rehabilitate health infrastructure where it has been lost as a result of conflict or natural disasters
- help train vulnerable communities in the principles of disease prevention, hygiene and reproductive health
- work with national and international partners to assist local capacity building in the health sector

Contact

Liz Graham
Merlin
5-13 Trinity Street
London, SE1 1DB

Tel: 020 7065 0832 (direct line)
020 7065 0800 (HQ)
Fax: 020 7065 0801
E-mail: liz.graham@merlin.org.uk
hq@merlin.org.uk
Website: www.merlin.org.uk

RedR

RedR is a humanitarian organisation which relieves suffering caused by disasters by selecting, training and providing competent and committed personnel to humanitarian programmes worldwide. While it does not run disaster relief projects itself, several hundred of its members work with field agencies and RedR maintains a pool of skilled people which can be mobilised rapidly in an emergency. It provides training for about 1,000 relief workers annually, in the UK and in many parts of Africa, Asia, South America, Eastern Europe, Balkans etc.

Contact

Name: Bobby Lambert Director
Address: RedR
1 Great George Street
London, SW1P 3AA

Tel: 0207 233 3116
E-mail: info@redr.org
Website: www.redr.org

Feed the Children (See also project library sheet)

Feed The Children, established in 1979, is a worldwide organisation. Its programmes in 18 countries reflect its child centred aid philosophy through nutrition, health and education.

The UK branch of the aid agency has forged a reputation for its emergency response – the direct and effective delivery of food, shelter and other life saving aid, out of its supply centres in Berkshire and Bristol. It was the first agency to fly in supplies to north-west Afghanistan during the crisis at the end of 2001 and previously despatched millions of pounds worth of donated goods to Bosnia and Kosovo during the conflicts there, as well as responding to the floods in Mozambique. Currently delivering aid to Iraq and Liberia.

Feed The Children (UK)'s policy is to seek free goods, as identified as appropriate. At all times the delivery of aid from the UK must be economically viable.

The charity has an in-depth knowledge of local community involvement in the whole aid process, from the procurement of the donated goods from companies, individuals, schools, churches and organisations such as Rotary, to that of volunteer commitment to packing aid and administrative tasks.

Contact

Name: Brian Main
Chief Executive
Address: Feed The Children Int. (UK)
2 Tavistock Industrial Estate
Ruscombe Lane, Twyford
Berks RG10 9NJ
Tel: 0118 932 0095
Fax: 0118 934 4957
E-mail: info@feedthechildren.co.uk
Website: www.feedthechildren.org.uk

Save the Children

Save the Children works in the UK and across the world. Emergency relief runs alongside long-term development and prevention work to help children, their families and communities to be self-sufficient. Save the Children learn from the reality of children's lives and campaign for solutions to the problems they face. It gains expertise through its projects around the world and uses that knowledge to educate and advise others.

All work is underpinned by Save the Children's commitment to making a reality of the rights of children, first spelled out by its founders and now enshrined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

All children deserve the best start in life – children have the right to live in a world where they have hope and opportunity. Children need special care and assistance, without which they cannot fully develop their potential.

Contact

Name: Adrian Uden
Overseas Supplies
Address: Save the Children
1 St John's Lane
London, EC1M 4AR
Tel: 0207 012 6400
Fax: 0207 012 6963
E-mail: a.uden@savethechildren.org.uk
Website: www.savethechildren.org.uk

UNICEF

UNICEF, the United Nations Children's Fund, is a global champion for children's rights, which makes a lasting difference by working with communities and influencing governments.

UNICEF works in over 158 countries and territories to fulfil children's rights to health and nutrition, education, emergency relief, protection, and water and sanitation. By working in partnership with others, from governments and teachers to youth groups and mothers, UNICEF is a driving force for people throughout the world working to ensure a better future for children.

UNICEF is unique within the United Nations family in that it receives no statutory UN funding - it is funded entirely by voluntary contributions from governments, the public and greeting card sales. As a result, UNICEF is regarded as a distinct entity in itself.

UNICEF UK was established in 1956 and is one of 37 National committees for UNICEF based in industrialised countries.

Contact

Name: Frances Merivale, Regional
Fundraising Development Manager
Address: UNICEF UK
Africa House, 64-78 Kingsway
London, WC2B 6NB
Tel: 020 7312 7629
E-mail: francesm@unicef.org.uk
Website: www.unicef.org.uk

British Red Cross

The British Red Cross is part of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, the world's largest independent humanitarian organisation. When disaster strikes anywhere in the world, the Red Cross is ready to help. The British Red Cross also works with local communities overseas to help them prepare for potential disasters and emergencies.

Contact

Name: Mike Goodhand
Address: British Red Cross
9 Grosvenor Crescent
London, SW1X 7EJ
Tel: 020 7201 5101
E-mail: rngoodhand@redcross.org.uk

RAPID-UK

RAPID-UK is an acronym for Rescue And Preparedness In Disasters – and NGO – Non Governmental Organisation run entirely by unpaid volunteers.

The capabilities of RAPID-UK are: to provide search and rescue teams, search and rescue dogs and a marine section for major flooding.

They also carry out worldwide training programmes in urban search and rescue and awareness programmes.

Contact

Name: Graham Payne, Director
Address: RAPID-UK (registered Office)
Beech Lodge, Jacobstowe
Okehampton, Devon, EX20 3RG
Tel: 01837 851443
E-mail: G.F.Payne@btinternet.com
Website: www.rapidsar.org.uk

Name: John Holland, Operational Director
Address: RAPID-UK Operational HQ
Unit 13, HQ Site
RAF Quedgeley, Naas Lane
Quedgeley, Gloucestershire
Tel: 01452 883233

ROTARY (D.1030) AQUA FILTER
(See also Project Library Sheet)

Contact:

Name: Rtn George Craig
Tel: 0191 488 5715
E-mail: george@whickham37.wanadoo.co.uk
Website: www.rotary-aquafilter.org.uk

BLYTHSWOOD CARE

Contact:

Name: Phil Shorthouse (Regional Manager)
Address: Blythswood Care
29 Laker Road
Rochester
Kent, ME1 3QX

Tel: 01634 681000
Fax: 01634 684443
Mob: 07747 012410
E-mail: philshorthouse@blythswood.org
Website: www.blythswood.org.uk

INTERNATIONAL AID TRUST

(See also Project Library Sheet)

Contact:

Name: Rtn Rev. Bernard Cocker
Address: International Aid Trust
Longton Business Park
Station Road
Much Hoole
Preston, Lancs, PR4 5LE

Tel: 01772 611000
Fax: 01772 619933
E-mail: logos@internationalaidtrust.org.uk
Website: www.internationalaidtrust.org.uk