



## Belgium - Consortium 12-12

### NATIONAL POPULATION

**10.8 million**

### STAFF SIZE

**0.25 FTE** (up to 3 when appeal running)

### YEAR OF FOUNDATION

**1979** (informal),  
**2005** (formal)

### LIST OF MEMBERS

|                       |                                |              |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------|--------------|
| Unicef Belgium        | Handicap International Belgium | Plan Belgium |
| Caritas International | Doctors of the World (MdM)     |              |
| Oxfam Solidarity      |                                |              |

### History

Consortium 12-12 has grown from an informal cooperation structure addressing the humanitarian disaster in Cambodia in 1979, to a common bank number (giro 12-12) for the 1984-1985 famines in Africa, to a formal structure in 2005. In 2005 revenues of the Asian Tsunami appeal increased to a point that informal cooperation was no longer justified from a legal perspective. The Belgian Consortium 12-12 currently has 6 members; Unicef Belgium, Caritas International, Oxfam Solidarity, Handicap International Belgium, 'Doctors of the World', and recently Plan Belgium joined.

### Organization

Consortium 12-12 has a light structure. There is no standing secretariat or staff apart from the Director and an accountant. It's actions and

activities are governed by a council and a the director, assisted by a permanent contactgroup of the members. The members organizations of the Consortium contribute indirectly to the administrative and fundraising costs, which do not rise above 2,5% (excluding contributions of member organizations). A crisis coordination committee consisting of representatives of the member organizations decides on the launch of an appeal on the basis of three factors; the severity of a disaster, the capacity of its member organizations to respond and the estimated willingness of the public to contribute. The governance board validates the decision to launch an appeal. Resources are distributed through a partition mechanism based on each members' private fundraising of the last three years (excluding Consortium resources). Of every appeal a financial report is submitted to the Belgian Ministry of Finance. In addition other auditing

and reporting is done on a regular basis. Reports are published on the website.

### Fundraising

The Consortium has a good relationship with Belgian public radio and television although no formal mechanism is in place. In the event of apparent disasters both the Consortium and the media keep in touch to judge the opportunity to launch an appeal. It may happen that only the Flemish media will participate. Commercial media generally follows public media in supporting the appeal. Media partners usually make a 30 second media clip for distribution. The Consortium does not start up a full campaign (public posters, mailings etc.), but aims to keep costs as low as possible by working and engaging with (media) partners almost entirely pro bono. Although online donations are important (15%),

there is no pro active online strategy as it does not directly generate more funding. An important contribution is made by local communities such as schools, neighbourhoods, companies or even individual families organizing activities for fundraising. This is something to strengthen and support through social media strategies. Provinces and municipalities are also important donors.

### **Major successes, highlights**

The Asian Tsunami appeal was the most successful, 55 million euros were raised. Also the appeal for Kosovo and the Balkans in 1999 has been important as a call centre was first tested which the public could call for information, register (fundraising) activities and donate directly. This has now evolved to

online registrations and donations. A modest success has been the Syria appeal, though a difficult decision as the willingness of the public to contribute was not estimated high, an appeal was launched nevertheless. In combination with the Philippines appeal, launched in November 2013, quite a few donors made a double donation.

### **Partnerships**

The Consortium has no specific strategy regarding corporate partnerships or sponsorships. It is somewhat complex to engage proactively in such partnerships as there may need to be sign offs for which the Consortium has no mandate. One of the members organizations of the Consortium is usually appointed to reach out to the corporate sector.

### **Challenges and innovations for the future**

The most important challenge remains how to proportion the different appeals. There is the risk of the loss of interest in humanitarian disasters and of support by media when appeals are made too often. A balance must be found between launching appeals in response to serious humanitarian disasters and keeping the public highly involved and interested. It would be worth looking into a model with different degrees of an appeal in order to ask for contributions without the full blown activities and scale of a nation wide appeal.



Photography by Mubashar Hasan/Oxfam