



United Kingdom - Disasters Emergency Committee

NATIONAL POPULATION

62.8 million

YEAR OF FOUNDATION

1963

STAFF SIZE

13

LIST OF MEMBERS

ActionAid	Christian Aid	Save the Children
Age International	Concern Worldwide UK	Tearfund
British Red Cross	Islamic Relief	World Vision
CAFOD	Oxfam	
Care International UK	Plan UK	

KEY PRIVATE SECTOR PARTNERS

Rapid Response Network:

Barclays, BBC, The Big Give, British Bankers' Association, BT, The

Co-operative Bank, Channel 4, Community Channel, FIVE, HSBC, ITN, ITV, Just Giving, NewsNow, Ogilvy & Mather, Post Office,

PayPal, Radio Centre, Royal Bank of Scotland, S4C, Sky, Transport for London, World Pay

History

The DEC was formed when several organizations started coordinating their activities in 1963 and launched their first appeal after the 1966 earthquake in Turkey. Since it started the DEC has launched 64 appeals and raised 1.1 billion pounds. Since its early days the DEC has had a strong relationship with the major broadcasters, which is part of its success. The DEC has well worked out procedures and a strong brand in the UK and amongst humanitarian stakeholders worldwide.

Organization

The DEC currently has 13 member agencies. Next to member CEOs, there are six independent trustees on the board. They are chosen for their capacities in finance, politics or media that fill the gaps in knowledge or networks. Aspiring members are welcome to apply, provided they are able to meet the membership criteria. The DEC secretariat consists of a staff of 13, along with regular volunteers. Allocation of funds is based on member agencies' ability to raise income from their donors and the capacity to spend it in vulnerable countries. This way a fair and transparent allocation

is guaranteed. Accountability and transparency are ensured through the DEC Accountability Framework that includes regular appeal reports, independent evaluations and annual assessments. Together with the Humanitarian Coalition of Canada evaluations or 'response reviews' have been done for the East Africa and Philippines disasters. It would be very useful if other EAA members were able to join such evaluations: important benefits are that costs can be shared and learning can be disseminated to a wider audience as well as being less disruptive for colleagues in the field as they only have to receive one such mission.

Fundraising

Members can opt in or out of responding to a crisis for which the DEC is appealing, but must promote and support the appeal. When the DEC trustees decide to launch an appeal the Rapid Response Network is alerted. This is a unique network of corporate and broadcasting sector partners who are essential in quickly reaching out to the British public. DEC works with five national broadcasters and the 'white listed' national newspapers. In addition DEC member organizations have their own activities towards their constituencies and local news outlets. Clearly digital media is a strong and growing channel as currently most people get news through a mobile or digital device. DEC asks its supporters to reach out to their personal networks and uses social media such as Facebook and Twitter to inform and interact with supporters on the progress of the humanitarian relief effort. Approximately half of the income now comes through online channels, such as the website or text giving. Importantly, the UK government has recently matched the funds received for the Philippines (5 million pounds) and Gaza (2 million pounds) appeals. This is an incentive for the public as it demonstrates support from the government. It also recognizes a certain indication as to how a portion of tax money would be spent.

Major successes, highlights

Success is achieved by being very careful about launching an appeal. Over the years there have been on average 1.5 or 2 appeals per year at the most. The public remains very generous and positive, they really value that aid agencies come together and they see the appeal everywhere. The 'one stop shop' idea is quick and appreciated. The speed with which an appeal is launched is a good way of encouraging people and this is due to DEC's high level relationships with all of the five major broadcasting partners. The most important recent success is how quickly money is raised as well as donations growing larger; 13 million pounds in 24 hours for the Philippines, mostly online. The benefits are that it is making aid more efficient, people in the field can initiate programmes right away and members have more flexibility in spending the money effectively.

Partnerships

The partnership with all major broadcasters is at the centre of reaching the public. Corporations approach DEC during appeals, offering financial, logistical or other support. Recently a High Value Partnership Manager was hired and DEC is pro actively pursuing such partnerships. There are two goals, firstly fundraising, including support from employees, and secondly to

find partners for the Rapid Response Network which have skills that can help DEC better reach the British public. An example is BT, their 'my donate' platform is used and they also support call centres.

Challenges and innovations for the future

The biggest challenge is how to respond to slow onset crises, which are often related to drought and food security. The level of need is huge, but there is little in the news. Conflicts are another challenge as they risk splitting public opinion. It is necessary to find ways to raise awareness for slow burn disasters. DEC is exploring with creative media partners how documentaries or other programming might contribute to this. DEC also reaches out to corporate partners that can help raise funds more quickly, especially in the digital field. Online presence and activity is a major strategy. It includes adapting the DEC website in order to better engage and share with the public, reaching out on Facebook and Twitter in order to report progress and be accountable to the public, as well as paid advertising such as pay per click.