

EFFECTIVE EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE

Guide for Disaster Relief Donations

2011



SPONSOR

As insurer and asset manager Allianz SE is preparing for more frequently occurring natural disasters. However, our financial solutions do not always reach the people most affected by these disasters as they lack access to basic insurance. Instead, they rely on donations and aid to help them recover. Together with our partners, and through sharing our knowledge, we want to help donors to use funds more effectively for disaster relief and prevention.

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PURPOSE

The number and severity of natural catastrophes is constantly on the rise: in the last thirty years, the number of people affected by these catastrophes across the globe has increased by around 250 million to around 1.5 billion. Humans are partly to blame for this sustained trend: in addition to climate change, global population growth and increasing urbanization are resulting in an ever-greater number of victims and increasing economic damage. People living in countries with low and mid-range incomes (up to 2 US dollars per capita and per

day) are increasingly the hardest hit; this is where natural catastrophes claim the largest number of fatalities. This is not only due to the climatic conditions in these countries. After all, much of the damage and the victims are concentrated in areas that lack the right preventative and protection mechanisms, or where poor building standards exacerbate the impact of natural disasters. This is why in Haiti, for example, the 2010 earthquake proved to be as devastating as it was.

Confronted with this trend, many people feel the need to provide the victims with fast and effective support. This sort of support is generally provided in the form of donations. Such type of commitment is made in the hope that the aid organizations will use the funds entrusted to them effectively, so as to reap the maximum benefits for the local population. But donors cannot always be sure that the funds will be used as they intended. A lack of awareness of the local situation, isolated "donation scandals" and fear that the funds will be used merely to finance large-scale bureaucratic structures have created a mood of uncertainty.

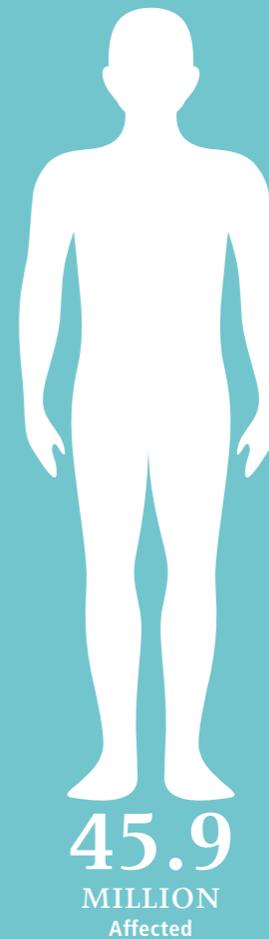
The advice contained in this document aims to combat this uncertainty. It provides useful information and guidelines for donors and companies that want their invested resources to be put to good use. Some of the pieces of advice are easy to put into practice, while others require a certain degree of time and interest. The guidelines aim to inspire more conscious, strategic donations, thus enhancing the impact of each and every donation on the individuals involved.

"FROM A SINGLE DONOR TO A LARGE CORPORATION, EVERYONE CAN MAKE ONE'S OWN CONTRIBUTION TO DISASTER RELIEF. THIS GUIDE PROVIDES SUPPORT FOR THAT PURPOSE. ADDITIONALLY, IT ILLUSTRATES HOW DONORS CAN TURN THEIR COMPASSION AND WILLINGNESS TO HELP INTO EFFECTIVE AID FOR AFFECTED PEOPLE."

Philipp Hoelscher, PHINEO expert for disaster relief

SOME FIGURES ON DISASTER RELIEF

This info graphic illustrates the comparison between the number of affected people of different disasters respective to the sum of donations. Sources: EM-DAT, OCHA FTS, VENRO



FLOODING OF THE RIVER ELBE
Germany 2002

TSUNAMI
Indian Ocean 2004

CYCLON NARGIS
Myanmar 2008

SZETCHUAN EARTHQUAKE
China 2008

CHALLENGES FACING DONORS

Anyone who wants to make an effective donation for disaster relief faces a number of challenges.

After all, the areas affected tend to be situations in far-flung places. This physical distance means that donors have to be able to rely on the aid organizations they choose and on the quality of their work. What is more, donors tend to rely on the media to report on catastrophes in other countries.

This results in something known as the “CNN effect”: isolated catastrophes are thrust into the public eye because they make for a good story. Others, on the other hand, go unnoticed, often in spite of a large number of victims. If, for example, a catastrophe has occurred in a mountainous area that is difficult for camera crews to reach, this has an impact on how the disaster is reported. This ultimately means that many regions miss out on donations that they urgently require – others are inundated with funds that can never entirely be put to good use.

The large sums of money involved make disaster relief an attractive market where countless providers vie for potential donors. This is why, sometimes, help tends to go to the places in which the assistance is most visible. After all, in order to attract attention, organizations have to present themselves to donors in the media in a manner that gives them advertising appeal. The sort of emotional engineering that often takes place within this context poses a further challenge to impact-oriented donors. As natural as the spontaneous urge to send help fast may be – it pays off to donate with a cool head.

Unfortunately, the size of the market and lack of control mechanisms also mean that an isolated number of “black sheep” are to be found among the many serious aid organizations. On the following pages, we will explain how donors can tackle these and other challenges.

“WHEN CONFRONTED WITH ISSUES LIKE THESE DONORS WILL HAVE TO TRY AND DISTINGUISH BETWEEN ENTERTAINMENT AIMED AT BOOSTING RATINGS AND FACTUAL INFORMATION. THE RULES AND LAWS OF THE MEDIA ARE AIMED AT SELLING INFORMATION TO AS MANY CLIENTS AS POSSIBLE. THIS IS A REALITY THAT BOTH THE GENERAL PUBLIC AND AID ORGANIZATIONS WILL HAVE TO LEARN TO DEAL WITH.”

Richard Munz, “Im Zentrum der Katastrophe”

"CLIMATE CHANGE IS ANTI-SOCIAL" - CLIMATOLOGIST MOJIB LATIF ON FUTURE NATURAL CATASTROPHES

WILL CLIMATE CHANGE EXACERBATE NATURAL CATASTROPHES IN THE YEARS TO COME?

It is, in fact, true that we can expect to see more, and more severe natural catastrophes in the future. In this respect, we are looking at a time-scale of decades as opposed to years because the impact of climate change is a gradual one. In the worst-case scenario, the global climate could be 4 degrees warmer than it is today by the end of the century. By way of comparison, in the 20th century, temperatures rose by only 0.7 degrees. If this scenario materializes, conditions would be completely different to those we are used to today, especially as far as natural catastrophes are concerned.

TODAY, WE CAN ALREADY SEE AN INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF NATURAL CATASTROPHES. IS CLIMATE CHANGE ALREADY HAVING AN IMPACT?

Obviously, it is also true that the records available to us today are better than they were in the past. Nevertheless, the increase is already partly due to climate change. The unfair fact is that the countries that have hardly contributed anything to the greenhouse effect, countries like Bangladesh, will be hit the hardest. In this respect, you could say that climate change is "anti-social".

SO CAN WE FORECAST WHICH REGIONS WILL BE HIT PARTICULARLY HARD IN THE FUTURE?

Climate change will also have an impact on Europe. The impact on tropical regions will be particularly pronounced. Even an increase in temperatures of only a few tenths of a degree will result in a huge increase in precipitation.

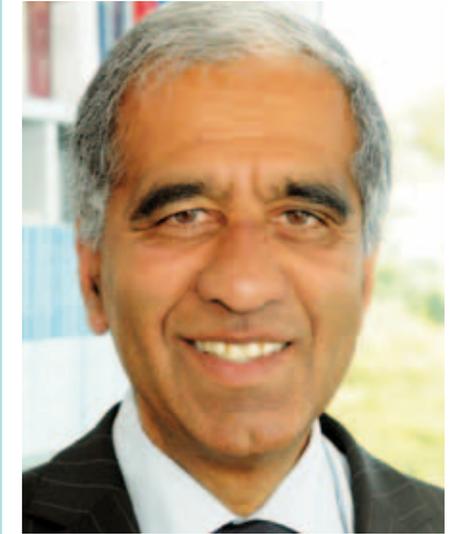
DOES THIS MEAN THAT WE WILL SEE MORE FLOODS, IN PARTICULAR, IN THE FUTURE?

This is certainly true of tropical areas. The subtropical regions, on the other hand, will be affected more by drought. In other words, those areas

that are already experiencing a lot of rain will experience even more rain – where there is a shortage of water, this shortage looks set to become more acute. Although the flood in Pakistan in 2010 was not directly attributable to climate change, it showed us what climate change is capable of. If you compare this flood with the flood that hit Australia shortly afterwards, it also becomes clear that poorer countries are less able to protect themselves from the impact of natural disasters.

GIVEN THIS TREND, WOULD IT MAKE SENSE FOR COMPANIES TO FOCUS THEIR AID STRATEGY ON CERTAIN REGIONS AND TYPES OF CATASTROPHE AT AN EARLY STAGE?

I think that the time frame we are looking at here is a little too long for this sort of strategy. Obviously, however, these trends can serve as something of a guide.



Prof. Dr. Mojib Latif manages the Ocean Circulation and Climate Dynamics research group at the Leibniz Institute of Marine Sciences at the University of Kiel.

MAKING A DONATION – BUT HOW?

What should you bear in mind when making disaster relief donations? The following pages show you how you can make targeted, effective donations.

MAKING A WELL-CONSIDERED DECISION

As a donor, never let anyone put you under pressure – be it using advertising, phone calls or fundraisers who turn up at your door and try to convince you. Your decision to donate should be a voluntary one, so take your time before you make a final decision. Many aid organizations have already set up reserves, allowing them to take initial measures on their own steam.

AVOID EARMARKED DONATIONS

Try not to specify a narrow purpose in your bank transfer form (e.g. “Emergency aid for flood in Pakistan”). Specifying this sort of information means that aid organizations are obliged to use the funds solely for the purpose stated. In the case of catastrophes with a particularly high media profile, aid organizations sometimes receive so many donations that they end up with funds that are surplus to requirements and that could be used better in less known crisis regions. Did you choose a particular organization because you trust it? Then trust its expertise when it comes to using the money in the way that will help the victims best. You can do this by mak-

ing a donation without specifying the purpose.

SUPPORT EFFICIENCY

Costs are incurred for every donation, for example for bank processing costs or the administrative costs incurred by the organizations in question. As a result, it makes more sense to make one larger donation as opposed to donating several small amounts. Paying by direct debit is less expensive than donating by credit card.

BE MINDFUL OF THE IMPACT

The recipients of your donation should be able to prove a successful track record with similar projects in the past. Independent evaluations published on organizations’ websites are particularly valuable in this respect. If you plan to donate a larger amount, you should ask your chosen aid organization to explain how the donation will be used and what impact it will have.

DONATE MONEY

Clothes, blankets, food – although in-kind contributions are popular, they tend to cause more problems than they solve. After all, sorting and transporting these items is an expensive business. The containers filled with in-kind contributions put pressure on marine and air cargo capacities, meaning that vital medical deliveries can suffer. What is more, aid organizations

DEFINITION

Large donations: There is no fixed definition of a “large donation” – every donor and every aid organization has different standards. It is often the case, however, that donations of four-digit figures or greater are referred to as large donations. For example, in 2009, the average amount of each individual donation in Germany came in at EUR 165 according to the GfK Charity Scope.

can often buy goods at lower prices on the local market using donated funds, boosting the local economy at the same time. This means that monetary donations to aid organizations are almost always more useful. After all, the experts know better than anyone else what is needed!

ASK QUESTIONS ACTIVELY

As a donor, you should feel that your questions are welcome. Especially if you are donating a more substantial amount of money, PHINEO recommends that you clarify any unresolved questions with your aid organization on the telephone. Many organizations offer their own donor service for questions like these.

CHOOSE THE RIGHT MOMENT TO DONATE

Dramatic pictures on television make us want to help as soon as possible. Donations can, however, be particularly effective when the public attention has died down again. This can help bridge the financing gaps between emergency aid and development cooperation. One option would therefore be to transfer the amount at a later date or to donate money to an organization on a regular basis. A donation for preventative measures can be particularly worthwhile. You can do this – as an exception – by specifying a corresponding purpose for your donation. According to figures released by the World Bank, one euro

EXAMPLE

In-kind contributions with negative impact: Haiti 2010 – the country is in urgent need of aid workers and medication following the earthquake. But the deliveries are delayed. This is because containers of second-hand shoes or teddy bears, donated with the best of intentions, are putting pressure on the unloading capacities of the airport in Port-au-Prince. Some crates contain food that has since rotten, or medication that has been donated is only labeled in German, meaning that it is of no use to the victims. This means that these in-kind contributions ultimately cause more harm than good.

donated for preventative measures can be up to seven times more effective than an emergency aid donation! Many organizations are active in both areas.

CONSIDER ALTERNATIVES

When major natural catastrophes occur, organizations that collect donations often amass a lot of money within a short space of time. If you do not want to follow the crowd, there are other options that also have a positive impact in the long run, for example, you can provide aid organizations with a larger donation for use in evaluating their work, or financing research work on catastrophe prevention.

LINKS FOR MORE INFORMATION

You can find more tips on making effective donations on www.phineo.org/services/10-tips/ and www.philanthropycapital.org/

FAST HELP? THE FIRST STEPS TAKEN BY AID ORGANIZATIONS

Things have to move fast after a natural catastrophe. The next paragraphs explain which measures aid organizations take before they reach the affected area and are ready to provide assistance.

Usually, it takes a few days for professional help to reach the victims. In order to collect information on the scale of the catastrophe and the most pressing needs, many aid organizations start by sending a reconnaissance team to the region affected.

At the same time, the organization starts to target the general public to raise awareness for the situation. These reconnaissance measures take a few days – organizations that were already in the country prior to the catastrophe, or who have reliable local partners, are at an advantage. They can get to work on identifying the basic needs of the local population in terms of medical treatment, potable water and sanitary products early on.

As soon as it is clear what is needed, the organizations start initiating aid measures in their home countries. Flights have to be organized and aid resources have to be acquired and loaded. Although inexperienced volunteers could soon make their way to the region affected, effective help can only be provided with a team of qualified experts. It can take another few days to mobilize these experts, as they may have to be released from their normal duties by their employers. If the focus is on disease prevention, it is experts for water or sanitary

equipment who are needed. If a large number of people have been injured, organizations require more medical staff. Then there are the logistics professionals who will be responsible for coordinating the transportation of the aid resources and field staff.

So the preparatory stage involves a considerable amount of time and effort. This is why professional organizations have standardized processes in place. Nevertheless, the situation in the crisis area is often chaotic – hundreds of different aid

organizations and volunteers in the area within a short space of time, along with hoards of journalists. It is usually the case that the most urgent measures have already been taken by the local people themselves in the hours following the catastrophe. This means that the aid workers now have to get their bearings in the midst of the chaos, understand the coordination mechanisms and focus on the areas where they are really needed. It is only now that they can start setting up mobile hospitals or provide potable water, for example.

MAKING A DONATION – BUT TO WHOM?

Strategic donations are all about choosing the right aid organization. The following guidelines are helpful in this respect:

TRANSPARENCY

The organization is a recognized charity and can prove this with an exemption notice issued by the tax authorities. It publishes annual activity reports and relevant financial data.

ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS

Professional work does not come for free. Good training for aid workers costs money, as do storage facilities for tents and equipment that ensure immediate availability. Consequently, it is only logical that part of your

donation should be invested in the recipient's administrative structure. If an organization claims that 100 percent of the amount donated will go towards the organization's projects, this may indicate a lack of integrity. As a rule of thumb, it is fair to assume that between 10 and 30 percent can be used to cover administrative expenses.

SEALS AND QUALITY STANDARDS

Make sure that aid organizations highlight their commitment to certain quality standards on their website. These include the German DZI donation seal, the American Charity Navigator or the Red Cross' Code of Con-

duct (see "Glossary"). Check if your country has an equivalent to that.

PRIVATE OR STATE RUN?

In addition to private aid organizations, United Nations organizations (e.g. UNICEF, UNHCR) also accept donations. These organizations often cooperate with the government of the affected country in order to strengthen state structures, which plays a key role in long-term reconstruction plans. The disadvantage with these organizations, compared with their private counterparts, is that the administrative costs are usually higher.

LONG-TERM STRUCTURES

Aid organizations can provide particularly effective support if they were already in the country working on long-term aid projects prior to the catastrophe. This is because these organizations are familiar with the country and its people. Look for references to this effect in project reports or on aid organizations' websites.

COORDINATION

The large number of aid workers in the disaster area makes coordination essential. Check with your aid organization if they work in collaboration with others. An important coordination mechanism for example is organized by the UN Office for the

coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA).

STRENGTHENING LOCAL CAPACITIES

People in areas hit by a catastrophe usually know better than anyone else what has to be done first. As a result, you should try to donate to organizations that cooperate with local partner organizations and highlight this on their website.

BACKGROUND

Controversial aid: Emergency and development aid is certainly a controversial issue – particularly when provided to countries with unstable or authoritarian political systems. Potential donors should be aware that their money may have unintended effects such as strengthening a corrupt local elite. They should try to make sure that funds reach the people in need.

“DONORS SHOULD ASSUME RESPONSIBILITY” – LINDA POLMAN ON DONATIONS AND DISASTER RELIEF

WHAT SHOULD DONORS WHO WANT TO PROVIDE DISASTER RELIEF BE AWARE OF?

The background: disaster relief has become an industry in its own right due to the huge sums of money that change hands internationally in the wake of catastrophes. Aid organizations have to compete with each other to attract these funds.

SO WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

Aid organizations are not only interested in saving other people's lives, they want to ensure their own survival as well. This means that many organizations opt to work not necessarily where help is needed

most but where the most money is on offer. Unfortunately, media reporting is often responsible for this phenomenon. Therefore, some countries are inundated with cash while others are not. Some crises are even ignored completely by donors and aid organizations alike. While people in areas like these are left with no help, other areas are sitting on abundant aid resources.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR DONORS?

It is important to remember that aid organizations are often just as interested in self-preservation as they are in helping victims. It is important to

raise awareness among the public at large as to how donations are spent. At the moment, the public rarely poses any critical questions, although good intentions in the disaster relief sector do not automatically produce good results. The affected, however, deserve to benefit from the best possible aid structures.

HOW CAN DONORS MAKE EFFECTIVE DONATIONS NEVERTHELESS?

I recommend that donors take responsibility for how their money is spent: visit the websites of the aid organizations and find out how they work. Ask questions: who am

I going to help, what are donations spent on? Aid organizations have to be able to explain what they want to achieve and why they are on-site. One good option is to make a conscious decision to choose one particular aid organization and then provide it with long-term support. When you have chosen your organization, you should keep checking if it is making progress and if it can provide evidence of the progress made.



The Dutch journalist Linda Polman is a specialist for international aid operations in crisis regions and is the author of the book “The Crisis Caravan: What’s Wrong with Humanitarian Aid?”.

GUIDELINES FOR DEDICATED COMPANIES

Natural catastrophes prompt many companies to take action. Often, however, these companies are uncertain as to what is the right action to take. The following pages serve as a guide in this respect.

GUIDELINES

Specific guidelines help you to take effective action in the event of a catastrophe. They support budget planning and show employees and the public that the company has a sense of responsibility when it comes to dealing with donations. Companies should document how to react to which catastrophes and put clear decision-making structures in place.

CASH DONATIONS

Companies can either make an amount available themselves, bundle employee donations or boost these donations using a matching program. In order to support employees' sense of belonging and trust, it is worthwhile to publish regular reports on the measures taken.

IN-KIND CONTRIBUTIONS AND DEPLOYMENT OF PERSONNEL

In some cases, companies can also make a valuable contribution to disaster relief by making in-kind contributions or assigning specialized personnel. NOTE: Before donating goods or deploying company personnel, it is imperative to clarify what the needs are with the aid organization working locally - ideally before a catastrophe occurs.

NOTE

Donations destined for abroad: Donations to foreign institutions are tax-deductible if the recipients and their activities meet the requirements of the country's legislation on non-profit organizations. The tax authorities have to be provided with corresponding proof in such cases. The complex duties of processing donations and issuing tax receipts for donations destined for abroad can be taken over by intermediaries such as

the European non-profit organization Maecenata International (see "Glossary"). One alternative is to set up an institution that enjoys certain tax privileges (e.g. a foundation, association) with a corresponding purpose which deals itself, or via trustees, with obtaining the evidence required to show that the funds are being used in accordance with the statutory guidelines and which is authorized to issue tax receipts.

EXAMPLE

A win-win partnership: DHL and OCHA. Ever since 2005, the logistics provider DHL has been helping the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) with the transportation of aid resources by providing a team of around 80 logistics specialists, putting its core competence to good use for emergency aid. Shortly after a catastrophe, the aid workers arrive at airports in the affected region and organize the transport and storage of aid resources sent from across the globe. DHL says that around 4,500 tons of aid resources were transported during the 2010 flood in Pakistan.

PARTNERSHIPS WITH AID ORGANIZATIONS

Larger aid organizations offer dedicated contacts for companies and help them to identify the right form of support for them. They can make material available for internal company donation programs or incorporate donation banners into the company's homepage. Another conceivable option is that larger donations can be used to support specific aid projects. Long-term partnerships with selected aid organizations are more effective than one-off activism and provide learning opportunities for both sides.

CHOOSING THE RIGHT PARTNER

When choosing a cooperation partner, one has the option of considering the renowned aid organizations. Alternatively, one can consider organizations located in the same region as the company or can ask subsidiaries in the country affected to identify legitimate local partners. Cooperations are particularly valuable if companies and aid organizations complement each other's skills.

Many aid organizations, however, are careful when it comes to selecting partner companies. This is because they are keen not to put an organization's brand name at risk by joining forces with partners that have incompatible values. This is why they often

assess the company's "suitability" before entering into cooperative ventures or accepting large-scale donations. The criteria applied often vary considerably depending on the aid organization. Common exclusion criteria include the production of and trading in weapons or products that can damage human health, as well as corporate activities that contribute to natural catastrophes.

MAKE A DONATION - BUT WHEN?

It is impossible to take action every time a natural catastrophe occurs. The following criteria may help to make a decision on when to take action:

- Internationally active companies can opt only to take action in countries in which their own employees or subsidiaries operate. This sort of commitment helps to improve the standard of living of people in those countries and also ensures geographical proximity between the company and the aid measures taken.
- Guidelines can limit any commitment to certain types of catastrophes. This often means limiting action to acute natural catastrophes. If a company's core business is restricted to customers in certain regions, another option is to focus any activities on these regions.
- The scale of a natural catastrophe can also be used as a criterion. Indicators can include official calls for help issued by the United Nations (via OCHA) or a request issued by the country affected for international aid. Other possible guidelines can include the mortality rate, as well as the number of victims or the extent of physical loss or damage: the EU uses the term "extraordinary disaster" to refer to catastrophes causing damage of more than three billion euros.

MYTH AND REALITY OF DISASTER RELIEF

MYTH: The population affected is helpless without foreign support.

REALITY: It takes a few days for major aid efforts to get up and running. By this point in time, the local people will have dealt with the most urgent problems themselves. The people directly affected know better than anyone else where help is needed most and will do more than anyone else to ensure that measures are taken immediately.

MYTH: Every form of assistance counts.

REALITY: Good intentions do not always lead to good results! Voluntary but inexperienced aid workers hinder the work of their professional counterparts. Furthermore, donors should keep the human dignity of the recipients in mind: In 2006, a company that produces pet food wanted to help African Refugees with its products – the delivery of the “dog food” was perceived as an insult.

MYTH: After a few weeks, the situation is back to normal.

REALITY: The victims of natural catastrophes will continue to suffer from the consequences of the event long after public attention has been diverted to the next catastrophe. Donations and international support are still needed for reconstruction and long-term development.

MYTH: Low administrative expenses = quality

REALITY: Aid operations conducted in a professional manner cost money. This is because experts provide more effective assistance than inexperienced, spontaneous aid workers. This is why moderate expenses to cover the costs incurred by aid organizations are legitimate.

NOTE

The databases “Financial Tracking Service” and “EM-DAT” provide current figures on the number of victims, fatalities and the flow of funds in English (see “Further reading”).

NOTE

More deaths, more need for donations? The need for donations is determined not by the number of fatalities, but by the number of survivors that require assistance. The total number of fatalities following the tsunami catastrophe in 2004 accounted to just under 200,000. Most of the approx. 1.7 million homeless people, however, were taken in and cared for by relatives or friends. When an earthquake hit Kashmir in 2005, around 85,000 died – far fewer than as a result of the tsunami. The number of homeless people, however, amounted to 3.5 million. What is more, the living conditions of the people living in the mountains of Kashmir just before the onset of winter were far more precarious than in the coastal regions of the Indian Ocean.

Richard Munz, “Im Zentrum der Katastrophe”

GLOSSARY

CODE OF CONDUCT

The Code of Conduct developed by the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement contains quality standards for humanitarian aid operations, including independence from political and religious views and the consideration of local social networks.

DZI DONATIONS SEAL

This seal of quality is issued by the German Central Institute for Social Issues (DZI) to non-profit organizations that collect donations on a nationwide basis. It confirms the proper use of the donations received.

DISASTER RELIEF

Disaster relief is used in this document as a synonym for emergency assistance. It is aimed at the victims of natural catastrophes with the objective of saving lives and alleviating suffering. Its shorter-term perspective and the context of a natural catastrophe distinguish disaster relief from the broader terms "humanitarian aid", "reconstruction aid" and "development cooperation".

MAECENATA INTERNATIONAL (MINT)

This program, which is part of the "Giving Europe" network, has been helping to process transnational donations and issue donation confirmations for these in order to enable tax-deductibility in Germany since 2002.

NATURAL DISASTER

The term "natural catastrophe" is used by us to describe events such as floods or earthquakes that are related to natural disasters, result in considerable human, material, economic and ecological losses and that exceed the capabilities of the community or society affected to handle the crisis themselves.

OCHA

Abbreviation for the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. OCHA coordinates local aid operations in the event of humanitarian catastrophes.

CHARITY NAVIGATOR

Founded in 2001, Charity Navigator is the largest and most-utilized evaluator of charities in the USA. Charity Navigator examines tens of thousands of non-profit financial documents of aid organizations. They developed an unbiased, objective, numbers-based rating system to assess the financial health of over 5,000 of America's best-known charities.

A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE TO MAKING DONATIONS

The four most important questions that you should ask before making a donation in brief:

WHEN?

- You want to take action now? Make an acute emergency aid donation.
- Do you like to think ahead? Don't wait until a catastrophe hits – donate for preventative measures.
- Do you plan in the long term? Donate when the media attention has already died down.

- You want to set your own course? "Gradual catastrophes", such as flooding, but also refugee disasters following military conflict are often underfinanced compared to earthquakes, for example.

HOW?

- Donate money – try not to make in-kind contributions.
- Reduce the administrative expense and donate larger amounts to a small number of organizations.

TO WHOM?

- Does the organization publish a financial and activity report on its website?
- Does it have a donation seal and/or make a commitment to quality standards?
- Has the organization been working in the country for some time?

HOW MUCH?

- There is no "ideal" donation amount. Each and every donor has to make his or her own decision depending on the resources available to him/her.

FURTHER READING

LITERATURE

Linda Polman: The Crisis Caravan: What's Wrong with Humanitarian Aid? Campus Verlag 2010.

Richard Munz: Im Zentrum der Katastrophe. Campus Verlag 2007.

LINKS

DZI: At www.dzi.de, you can find, among other things, a list of the organizations that have the donation seal (in German).

EM-DAT: This database provides extensive figures on catastrophes (<http://www.emdat.be>).

Financial Tracking Service: Data on international disaster relief donations is updated on a regular basis at <http://fts.unocha.org/>.

Maecenata International:

You can obtain help with tax deductible transnational donations at www.maecenata.eu.

OCHA: You can find the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs at <http://ochaonline.un.org/>.

Charity Navigator: Charity Navigator, America's independent charity evaluator, works to advance a more efficient and responsive philanthropic marketplace by evaluating the financial health of over 5,000 of America's largest charities. <http://www.charitynavigator.org/>

World Disaster Report: The Red Cross publishes detailed statistics on natural catastrophes which are updated every year at <http://www.ifrc.org/en/publications-and-reports/world-disasters-report/>.

PHINEO IS AN ALLIANCE OF STRONG PARTNERS

PHINEO provides guidance for social investors on various fields of philanthropic action and specific projects that promote effective engagement in the non-profit sector. As a not-for-profit corporation, PHINEO is supported by a broad alliance of business and

civil society organisations. Shareholders include the Bertelsmann Stiftung, the Deutsche Börse Group, KPMG, PWC and Stiftung Mercator. PHINEO's mission is to strengthen the non-profit sector and civil society. PHINEO conducts a multistage analysis of non-

profit projects and recommends those with strong potential to make a lasting impact. With reports on selected issues, handbooks for donors and recipients, and individualised consulting for social investors, PHINEO offers a platform for orientation: www.phineo.org.

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