



DEC STRATEGY 2024 – 2029



Abeer with her newborn daughter born in a DEC-funded hospital in north-west Syria after the devastating earthquakes in 2023.
Turkey-Syria Earthquake Appeal. Photo: Sonya Al Ali Maara/Action Aid/DEC

INTRODUCTION

Over our 60-year history, the DEC has responded to 77 major emergencies, collectively raising over £2.4 billion and reaching millions of people with humanitarian assistance.

The current partnership of 15 major humanitarian agencies, supported by the Secretariat, and alongside our media and corporate partners (the Rapid Response Network), continues to be a highly respected and trusted institution, solidly embedded in the national consciousness at times of humanitarian crisis overseas. There is nothing else quite like the DEC.

The incredible scale of appeals like the Ukraine Humanitarian Appeal and Turkey-Syria Earthquake Appeal during the 2019-2024 strategy, unequivocally proved that we are stronger together than the collective sum of our parts.

We face big change. The emergencies we respond to are ever more complex and impacted by geopolitics and climate change. Technology is advancing, media consumption is shifting and new audience needs are emerging. The demands and expectations on the DEC continue to increase.

Although this is a five-year strategy, we know a lot can change in short periods of time. That means we must be agile and dynamic in our approach. The Board's annual progress and performance review will ensure it remains appropriate for the changing world the DEC operates in, and the Secretariat will produce annual 12-month workplans and budgets for Board approval.



Tetiana* with her son Dmytro* at a train station in Poland where refugees fleeing conflict in Ukraine received support through the local partner of a DEC charity in 2022. Ukraine Humanitarian Appeal. Photo: Toby Madden/DEC

* Names have been changed to protect identities.

ABOUT THE DEC

OUR CHARITABLE OBJECTIVES

To support UK charitable sector NGOs (“agencies”) in their task of alleviating acute human suffering amongst those least able to withstand the effects of a major overseas disaster, by:

- Providing an accredited national forum for joint fundraising by UK charitable voluntary sector NGOs in order to maximise the funds raised and facilitate immediate commitment from participating agencies;
- Creating a focal point for the response of the public, the broadcasters and others to such disasters;
- Facilitating agency co-operation, co-ordination and communication;
- Ensuring that funds raised are used in an effective, timely, fully accountable way.

OUR VISION

A world where the impact of disasters on affected communities is minimised by working together through effective humanitarian response and growing resilience.

OUR MISSION

Together we will raise funds to save, protect and rebuild the lives of people that are impacted by emergencies and major disasters in countries overseas. We will:

- Raise funds quickly and effectively in large-scale humanitarian emergencies;
- Uphold the highest standards of accountability and transparency;
- Learn and share information to promote effective programmes of response.

OUR VALUES

Collaboration

We bring together leading UK humanitarian agencies and work in close cooperation with media and corporate partners and others. Together we meet our commitment to raise funds to save and protect lives in the wake of major disasters and support communities as they recover.

Accountability and transparency

We are accountable to the communities we work to help during crises, and also to our supporters who make this work possible. When we ask for money, we are clear about why it’s needed and how it is spent. We uphold the highest standards in delivery of programmes that meet the needs of disaster-affected communities.

Learning

We ensure that our collective expertise maximises funds raised and brings about an effective response that respects the dignity of the people we seek to help. We share our learning within each emergency and from one emergency to the next.

Humanitarian

We always put first the humanitarian imperative. This means that the focus of work of our member agencies is towards people affected, according to the urgency of their unmet needs and through those organisations or local partners best placed to meet those needs.

Impartiality

We stand up with integrity for principled humanitarian action. We work impartially, independently and without the influence of governments or donors to ensure that our humanitarian response is effective and supports the needs of disaster-affected communities, regardless of the age, gender, race, disability, ethnicity, faith, sexual orientation or political affiliation of individuals.

APPEAL CRITERIA

The DEC responds to the world’s worst disasters using a set of criteria to help us decide when we launch an appeal and how we can be most effective.

1. The disaster must be on such a scale and of such urgency as to call for swift international humanitarian assistance.
2. The DEC’s member charities, or some of them, must be in a position to provide effective and swift humanitarian assistance at a scale to justify a national appeal.
3. There must be reasonable grounds for concluding that a public appeal would be successful, either because of evidence of existing public sympathy for the humanitarian situation or because there is a compelling case indicating the likelihood of significant public support should an appeal be launched.

SUMMARY

This strategy underpins our mission to raise funds to save, protect and rebuild the lives of people impacted by major disasters in countries without the ability to respond at scale.

We will ensure we are a thriving, sustainable organisation able to launch the right appeals at the right time, and build trust with our audiences. We will continue to deliver effective responses and drive change in the sector to increase our impact.

Working with and through our member charities, we will launch appeals with public broadcasters that meet our three Appeal Criteria.

To deliver this strategy we will:

- Invest in our people and resources;
- Build ever stronger partnerships;
- Seek new opportunities;
- Continue developing and learning to improve processes and practices;
- Tell data backed authentic stories;
- and harness the changing power of technology.



FOUR STRATEGIC PILLARS

Working with and through our Member Agencies and the Rapid Response Network we will prioritise our activities under the following strategic pillars;

1

BE READY TO LAUNCH THE RIGHT APPEALS AT THE RIGHT TIME

- **Maximise appeal income:**
We will maximise appropriate opportunities to raise money during appeals.
- **Grow our partnerships:**
We will develop our relationships with key partners that provide us both reach and money to generate the greatest income during appeals.
- **Optimise digital and social channels:**
We will invest in our use of digital and social channels to reach more people, providing them with ways to donate easily and quickly during appeals.
- **Prioritise data and targeted technology:**
We will focus time, energy and resource on our fundraising data management and adopting targeted technological advancements to improve and drive our fundraising efforts.

2

BUILD TRUST AMONG OUR AUDIENCES AND PARTNERS

- **Mobilise a 'whole appeal' approach to marketing and communications activities:**
We will formalise a 'whole appeal' approach to optimise every meaningful opportunity to engage our audiences.
- **Reimagine our supporter experience:**
We will improve our supporter experience to increase the likelihood of future donations and long-term donor value.
- **Invest in our existing and future audiences:**
We will improve our engagement with current DEC supporters and put in place the building blocks to engage our audiences of the future.
- **Drive timely, impactful, and authentic content:**
We will work even more closely with Member Agencies and local communities to capture and produce engaging content to drive meaningful engagement across multiple channels.

3

DRIVE CHANGE IN THE HUMANITARIAN SECTOR AND INCREASE IMPACT

- **Harness our collective impact:**
We will channel the impact of DEC and member charities so that our humanitarian response is greater than the sum of its parts.
- **Influence the sector:**
We will drive change through our unique position in the humanitarian sector, showcasing our work on flexible funding, and adaptative and innovative programming.
- **Explore and strengthen our climate change and protracted crisis response:**
We will explore the most effective ways for DEC to drive impact, awareness and funds to these humanitarian emergencies.
- **Support a shift of power:**
We will ensure DEC programmes support shifting the power, through amplifying locally led responses and local voices, safe programming, environmental protection and climate adaptation in our programmes, approaches and communications.

4

BE A SUSTAINABLE AND THRIVING ORGANISATION

- **Support our people:**
We are a sector leading employer of choice, protecting our strong organisational culture, investing in our team's development, and supporting them to thrive.
- **Embed Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) commitments:**
We will define and act upon our cross-cutting organisational commitment to ESG, embedding improved practices.
- **Evolve our financial and risk strategy:**
We will evolve our current approach to organisational financing and risk, creating a more sustainable organisation better able to withstand future unpredictability and meet regulatory and compliance requirements.
- **Invest in our systems and processes:**
We will review and improve our systems, infrastructure, and processes to ensure they are secure, robust, efficient, and used effectively by the Secretariat.



DEC
MEMBER
CHARITIES



actionaid

Age International



CAFOD
Catholic Agency for
 Overseas Development



CONCERN
worldwide



DISASTERS EMERGENCY COMMITTEE

17-21 Wenlock Road
London N1 7GT

Tel: 020 7387 0200
www.dec.org.uk

Registered Charity No. 1062638
Company no. 3356526