

Disaster Best Practices — Effective Grants

A guide to providing effective disaster grants

The guidelines below provide a solid groundwork, strategies and recommendations you can adapt your international relief efforts.

Sample Disaster Grant Template – Canadian Co-operative Association Statement of Practice on International Relief Efforts (July 2011)

Background

Credit union members are generous, and when disaster strikes anywhere in the world, they are anxious to help. Often the first impulse is to raise money to help through the Co-operative Development Foundation of Canada. * But even if money can be successfully raised, the major challenge is **how to effectively apply that money to the people affected by the disaster.**

CDF resources are primarily committed to long-term development of credit unions and co-operatives in less developed countries that are conducted by the Canadian Co-operative Association (CCA). CCA's expertise lies in the long-term development of sustainable credit unions and co-operatives and does not retain the skill set for the provision of food, clothing and shelter following a disaster. As a result, CCA can best help in the longer-term rebuilding that takes months or years after a disaster.

Yet special circumstances call for special efforts, and there are times when CDF and CCA feel a powerful obligation to help.

Lessons learned in providing relief funds to international partners

International credit union or co-operative partners are not always equipped to make long-term decisions in a highly charged disaster situation.

Assistance should be provided to the credit union/co-operative to develop a communication strategy and methodology to select beneficiaries, to determine the nature of the support and to coordinate with relief agencies and government.

Consideration should be given to using disaster response funds to establish long-term funding pools with national credit union organizations in disaster-prone areas. It is very important that disaster relief assistance (charity) does not undermine the financial discipline of credit unions or their members. The national organization should develop longer-term disaster management policies and procedures with affected credit unions.

CDF Policy

CDF will raise funds for disaster relief when CCA requests assistance for an ongoing international partnership in the country where the disaster occurred and where CCA can ensure the funds will reach the intended victims.

CCA's Policy

- CCA will involve itself in disaster assistance in countries where it has existing co-operative development projects. That relationship may be through a current project or it may be the result of projects that have been concluded.
- CCA will become involved when a current or former partner is directly affected or when such partners recommend assistance to assist other co-operatives.
- CCA acknowledges that its greatest contribution can be to the longer-term rebuilding efforts that follow disasters and will become involved with the provision of post-disaster relief, such as food, clothing and shelter, when it is clear that other sources of relief are not available and when CCA, through its co-operative network, has the capacity to deliver this type of relief efficiently and effectively.
- CCA will make every effort to leverage resources from specialized relief agencies for the benefit of co-operative members.

* Co-operative Development Foundation (CDF) is a registered charitable organization whose mission complements the charitable aspects of Canadian Co-operative Association's (CCA) international development program. CDF funds contribute to a range of charitable activities undertaken by CCA.

Thanks to Canadian Co-operative Association for producing this unit.