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**Disaster Response Guidance Note – Issue 1**

1. **Introduction**

This guide has been put together immediately following Hurricane Dorian with input from DG Tony Sheard, International Chair Robbie Howlett and other interested District Rotarians.

When natural disasters occur, people have a natural desire to offer to help. Rotary International is not a Disaster Response Agency, but through the organization’s international reach it is well positioned to identify need on the ground in the affected area and to seek help from fellow Rotarians to provide swift humanitarian assistance. This help can take many forms and this guidance note provides a framework for how Rotarians and clubs within District 6330 may respond both proactively and reactively.

1. **Proactive Stage (Emergency Disaster Preparation)**
   1. Throughout the year clubs maysupport initiatives such as [ShelterBox](https://www.facebook.com/ShelterBox/?__tn__=KH-R&eid=ARCY69ipVc7_7EPV6mjCDjkOGduloORCS0o-sQo9TRjLlvy1VQUsiszxfZFLxyrDknyuZPAlq9RRQcYO&__xts__%5B0%5D=68.ARC92drpfLx7rVzgH6WMPxMj-Yrt983_8B_Mv7HPwO0SucgEFCsVLK9z3ygw24E6zI0wz-C7UqgN09vEZiHz1E-c1irOz6HP3mTWMeJbkeXhWAC32B7Dd88tgnjfec1RSVhsOqnfFz7xWzizqUtpivs_pzZJAazPRe8KgVepd6B5_EEZgmsU0N_cC3-9CT_MVe5oycT_Kksiwl_3mH6fqipZZ96utg), Rotary's Disaster Relief partner that delivers emergency temporary shelter and other aid following disasters. Supplies are pre-positioned at locations throughout the world in preparation for any pending disaster in that geographical region. ShelterBox welcomes contact from Rotarians to jointly assess community needs and they welcome volunteers for service opportunities Email at: rotaryrequest@shelterbox.org.
   2. or support our very own District 6330 Stratford Rotary Club's Aqua Box program ([http://rotarystratford.com/aquabox-home/](http://rotarystratford.com/aquabox-home/?fbclid=IwAR3WB1iEPdwt5u_GeXYuvFbsJzLLfqDwrcrLK-jvbOTYQ_-Qeg3QggV4uqk)).

Aqua Box consists of 2 sturdy plastic pails containing basic survival items and a water filtering system. The club welcomes donations at any time and also offers hands on service opportunities for Rotarians to participate in the assembly of the boxes. Email at: secretary@rotarystratford.com. The club has established a strategic partnership with [GlobalMedic](https://www.facebook.com/globalmedicdmgf/?__tn__=KH-R&eid=ARBfffYzLPwcHnAVf67C_FI6sHRQXIrNeazYGOHiHWkdtcVOQiVqwVUQrh-gXh5eIneQY7xeM2K1HLJC&__xts__%5B0%5D=68.ARC92drpfLx7rVzgH6WMPxMj-Yrt983_8B_Mv7HPwO0SucgEFCsVLK9z3ygw24E6zI0wz-C7UqgN09vEZiHz1E-c1irOz6HP3mTWMeJbkeXhWAC32B7Dd88tgnjfec1RSVhsOqnfFz7xWzizqUtpivs_pzZJAazPRe8KgVepd6B5_EEZgmsU0N_cC3-9CT_MVe5oycT_Kksiwl_3mH6fqipZZ96utg) to handle storage, logistics and timely distribution of the aqua boxes to affected communities.

* 1. You may also become a member of the Rotary Action Group [Disaster Network of Assistance RAG](https://www.facebook.com/DNA.RAG/?__tn__=KH-R&eid=ARBcN0Qnby6Fn4c9ZuD2W1RpxbE2tWjS1YEN4dLmplc76L2x6aGbB95Su02fFmTaOoiAobN3CMVK_KU1&__xts__%5B0%5D=68.ARC92drpfLx7rVzgH6WMPxMj-Yrt983_8B_Mv7HPwO0SucgEFCsVLK9z3ygw24E6zI0wz-C7UqgN09vEZiHz1E-c1irOz6HP3mTWMeJbkeXhWAC32B7Dd88tgnjfec1RSVhsOqnfFz7xWzizqUtpivs_pzZJAazPRe8KgVepd6B5_EEZgmsU0N_cC3-9CT_MVe5oycT_Kksiwl_3mH6fqipZZ96utg) so you may become involved and connected with this network throughout the world and be at the forefront on the latest thinking on how we tackle humanitarian disasters. They provide advice and support for all aspects of disasters ranging from preparedness through long term recovery and can be contacted for assistance at Email: dna.rag.contact@gmail.com.
  2. Rotary clubs and members are now able to contribute to The Rotary Foundation’s Disaster Response Fund, a general fund which supports club and district relief activities. These contributions fund Rotary Disaster Response Grants to support a district’s immediate disaster relief efforts. Qualified districts in affected areas may apply for a grant of US $25,000, pending availability of funds. Districts may apply for subsequent grants after successfully reporting on any prior grants. Visit “My Rotary” for more information about the Grant and to apply for funding. Longer term recovery efforts may be eligible for support from The Rotary Foundation through a district or global grant
  3. Consider, raising awareness of the climate change challenge facing our world and supporting climate change mitigation measures and initiatives.

At a news conference in the Bahamas on September 13th 2019, at the scene of the aftermath of the Hurricane Dorian Disaster, the United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said “First, the worst impact is on countries with the lowest greenhouse gas emissions; The Bahamas are a very good example of that. Second it is the poorest and most vulnerable people in those countries who suffer most, and again, the same has happened with communities in The Bahamas. And third repeated storms trap countries in a cycle of disaster and debt.

Mr Guterres noted that the climate crisis has generated “turbocharged” hurricanes and storms, which are occurring with greater intensity and frequency. And without urgent action, climate disruption will get worse, packing what he described as a “triple injustice.”

1. **Reactive Stage**

Support for immediate or post recovery rebuilding can be best accomplished by partnering with a club or District in the impacted region. In these cases, interested clubs should use due diligence to ensure the funds/aid/help and support is meeting a legitimate need and that that the recipients have the capability to deliver the aid/funds in a timely and effective manner.

This comprises 3 phases:

* 1. **Immediate response phase**

Local clubs and partners immediately offering helping hands and supplies

* 1. **Short-term assistance phase**

Clubs and Districts help affected communities wherever we can through funds, supplies and materials to re-establish day to day operations

* 1. **Long-term rebuilding phase**

Clubs plan and implement projects that rebuild affected communities

Typically, clubs and Districts in impacted or neighbouring areas will put out a call for help and provide contacts for further information so that interested clubs throughout the world may respond to help. On some occasions Governments, other Foundations and philanthropists offer matching funding for disaster relief projects.

This may be via direct request, social media or via the Rotary Ideas Page. The District will share this information with clubs via direct mail and social media. Interested clubs should assess the need and make their own determination on how best to help.

1. **Disasters within District 6330**

Natural disasters are rare in North America however in the event of such an occurrence the District’s International Chair will keep a watching brief and liaise with the affected or neighbouring clubs to determine how best to respond. In respect of making a determination if a District wide response is appropriate the District International Chair will expeditiously call a meeting of the DG, DGE, DGN, International Chair and Foundation Chair to develop a coherent response on behalf of the District and beyond.

1. **Other useful information**

Rotary Foundation Disaster Relief Fund: [How to apply for a grant?](https://my.rotary.org/en/take-action/apply-grants/rotary-disaster-response-grants)

District and Global Grants may be useful in providing funding for phase 3 rebuilding efforts. For further information/advice, please contact the District International Chair or District Foundation Chair.

AS/Disaster Response Guide/September 2019