

## WEEK 10 FOUNDATION MINUTE – ROTARY’S DISASTER RESPONSE

***...Earthquakes in Haiti, Pakistan and Turkey; Tsunami in Indonesia;  
Cyclones in Myanmar and Bangladesh; Hurricanes in New Orleans, the  
Philippines and Puerto Rico and now, utter devastation in the Bahamas.***

As human beings, our first and natural response to disaster is to want to DO SOMETHING! We feel helpless, frustrated and determined to TAKE SOME ACTION. But as Rotarians, we need to remember that our focus has not been on the disaster relief immediately after disasters, but rather on the rebuilding of lives, communities and livelihoods once the initial shock, clean-up and damage assessment have occurred.

Rotary has responded to disasters for decades – and is uniquely positioned to provide sustainable assistance through its global network of clubs and Rotarians. We leave the immediate post-disaster delivery of water, food, urgent medical care and clean-up to those government agencies and relief organizations best equipped to deliver it quickly.

Rotarians can offer financial help through the new Rotary Disaster Relief Fund of The Rotary Foundation and its affiliate, Shelter Box. Rotary is evaluating how it will provide rebuilding help while Shelter Box is evaluating whether it’s emergency tents, tarpaulins, tools and other supplies are needed and appropriate for the recovery. Each fund takes donations to fund disaster relief generally, and not for specific catastrophes.