

Statement from DEC Trustees

DEC Board Review of the Niger (Sahel) Appeal – July 07

At the June Board meeting the DEC Trustees were pleased to consider the independent Report to the Board on the DEC Niger Crisis Appeal, carried out between 23rd March and 17th April 2007 by CDR Resources Ltd as part of the Board's regular review of each Appeal's income and expenditure.

The DEC responded to news of the humanitarian crisis in the Sahel region by launching the Niger Crisis Appeal on 2nd August 2005 which raised £18 million. This enabled member agencies already present in the affected countries to scale up and for others to set up rapidly in order to respond to the crisis. In all, 4 countries benefited from the funds, Niger, Mali, Burkina Faso and Mauritania.

The DEC welcomes the success, outlined in the report, whereby "very significant number of under 5 year old children's lives were saved" and that the DEC funded logistics enabled 42,000 Metric Tons of food to be delivered. (Findings 2.1) In addition that the DEC response to the 2005 food crisis in the Sahel represents one of the best examples of the application of linking relief to rehabilitation and development

The primary function of the DEC appeal is to save lives and reduce suffering in the first few months of the crisis. However, Member agencies are encouraged to find ways to leave affected communities less vulnerable and in a stronger position to cope with future shocks.

In terms of the recommendations of the report, the Board is reviewing how DEC appeals can address the challenges of chronic suffering where minor shocks can have devastating effects and where responses need to address underlying problems of poverty and the marginalisation of whole communities.

Secondly the Board welcomes the recommendation to continue, on a case by case basis, to give the issue of sustainability the attention it deserves. Member agencies, so as not to lose the achievements of the emergency response, work hand in hand with communities and in close liaison with Government initiatives.

Finally the DEC appeal for the Niger and the Sahel countries has raised the profile of the needs of the area and the vulnerability of its people. As a result of the appeal three additional member agencies have secured funding in order to remain in the Sahel area. The Sahel Working Group (15 charities, 10 of which are DEC Member Agencies), established to meet the need for better coordination after appeal remains an affective vehicle for lobbying donors.

25.07.2007