



**DISASTERS
EMERGENCY
COMMITTEE**

TRUSTEE RECRUITMENT PACK



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Dear Potential Candidate,

Thank you for engaging with the Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC) and for considering serving as one of our Independent Trustees – a fascinating role at a wonderful and profoundly important organisation.

The DEC's purpose is clear: "When large-scale disasters hit countries without the capacity to respond, the DEC brings together 15 leading UK aid charities to raise funds quickly and efficiently. We have immediate impact, getting aid to people who need it, fast."

Since it was formed over 60 years ago, the DEC has launched 80 appeals and raised more than £2.5bn to help people in times of crisis, providing funds to save, protect, and rebuild lives. As the frequency and severity of disasters increase globally, the work of the DEC is needed now more than ever. By bringing together the UK's leading aid agencies and the members of the Rapid Response Network of national media and corporate partners at times of disaster overseas, the DEC can reach more people and make it easier for them to donate.

The DEC is honoured to have the trust of the UK public, who have responded time and again with extraordinary generosity and goodwill to DEC appeals. Preserving and strengthening this trust is the DEC Board's primary responsibility, and we are duty bound to mirror the public's generosity and goodwill with our own expertise and commitment. Our new Independent Trustees must be able to show trustworthiness, humanitarian concern, personal integrity, and wise judgement, through experience of leadership in challenging circumstances. They must be impartial, and at such a time of dynamic change in the humanitarian sector and beyond, we also need Independent Trustees who bring courageous creativity.

There is nothing else quite like the DEC. Working in partnership with the member charities, the Rapid Response Network, and our excellent Secretariat to mobilise the generosity of the UK public towards people facing disaster overseas is hugely rewarding.

Thank you for your interest in becoming an Independent Trustee and advancing the work of DEC.



**Michael Jerney, Chair
Disasters Emergency Committee**



It has been an immense privilege to contribute to the life-saving mission of the DEC, helping to ensure that people affected by crises receive support when they need it most. As an upcoming trustee, you will have a unique opportunity to provide strategic guidance, challenge and perhaps most importantly of all, support expert colleagues as they carry out critical work."

Tanya Steele, outgoing Independent Trustee

Cover image: Mohammad returns carrying full containers of water to his family's tent in a displacement camp in Gaza, following a distribution supported by DEC funds through Concern Worldwide. © Aboud Alsayed/Arete/DEC

**DEC
MEMBER
CHARITIES**



act:onaid

ageInternational



CAFOD
Catholic Agency for
Overseas Development



CONCERN
worldwide



OXFAM



tearfund

World Vision



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DEC charity Islamic Relief distributing food parcels in Caracas, Venezuela following the earthquakes, July 2026.

ABOUT THE DEC

The DEC brings together 15 leading UK aid charities to raise funds quickly and efficiently at times of crisis overseas. We have immediate impact, getting aid to people who need it, fast.

Pooling our resources to work as one, we are pivotal in co-ordinating the UK public's response to large-scale disasters. In collaboration with our Rapid Response Network of national media and corporate partners, we raise the alarm to the UK public and set up easy ways to donate. Our partnerships help us reach a wide cross section of the UK public, giving people a way to act on their concern for people affected by disasters around the world.

We also foster cooperation in the humanitarian INGO sector, bringing our member charities and local partners together and applying standards of quality, accountability, transparency and impact reporting. We learn together and share information to promote effective humanitarian response.

To decide whether we launch an appeal, the Board considers these three questions:

- 1. Does the scale and urgency of the disaster call for decisive action?**
- 2. Are our member charities able to provide effective and swift humanitarian assistance?**
- 3. Will the public support us?**

Once these criteria are met, we act quickly. The DEC alerts the [Rapid Response Network](#), a unique alliance of the UK's corporate and broadcasting sectors, to reach the British public through a multi-channel and multimedia campaign. As our [member charities](#) then deliver DEC-funded aid programmes, we employ the DEC Accountability Framework, including external evaluations and the Core Humanitarian Standard, to ensure transparency and accountability to both British donors and communities affected by disasters.

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 STRATEGY

The DEC Board leads the strategic direction of the organisation through delivery of its Strategy 2024-29, which focuses on four Pillars:

PILLAR 1

Be ready to launch the right appeals at the right time

PILLAR 2

Build trust and confidence among our audiences and partners

PILLAR 3

Drive change in the humanitarian sector and increase impact

PILLAR 4

Be a sustainable and thriving organisation

The DEC Board is supported by the Secretariat of around 40 staff, which expands with the inclusion of member charity staff, freelancers and volunteers when launching an appeal.

Over our 60-year history, the DEC has responded to 80 major emergencies, collectively raising over £2.5 billion and reaching millions of people with humanitarian assistance.

The financial turnover of the DEC depends on the number of appeals and the UK public's response. Our recent appeals include two of the largest we have ever launched: the Ukraine Humanitarian Appeal has raised over £446 million, and the Turkey-Syria Earthquake Appeal surpassed £163 million. In the last few years we also launched the Myanmar Earthquake Appeal which raised over £28 million, the Middle East Humanitarian Appeal which raised over £68 million, and most recently the Venezuela Earthquake Appeal which has raised over £23 million to date. A record of recent appeals can be found [here](#).

For a deeper insight into the DEC, please see our latest annual report [here](#).

Members of a local community women's group work together to move bamboo poles for house construction after receiving DEC funded support to rebuild their homes following the earthquake in Myanmar.



CONTEXT OF THE BOARD APPOINTMENTS

2026

The Board of the Disasters Emergency Committee is comprised of the CEOs of the 15 member charities (leading UK INGOs) and six Independent Trustees (three of whom hold officer positions on the Board). You can find the trustees' biographies [here](#). While this makes us a large board, we benefit from the insight of humanitarian sector leaders who ensure that the DEC is run by and for its members, and the objectivity, rigour and guidance of the Independent Trustees.

The DEC is in a very strong position, both in terms of our trusted brand and organisational capacities to deliver our mandate with excellence. That said, we face strategic questions in each of the three primary spheres of our work:

- 1.** We facilitate the UK public's response to emergency situations around the world. This includes raising the levels of awareness of and engagement with global concerns at a time when many people are focused on issues closer to home. We also seek to build public trust in the impact their donations make through the outstanding professionalism of our members. We need to think creatively about how we maintain and broaden the global consciousness and compassion of the UK public.
- 2.** We serve within the nexus of the humanitarian INGO sector, news organisations and the UK public. The nature of media and corporate partnerships and ways to access news are changing fast. To serve our partners and the public well, we must continually evolve our approach.
- 3.** We support our [member charities'](#) interventions in times of humanitarian crisis. Such crises are increasing in number and complexity, often with intersecting dynamics; and with significant reductions in funding available from US, UK and European governments and other traditional institutional donors. We offer our member charities a safe space for strategic discussions about the future of effective international humanitarian response.

The BT tower displays a banner for the Venezuela Earthquake Appeal, July 2026



It's a terrific board to be part of as an Independent Trustee: the DEC team are true professionals and the member charity CEOs are passionate about making a difference – put them together and big things happen.”

Peter Barron, outgoing Independent Trustee



TIME COMMITMENT AND TENURE

The DEC Board meets three times each year, with one of these meetings being an annual away day to review the DEC's strategy, performance and plans.

The Board has four established committees – Membership and Accountability (MAC); Audit, Finance, People and Risk Committee (AFPR); Donations Acceptance (DAC); and Remuneration – that operate under agreed terms of reference, oversee key aspects of DEC activity, and report back to the full Board.

Independent Trustees are expected to join at least one of the committees best fitting their expertise: for these roles this will include one new trustee attending the MAC and the other actively involved with the Fundraising Directors Group, each of which meet three times per year – and to contribute to the discussions of other committees as appropriate.

The time investment for a DEC trustee is likely to be 8-12 days per year with a commitment to be well-prepared for meetings and, critically, to make time available at short notice when urgent discussion and decision-making is required.

Independent Trustees serve four-year terms, with the option of extending their service into a second four year-term.

Image left: Local farmers inspect the health of tomato plants after their community received DEC funded support to restore their floating farms, which were severely damaged by the earthquake in Myanmar.



© Alex Bartsch/Arete/DEC

DEC charity World Vision distributes food parcels to earthquake-affected families in Catia La Mar, Venezuela.

OUR VALUES

Central to the success of the DEC's Mission is the expectation that all trustees exemplify the following five DEC values through their character and behaviours:

Humanitarian

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

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.

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.



© DEC

Saleh Saeed, DEC CEO (seated, centre left) and Chair of Trustees Michael Jermey (seated, centre right), with trustees and member charity representatives at the 13 July 2026 board meeting at the DEC office in London.

ROLE DESCRIPTION

INDEPENDENT TRUSTEES

The DEC is now seeking to appoint two Independent Trustees who would join the Board from July 2027, ideally with a period of induction and hand-over in the months prior.

DEC Independent Trustees provide objectivity, perspectives from diverse and often underrepresented communities, a willingness to challenge on strategic issues, and specific skillset expertise to the Board. The DEC has flexibility in considering different backgrounds for these appointments. Independent Trustees are not expected to be experts in humanitarian aid, but an awareness of this environment would be advantageous.

As a Trustee and member of the Board you will be asked to undertake the following:

- Provide informed leadership and guidance on governance issues.
- Contribute actively to the strategic direction of the DEC.
- Bring an independent perspective to all Board discussions, including their view of the completeness of evidence against the three criteria provided for trustee appeal decisions.
- Share insights from the various communities you interact with personally and professionally as pertaining to the interest and engagement in global crises.
- Contribute to the Board's understanding of new technologies and media.
- Take an active interest in being educated and keeping up to date on issues affecting the humanitarian sector.

Outgoing Independent Trustees Tanya Steele and Peter Barron both come to the end of their second terms at the July 2027 Board meeting. With these new appointments, the DEC Board will seek to replace Tanya's terrific expertise in public engagement, fundraising, people management and knowledge of the international-facing UK charity sector; and Peter's insightful experience of news media, public broadcasters, communications and digital technologies. One of the new Independent Trustees will be invited to join the Membership and Accountability Committee (MAC), and the other will be expected to actively participate in the cross-membership Fundraising Directors Group, both of which meet three times per year.

In line with the nature of the DEC's work, all trustees are occasionally expected to make time available at short notice to join Board meetings when urgent decision-making is required in relation to international humanitarian crises.



© Carmen Yahchouchi/Fairpicture/DEC

DEC CEO Saleh Saeed visits a school in Lebanon where children affected by the conflict receive psychological support sessions run by a DEC charity and their local partner with support from DEC funds, May 2025.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

The character of the DEC's trustees is as important a qualification as their professional experience. Character is strengthened through life's challenges, failures, pressures and diverse experiences. We would describe our trustees' character in the following ways:

- **Trustworthy** The DEC's reputation is based on trust. Our Board members are expected to have an accountable integrity: to not act (nor have acted) in any manner which would cause disrepute to the DEC and threaten the precious trust extended to us by member charities, our Rapid Response Network, and the UK public.
- **Compassionate** We seek trustees who are motivated to serve those who suddenly find themselves in life threatening and often deeply traumatic circumstances.
- **Wise** A track record of having made good decisions under pressure and being someone whom others turn to for sound advice.
- **Objective** DEC trustees, whether in the role of "independent" or "member charity", are expected to prioritise the DEC's mission.
- **Creative** We need those who naturally avoid groupthink and can ask questions that provoke co-creative, learning discussions. We seek constructive disruptors and forward-thinkers.
- **Curious** Board discussions are enriched by the diversity of our group and the complexity of the challenges we address together. Discussion is wide-ranging. Outside of the Board room, DEC trustees will exercise curiosity by being active learners with keen discernment, reading the signs of the times and taking an interest in innovations.
- **Pragmatic** The Board has to take difficult decisions during fast-moving humanitarian crises and trustees must be able to assess relevant information quickly when deciding whether or not to launch an appeal.
- **Collaborative** The success of the DEC is based on cooperation and partnership. We must demonstrate this value as a Board, working as active team collaborators with no shrinking violets but equally no grandstanding egos.

In addition, all DEC Trustees must have an understanding of voluntary sector and/or philanthropy; a commitment to the vision, mission and values of the DEC and its member agencies; and willingness to commit additional time as required, particularly in the lead up to launching a major fundraising appeal.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Perrett Laver will conduct an executive search process in parallel with the public advertisement of the role. The selection panel will meet to decide upon a shortlist for the posts in early November, following which, formal interviews with the Disasters Emergency Committee will take place in January 2027. If you require any reasonable adjustments to assist you in the selection process, please advise us of these so that we can make appropriate arrangements.

Further information, including a detailed role description and person specification, and information on how to apply can be downloaded at <https://candidates.perrettlaver.com/vacancies> quoting reference **8483**.

To confidentially get in touch about this role, or for advice on your application please email Fiona Dattan on Fiona.Dattan@perrettlaver.com.

Deadline for submission of applications is 11:59pm on 18 October 2026.

Accessibility

Should you require access to these documents in alternative formats, please contact Bharti Aggarwal via bharti.aggarwal@perrettlaver.com.

If you have comments that would support us to improve access to documentation, or our application processes more generally, please do not hesitate to contact us via accessibility@perrettlaver.com.

Inclusion

Perrett Laver believes that excellence will be achieved through recognising the value of every individual. A broad range of perspectives, backgrounds and opinions amongst our global community of colleagues is crucial in maintaining our culture of openness, intellectual curiosity, and creativity. We take an active role in supporting under-represented communities and groups in becoming better and more fairly represented in the leadership of all organisations. We also know that diverse and inclusive teams have a positive impact on our ability to identify, engage and secure candidates from these groups.

Our commitment to inclusion across race, gender, age, religion, sexual orientation, identity, and experience drives us every day – for clients, for candidate identification and in the recruitment, development and retention of colleagues.

To ensure inclusion on the basis of age, disability, ethnic or national origin, family circumstance, gender, gender identity, marital status, nationality, political or religious beliefs, race, socioeconomic background or

sexual orientation, we would like to specifically invite applications from under-represented groups.

Data Protection and Privacy

Protecting your personal data is of the utmost importance to Perrett Laver and we take this responsibility very seriously. Any information obtained by our trading divisions is held and processed in accordance with the relevant data protection legislation. The data you provide us with is securely stored on our computerised database and transferred to our clients for the purposes of presenting you as a candidate and/or considering your suitability for a role you have registered interest in.

As defined under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) Perrett Laver is a Data Controller and a Data Processor, and our legal basis for processing your personal data is 'Legitimate Interests'. You have the right to object to us processing your data in this way. For more information about this, your rights, and our approach to Data Protection and Privacy, please visit our website <http://www.perrettlaver.com/information/privacy/>.



Daw Mi Mi (left), a health worker who lost her home in the earthquake in Myanmar, is among the women in her Inle Lake village selected to receive a new house through DEC-funded support.



© DEC

DEC CEO, Saleh Saeed, visits earthquake-affected communities in La Guaira, Venezuela, alongside World Vision CEO, Fola Komolafe.



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