

Guidelines for National Disaster Relief Fund (NDRF)

1. Background.

The National Disaster Relief Fund has been set up by the President in the aftermath of the heavy floods caused in the southern region of the island as a result of the torrential rains that struck the island during the period 27th January 2013 to 29th January 2013. An appeal was made nationwide and to international donors to contribute towards the Fund to help and rehabilitate those affected by the disaster and repair the heavy damages sustained.

2. Aim of the Guidelines

These guidelines are meant to ensure there are proper procedures in place for the:

- a. smooth operation of the Board
- b. activities of the Fund that should be as per the mandate of the Statutory Instrument and Act creating the Fund
- c. accounting of all monies received
- d. accounting of all payments made

They can be modified as per a quorum of the Board at any time. Whilst following these guidelines, the National Disaster Relief Fund Notice SI. 7 of 2013 will be adhered to in all respect and at all times.

3. Objective:

The objective of the Fund is clearly set out in the Statutory Instrument -SI 7 of 2013 of the Public Finance Act 9 of 2012, whereby the Fund is to:

- a. Raise funds from Governments, private individuals, corporations, associations and other institutions or bodies in Seychelles and elsewhere
- b. Use the funds:
 - i. To assist persons in cases of emergencies, such as floods, fires, epidemics, tsunamis, landslides and other natural causes
 - ii. To provide funds for rehabilitation of communities and the reconstruction of public infrastructure relating to such emergencies as listed above
 - iii. To provide funds for review of disaster risk assessment on prevention and mitigation and any reconstruction program related to risk management
 - iv. To provide temporary relief to small businesses which have suffered significantly through above causes by extending short term loans for purchase of equipment , raw materials or related products
 - v. To assist other charitable organizations in achieving the above objectives.

4. Source of Funds.

The National Disaster Relief Fund may accept funds or contributions in kind from any source both locally and from overseas.

5. Bank Accounts

The Fund will seek permission from the Ministry of Finance to operate bank accounts in a commercial bank. The Fund may operate different bank accounts but will have the main rupee and dollar accounts at Nouvobanq.

6. Payments

The cheque book will be held by the Treasurer and the Chairperson. There will be four signatories (2 Gos and 2 Private members). For all disbursements from the Fund there should be any two signatories.

7. Verification of disaster.

In order for distribution from the Fund to be activated, the geographic area to which the aid is to be sent must have been declared a disaster area by the Government. In all cases, the disaster has to be verified and cost of damages ascertained. Since there is already a mechanism with the Government appointed Task Force, the bodies responsible for Risk and Disaster Management and the Community Development, the Fund may use any as the focal point to make the assessment and distribution of funds in response to a request for assistance following a disaster. In addition, the Fund may appoint a Consultant or Expert and may use the resources of any other Government Ministry or Department to ascertain, cost the damages or to verify the authenticity of the request for assistance. The NDRF Board may also decide to verify and assess the damages themselves.

8. Requests for support

Requests for assistance to the Fund should be routed through such a Focal Point appointed by the Fund. Requests may also be considered directly especially from other LUNGOS-registered charitable organizations. All requests must be substantiated.

9. Disbursement of funds:

The appointed Focal Point will serve as the verifying agency and contact to confirm that a need for assistance exists. Factors the verifying agency may consider include the availability of other humanitarian aid, insurance, ability of individuals to pay, and the amount of funds available for distribution from the Fund.

10. Evaluation of application and processing procedures

a. Duly designed application forms must be completed in entirety, signed and dated by applicants requesting assistance. The applicant may obtain an application form online, or directly from any Board member of the Fund.

11. Eligible expenses.

Assistance from the Fund is intended to assist persons with immediate needs of daily living for those affected by a disaster. Distribution from the Fund may be used for short term expenses for food, clothing, lodging, medicine or other immediate needs. Funds may also be disbursed for infrastructure repairs and rehabilitation purposes.

12. Approval for support

A quorum of 3 members approval is needed for requests to be considered by the Fund and before disbursements are made.

13. The Fund does not cover:

- a. Losses already covered by insurance
- b. Non essential furnishings such as stereos, etc..
- c. Landscaping with trees, fences, driveways or retaining walls
- d. Vehicles
- e. Antiques and collections
- f. Loss of wages and income
- g. Personal injury or losses recoverable by law

14. The fund will cover

- a. Structural damage not covered by insurance to key community/public infrastructures
- b. Perishables foods/cooking materials/bedding materials
- c. Essential furnishings not covered by insurance in a private residence
- d. Uninsured tools or other items essential to a claimant's livelihood
- e. Emergency expenses, such as costs associated with evacuation or emergency supplies

15. Except in emergency cases immediately during and after a disaster, the Fund will use Government approved procedures in its procurement of goods and services and in its implementation of projects as mandated under its Act, as follows:

- a. For goods and services less than SR 150,000 direct procurement can be made and approved internally by the procuring entity.
- b. For procurement of goods and services above SR 150,000 but less than SR 750,000, three quotations must be obtained.
- c. For procurement of goods and services above SR 750,000, a public tender must be made

16. Loans

The Fund may approve for loans to be given. All requests for such loans will be only to small businesses, which will be managed by the Small Business Finance Agency.

17. Management of assets.

Money or assets received for the National Disaster Relief Fund will be invested until such time as it is needed for disaster relief. In order to provide quick response to needs which follow a disaster, assets will be kept in interest bearing accounts such as short term call deposit accounts,

or similar liquid arrangements. The Treasurer of the Fund will have the responsibility to manage the investment of funds in a manner approved by the members of the Fund.

18. Audit and report

A monthly report will be provided by the Treasurer of all monies received and a full report of distribution of the funds. The report will include names of those receiving aid, the amount, and the date the aid was delivered. Distribution of funds will only be made when there is money in the Fund. An annual audit of the Fund as per SI 7 will be made and published.

19. Board Meetings and proceedings

- Physical as well as virtual board meetings can be held.
- Communication and approvals can be made by email.
- The Board shall meet at least once every quarter .
- The Chairperson shall have a casting vote in instances where Board members cannot agree in majority on any matter brought to the Board.
- In the absence of the Chairperson, the Vice-Chairperson appointed will chair the meetings and take over the responsibilities of the chairperson

20. Donations and fundraising

Members can fundraise on behalf of the Fund. A template letter signed by the chair will be available for fundraising. A template letter signed by the chair will also be available for thanking donors. All donors will be provided with a receipt, as long as donors can be identified. Members can collect cheques and donations but these need to be deposited with the Treasurer within 48 hours of collection. The names, addresses and other contact details of donors must be acquired despite donors wanting to remain anonymous. The wishes of donors to remain anonymous must be respected. A list of donors will be published in the media and the website on a regular basis.

21. Donations in-kind

The Fund is not in a position to accept donations in kind. Persons pledging such donations will be referred to the Government District Authorities, the Red Cross and other charitable organisations as relevant.

22. Press and Media

Regular press information will be released through the office of the Chair. A spokesperson will be appointed from the Board for all communication to the media. The Board may appoint different persons at different times.

23. Public Information

A regular financial statement of the fund will be issued in the public domain.

