



The **Danish Refugee Council (DRC)** is Denmark's largest NGO. Founded in 1956, we assist refugees and displaced people, safeguarding rights and supporting self-reliance across the humanitarian-development-peace nexus. DRC works with displaced and host communities, delivering support in four core sectors: Protection; Economic Recovery; Humanitarian Disarmament & Peacebuilding; and Shelter, WASH, and Infrastructure.

Diaspora Emergency Response

Our Approach and Impact

Humanitarian crises are increasingly complex, fast-moving, and underfunded, requiring innovative, rapid, and locally grounded responses. Yet, traditional humanitarian mechanisms often face delays due to gaps in access, coordination, and resources.

Diaspora actors are uniquely positioned to address these gaps. Rooted in the communities they serve, they possess trust, cultural knowledge, and local intelligence. They are guided by the priorities, needs, and agendas of the communities themselves, ensuring that responses are contextually appropriate and locally owned. They are often among the first to mobilize, channeling funds rapidly and flexibly through established networks that circumvent bureaucratic bottlenecks. In hard-to-reach areas, their longstanding local connections provide access that remains unavailable to outside responders. Because their commitment is relational, they remain engaged well beyond the acute phase of a crisis, sustaining the vital link between emergency response, recovery, and long-term resilience building.

With over 15 years of experience, DRC has established itself as a global leader in diaspora emergency response. Through strategic partnerships, innovative approaches, and sustained engagement, DRC connects diaspora actors with local communities, humanitarian institutions, and key stakeholders to enable timely, coordinated, and impactful crisis response.

What does DRC deliver?

DRC delivers an integrated and phased approach to diaspora-led emergency response through engagement with diaspora communities from over 40 countries, DRC leverages the capacities of diaspora actors within its core sectors and priorities to ensure timely, dignified, and sustainable impact:

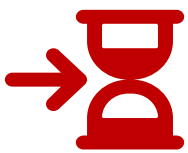
- ⇒ **Emergency Assistance:** Supporting the role of diaspora networks to mobilize and deliver life-saving support to hard-to-reach and underserved communities - including shelter, food, and WASH services.
- ⇒ **Innovative Finance and Economic Recovery:** Harnessing diaspora economic engagement—such as crowdfunding, private sector partnerships, and remittance channels—to rapidly mobilize resources for affected communities.

- ⇒ Localization: Helping local communities harness their diaspora networks to drive locally led responses where meaningful localization remains difficult.
- ⇒ Protection: Cross-cutting within the humanitarian-development-peace nexus approach, DRC supports diaspora networks in relaying critical protection information, providing psychological first aid, and amplifying the voices of displaced communities.
- ⇒ Humanitarian Disarmament and Peacebuilding (HDP): Recognizing that diaspora’s engagement is often diverse and complex, DRC applies conflict-sensitive approaches to build trusted diaspora networks, promotes constructive dialogue and social cohesion, and connect diaspora actors with local and institutional stakeholders.

How DRC delivers

Aligned with DRC’s Integrated Emergency Response Framework, DRC operationalizes diaspora emergency response through a structured, multi-phase model that integrates anticipatory action, emergency response, and recovery within a nexus approach.

Our approach encompasses four vital phases:



Anticipatory Action: acting early, responding better

DRC leverages advanced forecasting and risk analysis to anticipate crises and strengthen preparedness. Through training, scenario planning, and network-building, DRC enhances diaspora readiness and early warning capacities.

Emergency Response: mobilized, scalable and coordinated action



When emergencies occur, DRC conducts rapid diaspora operational capacity assessment in direct engagement with diaspora actors and communities. DRC then deploys diaspora liaison officers to connect diaspora actors with formal humanitarian mechanisms and local partners. DRC supports flexible financing models, including crowdfunding and community-led cash transfers, to accelerate resource mobilization and coordinated action.



From Emergency to Recovery: A Nexus approach

In the aftermath of crises, DRC sustains diaspora engagement by facilitating partnerships with institutional actors and supporting long-term recovery and resilience-building initiatives.

Diaspora Emergency in Action & Coordination (DEMAC)

Founded in 2015, DEMAC is a global initiative that strengthens coordination and collaboration among diaspora organizations engaged in humanitarian action, and between diaspora actors, local partners, and institutional humanitarian stakeholders. DEMAC promotes the visibility and meaningful inclusion of diaspora organizations within the humanitarian system, contributes to a deeper understanding of diasporas as humanitarian actors, and supports the transformation of humanitarian practice. DEMAC advances these objectives by:

- ⇒ Enhancing knowledge and raising awareness about diaspora humanitarian engagement;
- ⇒ Building diaspora capacity to contribute to humanitarian responses in close collaboration with local actors, as well as institutional actors' capacity to be more inclusive;
- ⇒ Strengthening diaspora coordination mechanisms to build trust, share information and collaborate with local and other institutional actors

Since 2015, DEMAC has contributed to DRC's diaspora engagement and emergency response through the following examples:

Ukraine response: DEMAC's most notable engagement has been with the Ukrainian diaspora, where collaboration began in 2020, prior to the Russian full-scale invasion in February 2022. Since then, DEMAC has engaged with 91 Ukrainian diaspora organisations worldwide, establishing trusted partnerships and providing early capacity-strengthening support. This proactive approach enabled a rapid scale-up of diaspora-led response efforts when humanitarian needs escalated. Between February 2022 and the subsequent period, the Ukrainian diaspora delivered 17,600 tonnes of humanitarian aid and supported the evacuation of 111,764 people. DEMAC continues to sustain this engagement through ongoing capacity strengthening and facilitated access to international humanitarian and peace forums.

Somali Diaspora Coordination: In partnership with IOM, DEMAC strengthened the engagement of Somali diaspora organisations through the establishment of the Somali Diaspora Emergency Coordination Humanitarian Platform (SODECH). In 2025, SODECH brought together 79 diaspora organisations to share practices, coordinate responses to floods and droughts, and engage collectively with local actors, institutional stakeholders, and the Somali government.

Diaspora engagement in Anticipatory Action: Through DRC's Anticipatory Humanitarian Action for Displacement project (AHEAD) running from 2024 to 2027, DEMAC strengthens the role of diaspora organisations in anticipatory action across displacement contexts in Burkina Faso, Niger, South Sudan, Uganda, Ethiopia, Somalia, Yemen, and Myanmar. The initiative supports diaspora actors and their local partners to engage in anticipatory action frameworks by enhancing preparedness, strengthening access to early warning tools, building operational capacities, and fostering collaboration with local humanitarian actors.

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