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## HOW YOU CAN HELP PEOPLE AFFECTED BY THE EARTHQUAKE IN ECUADOR

The most effective way to support people affected by disaster events, including the recent 7.8 magnitude earthquake in Ecuador, is to provide monetary donations to relief and charitable organizations working directly with affected populations. Even very small cash donations make a significant difference, thanks to relief and charitable organizations' bulk purchasing power. Monetary donations are the simplest option for donors, the most efficient for relief and charitable organizations, and the most effective for survivors, as they:

- Enable relief organizations to respond to urgent needs as they arise, which happens frequently in the early stages of an emergency response;
- Facilitate programs that material donations cannot support, including search and rescue operations, emergency medical services, family reunification initiatives, and trauma counseling; and
- Allow the local purchase of much-needed goods, ensuring that supplies are fresh and familiar to survivors, acquired in needed quantities, and culturally, nutritionally and environmentally appropriate. These purchases in turn support local merchants and economies, which strengthens and speeds recovery.

Some community groups and civic organizations feel a strong desire to provide material donations, often in the form of clothing, canned food, bottled water, and other household items. While well-intentioned, these donations can actually delay the delivery of life-saving services and supplies to survivors and are costly and time-consuming for relief organizations to manage.

If monetary donations are not possible, prospective donors are asked to donate according to these guidelines:

- “Connect before you collect” by identifying a relief or charitable organization that has specifically requested the items before the collection begins;
- Ensure that all material donations are directed to a consignee that can receive, manage, and distribute them;
- Ensure all documentation for the shipment are in order, including customs clearance, inspections, and port fees; and
- Arrange transportation before the collection begins.

For more information on the impact of non-cash donations, go to [www.cidi.org](http://www.cidi.org). For more information on the U.S. government's humanitarian assistance efforts in Ecuador, please see <https://www.usaid.gov/crisis/ecuador>.