**FLASH 7-**

* **UNITED NATIONS JOINT STAFF EMERGENCY FUND IN SUPPORT OF UN RETIREES IN EARTHQUAKE-STRIKEN AREAS IN CENTRAL ITALY.**
* **FFOA EMERGENCY FUND**

Dear Members,

As you may be aware, the UNITED NATIONS JOINT STAFF PENSION FUND (UNJSPF) operates an **EMERGENCY FUND** (financed from its own assets and voluntary contributions), which makes available funds to provide financial assistance to beneficiaries in receipt of a UN pension. These emergency funds are intended to provide relief in individual cases of proven hardship owing to a variety of exceptional circumstances including natural disasters.

FFOA has learnt recently that the Chief Executive Officer of the UNJSPF has approved activation (in a streamlined modality) of the Emergency Fund for regions affected by the earthquake in Central Italy (similarly with what done in other natural disaster areas in the past). While the Fund will directly inform retirees and beneficiaries residing in those areas, FFOA wishes to bring all its members up-to-date on the availability of this benefit as it may apply to them.

A number of limitations apply to the release of emergency funds which are not intended to supplement pensions considered insufficient or to become a source for loans for educations or other family requirements. Applications are normally examined without a rigid set of rules while consideration is given to a number of factors such as age, numbers of years of contributory service, other possible sources of income etc. It should be noted that amounts released under this scheme are usually relatively small.

Individual requests are normally submitted through the Secretaries of the local Staff Pension Committees (in this case, requests should be addressed to the Secretary of the FAO/WFP Staff Pension Committee or the IFAD Staff Pension Committee. FFOA expects that details, forms, criteria and amounts available to individuals will be communicated to eligible retirees shortly. Examples of emergencies creating hardship that were considered in the past include

* Removal costs due to an emergency that may have been caused by the destruction of leaving quarters by natural disasters
* Temporary shelter needed because of the destruction of and/or major damage to living quarters, and replacement of a minimum of household effects in the case of fire or natural disasters
* Assistance may also be provided in certain cases when pensioners must spend time residing in assisted living facilities or nursing homes.

The above cases are listed above only as possible examples, we recommend interested members to wait until specific guidelines and instructions are received from the UNJSPF.

Our associations will remain vigilant on developments and inform members on a timely basis. We will also stand ready to assist members who may require further guidance or clarification.

We would like to remind interested members of the **FFOA Emergency Fund (FEF)** which operates under circumstances similar to those of the UNJSPF. Queries on the FFOA Fund can be directed to the FFOA office while applicants should address their request for assistance in writing to the Chairperson of the Emergency Fund Committee Ms Joan Smidt at joan\_smidt@libero.it

We would like to take this opportunity to express our solidarity and wish prompt recovery to all members affected by this severe natural disaster. All the FFOA Executive Committee Members will be at your disposal for advice.

Regards,

Alan Prien

President, FFOA