Volunteers of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) help to distribute food in Biera, Mozambique, after floods this summer (pictured).

The BMJ’s appeal this year is for the IFRC, the world’s largest humanitarian network, brings together local Red Cross and Red Crescent societies in 192 countries and almost 15 million people volunteering for the good of humanity. They reach 160 million people every year through long term services, development programmes, and disaster response. They also work to improve global humanitarian standards and persuade leaders to act in the interests of vulnerable people.

Recent IFRC actions have included disaster relief in the earthquake hit Cianjur district in West Java, Indonesia, in November. As the power grid went out, communications such as the mobile phone network were also disrupted. Access from neighbouring Bogor district, south of Jakarta, was blocked by landslides.

In Pakistan the August floods left almost a thousand people dead, including children, as ravaging floodwater displaced over 3.1 million people while damaging more than half a million homes in many districts across the country. Almost 710,000 livestock were lost, and thousands of kilometres of roads and bridges were destroyed. The floods caused earthquake-like destruction. Pakistan Red Crescent, supported by IFRC, has reached more than 584,000 people with emergency lifesaving assistance.

In Afghanistan more than 50% of schools have no latrines, handwashing facilities, or drinkable water. The Afghan Red Crescent, supported by IFRC, is working to bring safe drinking water, boys’ and girls’ toilets, and handwashing stations to schools across the country.

Support the mission of the IFRC across the world. Please donate online at https://bit.ly/IFRC-TheBMJ.