ETHIOPIA HUMANITARIAN FUND
IN BRIEF
Since its establishment in 2006, the Ethiopia Humanitarian Fund (EHF) responded to disasters triggered by natural hazards, such as droughts, floods and outbreaks of diseases, as well as conflict-related crises. The EHF aims to support the timely disbursement of funds to the most critical humanitarian needs in the context of the annual Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) and also unforeseen emergency needs.

Since 2006, the EHF has mobilized US$ 604 million and allocated some $600 million to 1,011 projects through 59 partners, including United Nations (UN) agencies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

In 2019, the EHF allocated $60 million supporting 127 projects in the Nutrition, WaSH, Health, Protection, Emergency Shelter and Non-Food Items (ES/NFI), Agriculture, Common Services and Education clusters. Funding is received from twelve donors namely Canada, Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, Ireland, Korea, New Zealand, Sweden, United Kingdom and the United States.

**Objectives of the Ethiopia Humanitarian Fund**

The EHF enables the delivery of humanitarian assistance by specifically focusing on:

1. Ensuring more adequate, timely, flexible and effective humanitarian financing through the use of the pooled funding mechanism,
2. Ensuring well prioritized use of resources, primarily in support of the needs and strategies outlined in the national HRP,
3. Empowering the Humanitarian Coordinator to enhance coordination,
4. Supporting coordination efforts through the cluster approach,
5. Enhancing partnerships between UN and non-UN actors.

**An effective tool to address needs**

Donor contributions to the EHF are un-earmarked. The Humanitarian Coordinator (HC) allocates funding through a consultative process, based on identified humanitarian needs and priorities at the country level. Inclusiveness, flexibility, timeliness, efficiency, partnership, transparency and value for money are the principles which underpin the use of the EHF.

**Allocation modalities**

The EHF has two windows for allocating funds: (a) Standard Allocation and (b) Reserve Allocation. At the HC’s discretion and following on the HRP and the inter-agency prioritization exercises, the Fund issues a Standard Allocation for collectively identified strategic needs. Cluster coordinators drive the prioritization exercise and the HC, in consultation with the Advisory Board (AB), will determine the amount to be allocated through the Standard Allocation. The Reserve Allocation is open for proposals throughout the year, responding to humanitarian needs identified in the HRP and other emerging humanitarian needs.
Coordination Saves Lives

Allocation parameters
The maximum allowable grant amount will be determined and disbursed in tranches on the basis of project duration, partner capacity and risk levels.

Eligibility
Eligible recipients include UN agencies, NGOs and the Ethiopian Red Cross. International and national NGOs (INGOs and NNGOs) participate in the due diligence and capacity assessment processes to determine their eligibility.

Leadership and Governance
The activities of the EHF is carried out under the overall leadership of the HC, supported by the Advisory Board, Advisory Board Technical Working Group (ABTWG) and an OCHA-led Humanitarian Financing Unit (HFU) that fulfills the EHF’s secretariat functions. The HC chairs the Advisory Board, which includes senior-level participation of donors, UN organizations (in their capacity as cluster lead agencies) and NGO representatives (INGOs and NNGOs). Cluster coordinators, in consultation with Government counterparts, play a key role in prioritization as well as project review at both strategic and technical levels. OCHA chairs the Advisory Board Technical Working Group, which includes technical level experts representing donors, UN agencies, international and national NGOs. Humanitarian donors attend as observers.

Accountability Framework
The EHF accountability framework strikes a balance between providing assistance to people in need, while implementing viable and effective oversight mechanisms. These accountability management efforts include:

- Development of an accountability framework, including a Risk Management Framework to identify risks to the EHF, analyse their potential impact and create strategies to mitigate them,
- Establishment of proper governance mechanisms to ensure the transparency and quality of allocation decisions,
- Verification of partner eligibility and capacity through clear due diligence and capacity assessment processes,
- Tracking performance of each grant recipient throughout the project implementation and closeout,
- Development of clear monitoring, reporting and audit requirements,
- Compliance to OCHA’s Global Guidelines for Country-Based Pooled Funds (CBPF).

Transparency
The OCHA HFU generates periodic public information products at appropriate stages during the year with information on donor contributions and allocations, including the EHF Update, Allocation Dashboards and Costing Matrix.

The HC, supported by OCHA HFU and in close consultation with the Cluster Coordinators, prepares the narrative Annual Report of the EHF activities based on information that each participating UN agency and NGO partner provides. Published at the beginning of the second quarter of the following year, the Annual Report features best practices, lessons learned and challenges, and showcases the achievements of the Fund.
The humanitarian landscape in 2019 was characterized by adverse situations including conflict/violence and displacement, impact of drought resulting in food insecurity, unseasonal rainfall which caused flooding, disease outbreaks and desert locust infestations that continue to pose challenges. The year began with 8.3 million people requiring food and non-food assistance, which quickly grew to 8.6 million before mid-year due to increasing conflict-related displacements. Floods and disease outbreaks exacerbated the already dire humanitarian situation.

During the year, there were frequent incidences of inter-communal violence as well as clashes between Government forces and unidentified armed groups in various pocket areas. The situation remains fragile in communities that were affected by conflict. From March to May 2019, the southern and southeastern parts of Ethiopia suffered from late-onset, erratic and below-average gu/ganna (March-May) rains. The overall 2019 belg (June/July) harvests were below average in most belg-producing areas of Amhara, Oromia, SNPP and Tigray regions, which led to a significant reduction in household access to food. Delayed or failed planting of crops, particularly in lowland areas of Bale, East and West Hararge zones, and delayed planting in northeastern Amhara and southern Tigray led to either no production or a delay in harvesting. In pastoralist areas of Somali region, and the lowlands of East and West Hararge zones of Oromia region, livestock deaths were reported due to significant water shortages although improvements were reported in some parts after Mid-May. On the other hand, unseasonable rainfall continued in November 2019, which negatively impacted the meher harvest in parts of Amhara, Oromia and Tigray regions. Since most meher (June to September) crops were at the ripening and harvesting stages, the unseasonable rainfall caused crop seed shattering and rotting.

Meanwhile, desert locust infestations continue to threaten a further reduction of the meher harvest. According to FAO, locusts infested an estimated 56 woredas of Afar, Amhara, Oromia, Somali and Tigray regions. In Amhara alone, nearly 75,000 hectares of crop and rangelands were infested according to the Regional Bureau of Agriculture. In localized areas, households began harvesting immature crops to avoid large-scale crop losses. In affected pastoralist areas of Afar, Oromia and Somali regions, desert locusts are feeding on pasture and vegetation, which deteriorated pasture availability for livestock. Desert locusts are expected to continue hatching, specifically in Somali region, as conditions are largely favorable for breeding.

The Government and humanitarian partners are also dealing with the impacts of floods following unseasonal and/or extended heavy rainfall which caused severe damage to infrastructure and livelihoods in many parts of the country. Floods during this season affected more than 790,000 people in Afar, Amhara, Gambella, Oromia, SNPP, Somali and Tigray regions.

In addition, Ethiopia remains vulnerable to epidemic outbreaks where cholera remains one of the major public health hazards throughout the country. As of mid-November 2019, nearly 2,000 cases of cholera were reported in Ethiopia in 2019 from almost all regions. Other epidemics in 2019 in Ethiopia include measles, polio, malaria and chikungunya. As of November 2019, nearly 9,000 suspected measles cases were reported from Afar, Amhara, Oromia, SNPP and Somali regions, including among adults up to 45 years of age while over 53,000 suspected cases of chikungunya were reported in Dire Dawa City Administration and Afar region, and polio outbreak were reported in Oromia and Somali regions during the year.

The communities who suffered consecutive years of severe drought and who have lost productive assets due to the compounded effects of the above-mentioned hazards will continue to rely on humanitarian assistance and recovery support for the coming year. Moreover, in the run-up to the 2020 national election and its results, more violence-induced displacements are likely to occur.

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