

# Pathway to Recovery



**Impact and Insights from World Vision's  
Northern Ethiopia Crisis Response**

November 2024





Our vision  
for every  
child is  
life in all  
its  
fullness.  
Our  
prayer for  
every  
heart is  
the will to  
make it so



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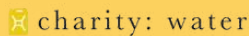


# ACRONYMS

- AAP- Accountability to Affected Populations
- AP - Area programme
- BHA- Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance
- CHD-Community Health and Development
- CHS- Core Humanitarian Standard
- CFRM- Community Feedback and Response Mechanism
- CFS - Child Friendly Space
- EMS- Emergency Management Structure
- ESNFI - Emergency Shelter Non-Food Items
- GAC - Global Affairs Canada
- GBV - Gender-Based Violence
- GIK - Grant in Cash
- HEA - Humanitarian Emergency Affairs
- IDP - Internally Displaced Person
- KVA- Kilo-volt-amperes
- MHPSS- Mental Health and Psycho-Social Support
- MAM - Moderate Acute Malnutrition
- MHNT - Mobile and Health Nutrition Team
- NGO - Non-Governmental Organization
- NFI - Non-Food Items
- PLWs- Pregnant and Lactating Women
- PNS - Private Non-Sector
- RUTF - Ready-to-Use Therapeutic Food
- Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA)
- SAM- Severe Acute Malnutrition
- SMAP- Standardized Monitoring and Accountability Platform
- SOP - Standard Operating Procedures
- Supply Chain Management (SCM)
- UN - United Nations
- UNFPA - United Nations Population Fund
- UNICEF- United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
- UNHCR - United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
- UNOCHA - United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
- USAID - United States Agency for International Development
- WFP - World Food Programme
- WGSS - Women and Girl's Safe Space
- WHO - World Health Organization
- WVE - World Vision Ethiopia
- WV - World Vision

# DONORS

We extend our deepest gratitude to our generous donors and partners for their unwavering support and commitment to the Northern Ethiopia Crisis Response (NECR). Your contributions have been instrumental in transforming lives, restoring hope, and building resilience in communities affected by the conflict.





**Karmen Till**  
**National Director,**  
**World Vision Ethiopia**

As we reflect on the Northern Ethiopia Crisis Response (NECR), I am deeply moved by the profound resilience, strength, and courage demonstrated by the communities we serve. This booklet captures not only the scope of our work in addressing the crisis but also the incredible partnerships and unwavering commitment that have made this response possible and driven our impact.

At World Vision Ethiopia, our mission is rooted in addressing the multifaceted needs of vulnerable populations through a holistic approach, combining emergency relief, long-term development, and community empowerment. The NECR journey really stands as a powerful testament to this vision. Together with local and international partners, and our dedicated staff, we have delivered life-saving support to alleviate the suffering of millions of children and their families, while laying the foundation for sustainable recovery and resilience. Our programs in health, protection, education, and livelihoods are a strong statement to our collaboration and partnerships.

## MESSAGE FROM THE NATIONAL DIRECTOR

Let the lessons and insights gained from NECR serve as an encouragement of our strength as an office and our ability to adapt in an extraordinarily complex and rapidly changing environment. I hope these experiences inspire confidence in our capacity and continue to strengthen our response strategies and prepare us for future challenges. I believe this crisis has demonstrated what is possible when resources, expertise, and compassion converge.

I extend my heartfelt gratitude to all who have contributed to this journey, our partners, donors, staff of World Vision Ethiopia, the Region and the Global team, as well as the communities we were privileged to serve during those challenging times. As we transition from emergency response to recovery and hopefully long-term development through our Area Programs, we remain committed to helping these communities rebuild their lives and address ongoing critical needs, even as peace has returned and the situation has improved.

Thank you for standing with us as we work towards a brighter and more hopeful and a brighter future for every child and family we serve in Ethiopia



# MESSAGE FROM THE RESPONSE DIRECTOR



**Lilian Mumbi Kamonjo**  
**Director,**  
**Northern Ethiopia Crisis Response**

Reflecting on the journey and achievements of World Vision's Northern Ethiopia Crisis Response (NECR), I am deeply moved by the resilience and dedication of our teams, partners, and the communities we serve. Together, we have navigated immense challenges in conflict-affected regions with agility, compassion, and a shared commitment to creating lasting change.

NECR has demonstrated that effective humanitarian response goes beyond immediate aid delivery. By integrating health, education, protection, and livelihood support, and partnering with local organizations, the UN, and community leaders, we have laid a strong foundation for sustained impact. The introduction of our Nexus model, bridging emergency relief, development, and peacebuilding, has been particularly transformative, offering communities a path to recovery and resilience.

The achievements highlighted in this booklet are a testament to the generosity of our donors, the expertise and dedication of our staff, and the courage of the people we serve. As we look to the future, I am confident that the insights and lessons from NECR will inspire further innovation and strengthen our response, setting a model for impactful humanitarian work in complex environments.

Thank you for being part of this journey toward hope and transformation.



# BACKGROUND

The Northern Ethiopia Crisis between the Federal government and Tigray regional forces began in November 2020, triggering a devastating humanitarian emergency. The armed conflict that started in the Tigray region rapidly escalated, spreading to the neighboring Amhara and Afar regions, displacing millions and leaving countless families vulnerable.

The devastating impact included mass displacement, widespread destruction of infrastructure, and a catastrophic disruption of livelihoods. Millions were forced to flee their homes, while countless others were trapped in areas with limited or no access to basic necessities. Vulnerable groups, particularly women and children, faced severe risks, including food insecurity, malnutrition, lack of access to health care, and education, and an increased threat of gender-based violence.

In response, World Vision Ethiopia (WVE) declared a national CAT III response in December 2020. Recognizing the scale of the crisis, the response expanded to cover all affected regions and was declared a CAT III Global Response in July 2021. Guided by a commitment to alleviate suffering and restore dignity, WVE implemented a multi-sectoral approach to deliver life-saving aid and build resilience in affected communities.

Through collaboration with donors, local partners, and humanitarian actors, WVE mobilized over US\$314.8 million to address the urgent needs of conflict-affected populations. The response provided critical food assistance, water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) services, health and nutrition support, education, child protection, and livelihood recovery initiatives.

Over its duration, the NECR reached over 8 million people, including 4 million children.

As the NECR concludes on September 30, 2024, this impact booklet captures its key achievements, challenges, and lessons learned. It reflects WVE's unwavering dedication to supporting vulnerable communities during times of crisis and creating pathways toward recovery, resilience, and lasting hope.

# NECR OVERVIEW

NECR has been at the forefront of responding to the complex and evolving crises in Northern Ethiopia since December 2020. Initially launched as a six-month national emergency response, the intervention was soon elevated to a Category III Global response for the Tigray region due to the expanding conflict. By July 2021, as the crisis deepened and spread across the regions, World Vision declared the Northern Ethiopia Crisis Response (NECR) a Category III Global response across Tigray, Amhara, and Afar regions.

Over the past four years, the NECR has tackled immense humanitarian needs, underscoring World Vision's commitment to the Ethiopian people and leveraging the organization's significant reach and capacity within the country. NECR's mission has been to deliver life-saving assistance, support community resilience, and improve the well-being of vulnerable populations—especially children, women, and displaced families.

The NECR was designed to address both urgent and long-term needs with specific, measurable objectives, including:

- Enhancing access to life-saving and sustaining services that uphold dignity, well-being, and self-reliance among affected populations.
- Creating safer environments and improving access to protective services, with a focus on the most vulnerable groups.
- Enhanced coordination and support to strengthen the capacity of local peace and development actors to build the capacity for social cohesion and resilience among internally displaced persons (IDPs), returnees, and host communities.



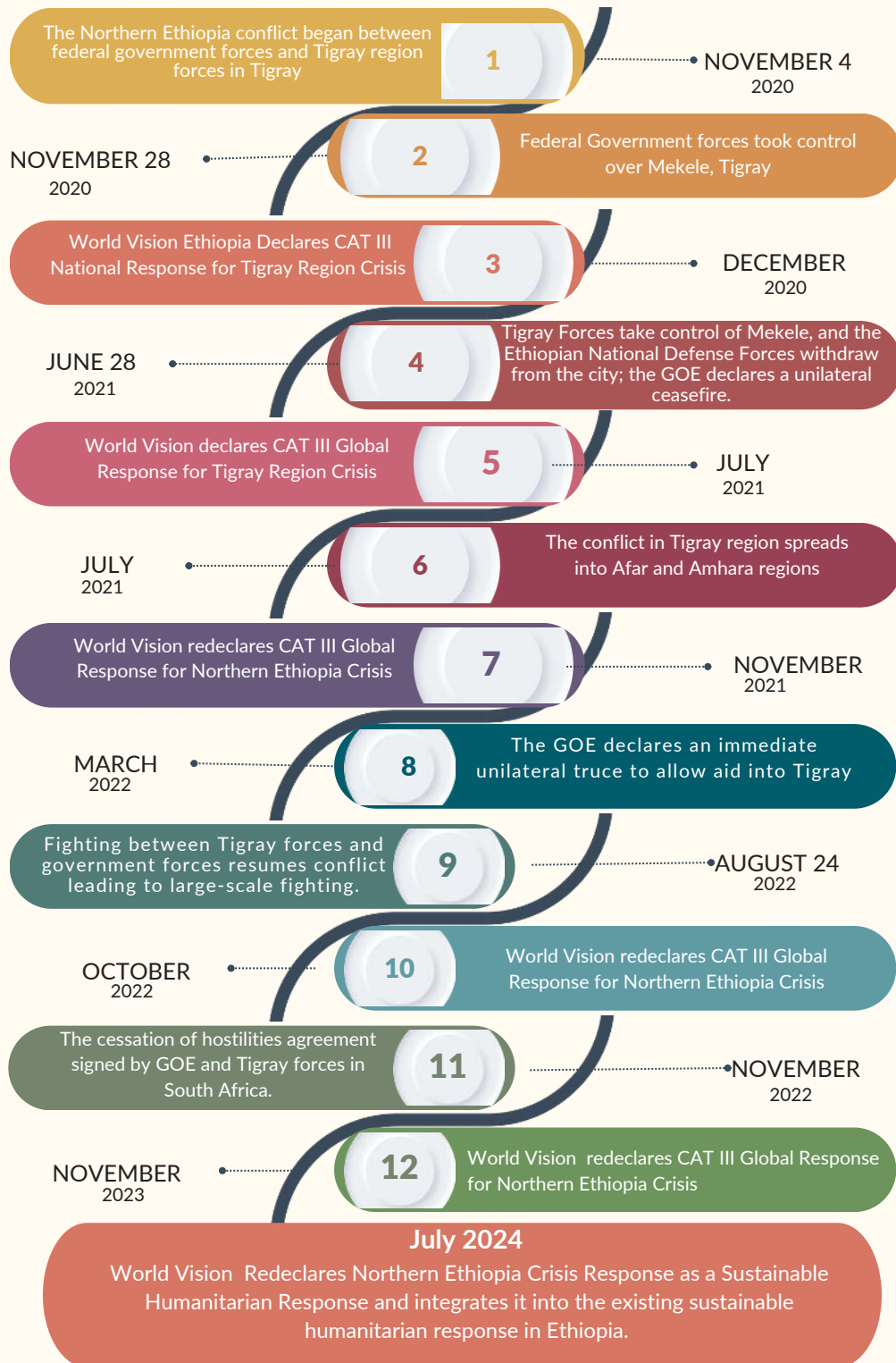
- Improved organizational capacity to respond to evolving humanitarian needs of affected communities.

WVE's response was comprehensive, combining emergency food distribution and livelihood, WASH, health, nutrition, education, and protection. This multifaceted approach ensured that both immediate relief and sustainable support were available across Tigray, Amhara, and Afar. NECR operates across sixteen zones, focusing on the most vulnerable, including IDPs, returnees, host communities, women, children, and marginalized groups.

By fostering partnerships with other organizations, NECR amplified its impact and strengthened collaborative efforts to address the crisis. This collaborative model not only maximized resource use but also built lasting support networks to empower affected communities as they recover and rebuild.



# RESPONSE TIMELINE



# The Conflict Impact & Humanitarian Needs

Since the outbreak of conflict in November 2020, Northern Ethiopia has faced a complex and escalating humanitarian crisis, with profound impacts on the regions of Tigray, Amhara, and Afar. The hostilities initially concentrated in Tigray quickly expanded in mid-2021 to Amhara and Afar, exacerbating the existing challenges of drought and displacement. These compounded crises have intensified the need for humanitarian assistance, impacting every aspect of life, from food security and healthcare to shelter and basic services.

The conflict has led to widespread destruction of infrastructure, severe displacement, and restricted humanitarian access. Across the three regions, approximately 1.6 million people remain displaced:

- **Tigray:** About 1 million internally displaced persons (IDPs) are housed in temporary IDP shelters, including schools, limiting access to education and increasing vulnerabilities.
- **Amhara:** An estimated 580,000 people are displaced due to conflict, requiring significant food and health support.
- **Afar:** Hosting around 837,100 returnees, many of whom returned spontaneously to communities with limited resources and support systems.

Food insecurity has been one of the most urgent needs, as conflict has disrupted local agriculture and livelihoods:

- Once among the least food-insecure regions, Tigray faced catastrophic conditions by mid-2021, with 350,000 people at famine levels (IPC Phase 5). By October 2021, 5.2 million people—91% of the population—required food assistance, and the number of people facing emergency (Phase 4) conditions continued to climb.


- Conflict and drought have left nearly 5.6 million people in Amhara with severe food shortages. Acute malnutrition is widespread, with Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM) rates reaching 20.8% in areas affected by drought.
- Around 2.2 million people in Afar are food insecure, struggling with conflict and persistent drought. Malnutrition rates are high, especially among children and pregnant or lactating women, and therapeutic feeding programs are in short supply.

As of 2022, the World Food Programme (WFP) estimated that 11.2 million people in Tigray, Amhara, and Afar required immediate food assistance. This alarming situation is attributed to a mix of conflict-induced displacement, restricted market access, and agricultural disruption, all of which have driven food insecurity to critical levels.

The destruction of health facilities has severely limited access to medical care. A Health Cluster report documented that 78% of health posts, 72% of health centers, and 80% of hospitals across Tigray have been destroyed. Most of the health facilities in the conflict-affected areas of the Afar and Amhara regions were also destroyed, looted, and damaged. This decimation of healthcare resources has led to:

- High maternal mortality rates due to a lack of maternal health services.
- A rise in disease outbreaks, including malaria, measles, and cholera, amid poor access to clean water and sanitation.
- Disrupted immunization services, with health systems struggling to meet basic healthcare needs.



A young boy with short dark hair is shown in profile, looking towards the right. He is wearing a red short-sleeved shirt with a dark pattern. The lighting is dramatic, with strong highlights on his face and shirt, and deep shadows elsewhere. The background is dark and out of focus, suggesting an indoor setting.

**Children: The Silent Victims of Conflict.**  
*Though the active fighting has ended, these children continue to face immense challenges, calling for everyone's support as they strive for brighter days.*



The volatile situation has constrained movement and humanitarian operations, with Tigray experiencing a “de facto blockade” that left only 10% of the required aid reaching the region by late 2021. Ongoing restrictions on transportation, fuel, and humanitarian supplies have also limited access to healthcare, food, and shelter for millions. Moreover, restrictions on movement, absence of fuel, bank, and a communications blackout across Tigray have compounded the challenges. Humanitarian agencies have faced increasing risks, with 23 aid workers losing their lives by September 2021 and numerous others detained amid operational constraints.

Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) services are critically lacking and many communities do not have access to clean water due to the impact of the conflict. Poor WASH conditions have intensified health risks such as contaminated water sources and inadequate sanitation has increased vulnerability to waterborne diseases.

Many displaced families are living in unsanitary conditions in overcrowded temporary shelters, further exacerbating health risks.

The conflict has disrupted education for millions of children, with approximately 2.6 million school-aged children out of school due to the conflict. In Tigray, where many schools are used as temporary shelters for IDPs, access to education is especially limited, depriving children of essential learning and social stability.

The widespread violence and displacement have led to heightened protection needs, particularly for children, women, and other vulnerable groups. Trauma from conflict, displacement, and loss has created a need for mental health and psychosocial support, yet resources in this area are limited. Additionally, children are particularly at risk, facing physical, emotional, and psychological impacts from exposure to conflict and instability.

The crisis in Northern Ethiopia demands an urgent and sustained humanitarian response. With vast unmet needs in food security, health, shelter, and basic services, the situation remains critical. Addressing these urgent needs will require a coordinated effort to support affected communities, rebuild infrastructure, and restore hope for millions struggling to survive and recover in the face of this prolonged crisis.



# NECR Summary

## TOTAL REACH

(December 2020- September 2024)



8.9 Million



4.1 Million



2.65 Million



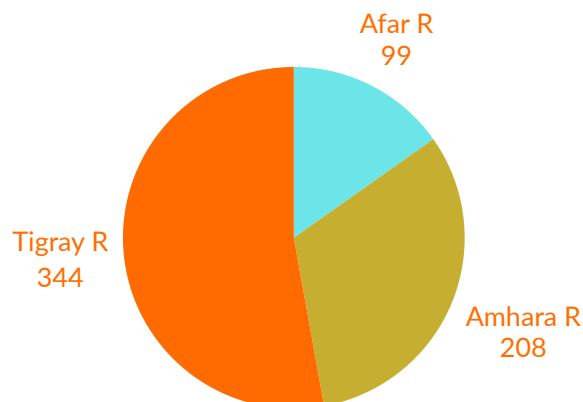
2.2 Million



TOTAL FUNDING (US\$)- 314 MILLION

## STAFF SUMMARY BY REGION

651 Total Staff



# Donor Partnership

The success of the Northern Ethiopia Crisis Response (NECR) was founded on strong collaboration with a diverse network of donors and partners. Support offices from the United States, Canada, Taiwan, Germany, Ireland, Australia, and Japan played a pivotal role, alongside international organizations such as USAID, GAC, Japan Platform, Irish Aid, the German Relief Coalition, Charity: Water, the Hilton Foundation, and others. Additionally, resources from intergovernmental organizations like the EU and UN agencies, including WFP, OCHA (EHF), UNHCR, UNICEF, UNFPA, WHO, and FAO, provided critical funding and support.

These partnerships ensured well-coordinated and impactful interventions, enabling rapid responses to the urgent needs of affected communities. Local partners, including regional government bodies and community organizations, were instrumental in the effective implementation of NECR initiatives. Their engagement ensured that the needed humanitarian assistance could reach the most vulnerable populations efficiently while fostering local ownership and long-term sustainability.

NECR significantly broadened World Vision's donor network, attracting notable contributors like the World Food Programme (WFP), Hilton Foundation, Charity Water, and UNFPA as well as strengthening the relationship with USAID. These partnerships enhanced WV's financial and operational capacity, aligning NECR's goals with key donor priorities such as food security, health, and child protection. For example, WFP's

focus on improving food distribution complemented NECR's tackling food insecurity and malnutrition initiatives, while UNICEF's child protection and education goals aligned seamlessly with NECR's efforts to safeguard vulnerable children. This strategic alignment facilitated increased funding, integrated operational support, and expanded services in all crisis-affected regions.

A key takeaway from NECR was its effective integration of emergency grant management and donor-based expansion. Streamlined processes enabled WV to acquire new grants, maintain strong donor relationships, and respond proactively to emerging funding opportunities. This approach ensured readiness for future humanitarian needs while enhancing programme efficiency.

NECR also leveraged smaller Private Non-Sector (PNS) projects to integrate emergency efforts with existing grants, addressing immediate needs while rehabilitating social structures and laying the groundwork for sustainable development.

The collective efforts of international and local partners, alongside strategic donor engagement, were pivotal in the success of NECR. These partnerships not only amplified the impact of emergency interventions but also contributed to sustainable recovery and resilience in Northern Ethiopia. World Vision is deeply grateful to all donors and partners whose support has helped transform lives and restore hope in the aftermath of the conflict.



# NECR's IMPACT



 WASH



# Water of Hope: Restoring Lives

## In the Heart of Change: Hayat's Story

In Burka Guro Arba kebele, North Wollo Zone of the Amhara region, 18-year-old Hayat Alemnew reflects on a life shaped by both tragedy and resilience. After losing her father to the conflict in January 2021, Hayat and her mother faced another harsh reality—the loss of their village's water supply. When the water source was destroyed in June 2021, Hayat and her neighbors were forced to walk three hours daily to a distant river, a journey fraught with physical strain and the constant fear of gender-based violence.

“For us, water is essential,” Hayat shared. “The rough terrain made it difficult, and I constantly worried about my safety while fetching water.”

This dire situation changed dramatically in June 2022, when World Vision, with support from Charity Water, rehabilitated the village's water system, installing an 80 Kilo-volt-amperes (KVA) electric power generator to restore access. For Hayat and her community, the restored water point was more than a technical repair—it was a life-changing intervention.

“We no longer have to go for hours to collect water,” Hayat said with relief. “Now, I can fetch water in my village without worrying about being attacked. The time I've saved allows me to help my mother.”

Through this intervention, World Vision didn't just bring clean water to Burka Guro Arba Kebele; it restored safety, dignity, and the chance for young women like Hayat to reclaim their lives.

## NECR's WASH Sector Achievements

Hayat's story is just one example of the Northern Ethiopia Crisis Response's (NECR) transformative work in Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH). Throughout the response, NECR improved access to safe water and sanitation facilities for over



one million people, making significant strides toward ensuring dignity, well-being, and resilience for displaced and host communities alike. Major achievements include: -

- 1,348,737 IDPs and host communities received safe water supply.
- Constructed or rehabilitated 1,257 water points
- Built or rehabilitated 158 gender-sensitive sanitation facilities, serving 36,830 people.

- Reached 297,351 people with hygiene promotion messages and provided 287,111 people with WASH NFI assistance.

These interventions have gone beyond meeting basic needs, fostering self-reliance, and promoting community well-being.

## Restoring Lives

The rehabilitation of water points and construction of gender-sensitive sanitation facilities have addressed critical gaps in the lives of the most vulnerable, reducing the risk of disease and gender-based violence while saving countless hours for families previously burdened by the search for water. Hygiene promotion efforts have empowered

communities with essential knowledge to keep their health.

As Hayat expressed, the impact of clean water goes far beyond convenience—it restores safety, hope, and stability. “I am thankful to World Vision and Charity Water for their significant support during this challenging time for us,” she said, her voice filled with gratitude and optimism.

Through its WASH interventions, NECR has shown how targeted, community-focused efforts can transform lives. By bringing clean water, improved sanitation, and hygiene education to over a million people, World Vision has not only addressed immediate needs but also laid the foundation for long-term health, dignity, and resilience in Northern Ethiopia.







# FOOD SECURITY & LIVELIHOOD





# Seeds of Hope: Transforming Lives Through Livelihood

## Maritu's Journey: Resilience Reimagined

In the Ewa district, Afar region, 47-year-old Maritu Hassen faced the unimaginable due to the northern Ethiopia conflict. Displaced by the conflict, she returned to her village only to find her home destroyed and her belongings gone. With her children to feed and no resources left, Maritu struggled daily, often going hungry to ensure her children had something to eat.

But even in the face of despair, Maritu's determination never wavered. Her unwavering determination caught the attention of World Vision Ethiopia, which offered her a life-changing opportunity through USAID's Bureau of Humanitarian Affairs-funded multisector project. Maritu received 10 chickens and 83 kilograms of feed.

Throwing herself into poultry farming, Maritu quickly turned this support into a source of fresh eggs, providing her children with essential nutrition. The surplus eggs were sold at 15 ET birrs (1.2 US\$) each, creating a steady income stream that enabled her to buy essentials and even save money.

Maritu's success didn't stop at her doorstep. Inspired by her achievements, neighbors began following her example, transforming poultry farming into a shared community venture. "When I see my children eating well and going to school without worry, I feel I have conquered something great," she said with pride.



Maritu's story is one of resilience, hope, and the ripple effect of meaningful support. What began as a lifeline for one family has become a beacon of inspiration, sparking a collective movement in her community toward self-reliance and recovery.

## NECR's Food Security and Livelihood Achievements

Maritu's transformation is just one of the many stories illustrating the profound impact of the Northern Ethiopia Crisis Response's (NECR) work on food security and livelihoods. Over its tenure, NECR provided millions with life-saving resources and opportunities to rebuild. Key Achievements:-

- ▶▶▶ Provided emergency food assistance to 4,183,689 individuals.
- ▶▶▶ Distributed emergency agricultural inputs to 41,613 households and supported 1,360 households with livestock restocking.
- ▶▶▶ 80 veterinary clinics were supplied with drugs, vaccines, and equipment to improve animal health.
- ▶▶▶ 10,983 people engaged in off-farm income-generating activities
- ▶▶▶ 102,306 people reached through multipurpose cash and voucher assistance
- ▶▶▶ 15,555 people benefitted from skill training (for both farm/off-farming).

These initiatives not only met immediate food needs but also laid the foundation for long-term development, empowering communities to recover and thrive.

## The Power of Livelihood Support

NECR's food security and livelihood efforts went beyond providing aid—they transformed lives. By restoring agricultural activities, equipping families with skills, and supporting income generation, the programme helped conflict-affected communities regain stability. Families who once faced despair are now building futures with renewed hope.

Maritu's journey from survival to success is a testament to the impact of targeted support. "I'm not just supporting my family anymore—I'm showing others that we can change our lives with hard work and the right support," she said.

Her entrepreneurial drive has inspired a movement in the Ewa district, where neighbors now collaborate on farming and business ventures. The USAID/BHA-funded initiative has created not just livelihoods but a vibrant local economy, transforming hardship into opportunity.







 HEALTH





## Restoring Health: The Impact of Health Sector Programme

### Healthcare in Crisis: A Community's Struggle

In Gerba Kebele, South Wollo Zone, Aminat Mohammed recalls the struggles her community endured after the conflict-ravaged their local health center. Looted of medications and equipment, the facility could no longer provide even basic prenatal care or treatments for preventable illnesses.

“Pregnant women receive minimal care, and when we are sick, there’s no medicine for us,” Aminat shared. Children faced dire consequences, suffering from diarrhea and other diseases with no access to treatment. The collapse of healthcare services in the conflict-affected East Amhara mirrored a broader crisis across the region. A 2021 World Vision assessment after the conflict revealed the extent of the damage: 16 hospitals, 188 health centers, and 759 health posts were looted or destroyed, leaving nearly 4.9 million people vulnerable.

Among the damaged facilities was the Sulula Health Center, which was once a health service for 25,000 people near Dessie City of the Amhara region. “The conflict severely damaged our center,” said Mohammed Ayalew, the center’s director. “Offices, equipment, and medicines worth over 6 million birrs [US\$1,20,000] were looted and destroyed. We cannot provide adequate services with what we have left.”

Recognizing the urgent need for healthcare, World Vision, through its Northern Ethiopia Crisis Response (NECR), launched critical interventions to restore health services. These efforts included supporting health facilities with medical supplies, capacity-building initiatives, rehabilitation of facilities, and the establishment of Mobile Health and Nutrition Teams (MHNTs) to reach the most vulnerable populations.

Including Sulula Health Center, World Vision delivered emergency medical kits to 188 health centers and 16 hospitals, ensuring lifesaving care could resume. “These kits are a lifeline for more than one million people across North Shewa and Wollo zones of Amhara region,” said Taemyalew Zenebe, Emergency Health Coordinator for World Vision Ethiopia.

For communities like Gerba Kebele, this support marked a turning point. “The medical supplies are helping us receive the health services we desperately need,” Aminat expressed with gratitude. At Sulula Health Center, the restored resources brought new hope. “Each kit will help us reach a thousand people,” Mohammed explained.

## NECR’s Health Sector Achievements



Conducted 829,725 outpatient consultations, ensuring access to essential healthcare for conflict-affected populations.



Provided capacity-building, critical medical supplies, and other support to 1,549 health facilities, helping restore services to vulnerable communities.

By leveraging mobile health teams and revitalizing health facilities, NECR addressed both immediate and long-term healthcare needs, safeguarding the well-being of millions.

## A Healthier Future

For healthcare providers and community members, the impact of these interventions extends beyond the numbers. They represent resilience, recovery, and the power of collaboration. “This support resolves shortages and helps us serve the community properly,” Mohammed emphasised, reflecting on the renewed capacity of Sulula Health Center.

In Gerba Kebele and beyond, the journey to rebuild healthcare continues. The resilience of these communities, combined with ongoing support from programmes like NECR, is paving the way for a brighter, healthier future. As northern Ethiopia recovers, the lessons learned underscore the critical importance of investing in health systems to rebuild hope and dignity for those who need it most.







# NUTRITION

# Fighting Malnutrition: Impact on Nutrition

## The Silent Crisis of Malnutrition

In the conflict-affected regions of northern Ethiopia, malnutrition continued to devastate families, especially children and pregnant and lactating women (PLWs). Food insecurity affected 83% of the population, leaving over 2 million people severely food insecure (WFP, 2022). For mothers like 23-year-old Kelem Zereabruk, the fight against malnutrition was a daily battle to survive.

Kelem, who fled her village in north West Tigray to escape violence, arrived at the Seleklaka IDP camp with her two-year-old son, Alembirhan, who was in critical condition. Diagnosed with Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM), Alembirhan's future seemed uncertain. "He was underweight and wasn't getting enough food," Kelem recalls.

But thanks to World Vision's Mobile Health and Nutrition Team (MHNT), supported by USAID/BHA, Alembirhan's life took a turn. With targeted treatment, including Ready-to-Use Therapeutic Food (RUTF) and ongoing health monitoring, his health steadily improved.

In a matter of weeks, Kelem saw an improvement in her son. He began gaining weight and strength, reaching a healthy benchmark that allowed him to be discharged from the programme. Alembirhan's recovery offered a glimmer of hope for Kelem, who had been uncertain of what their future would hold. "With the nutrition support and counseling from the MHNT, my son's physical health was restored," she said. "He can now sit without any support, stand by himself, and has even begun to walk independently." Kelem shared with relief.

Kelem's story is one of resilience and hope, emblematic of the challenges faced by millions in the region and the transformative impact of targeted nutrition interventions.

Kelem and Alembirhan's journey reflects the broader success of the Northern Ethiopia Crisis Response's (NECR) nutrition sector. Focused on saving lives and building resilience, NECR's targeted interventions have addressed critical nutritional needs for vulnerable populations across Tigray, Amhara, and Afar. Major achievements include:

- Reached 241,892 children with essential nutrients to support healthy growth and development.
- Provided SAM and MAM management and referrals to 342,020 children and PLWs, facilitated through strengthened health institutions and trained health professionals.
- Diagnosed and treated 913,380 children under five and 299,931 PLWs through acute malnutrition screenings, ensuring timely interventions to prevent severe health consequences.





## Transforming Lives, One Step at a Time

For Kelem and thousands like her, NECR's interventions go beyond immediate medical treatment—it restored self-esteem and empowered families to take charge of their futures. With counseling and nutrition education, mothers are educated to sustain their children's health, fostering resilience in a precarious environment. At the Selekilaka IDP camp, MHNT coordinator Tesfay emphasizes the critical role of such programme. "Every child we treated was a step toward breaking the cycle of malnutrition in these communities," he says.

In a place where survival was uncertain, Kelem's hopes for her son's future became a source of strength. "My ultimate goal is to see him go to school," she says with conviction. "I hope one day he can become a person who will bring real change to our community."

For Kelem and Alembirhan, the journey toward health and stability was a continuous process, yet every step forward was a victory against the odds.



Through initiatives that combine lifesaving support with long-term resilience, NECR has shown how coordinated efforts can tackle malnutrition in the most challenging conditions. The programme not only saves lives but also equips families with the tools and knowledge to sustain health and hope for generations to come.

In the face of overwhelming adversity, every sachet of RUTF, every counseling session, and every recovered child was a victory—a step toward a brighter, healthier future for northern Ethiopia.





# PROTECTION

# Finding Safety and Healing: Protection Efforts

## Arsema's Story: Hope Amid Hardship

At just 11 years old, Arsema's life was irrevocably altered by conflict. Permanent injuries to her leg and hand have remained as constant reminders of the shield attack that claimed the lives of most of her family members. Displaced from her home, she now resides in the Seba Kare IDP camp in Mekelle City, where the wounds of the past weigh heavily on her childhood shoulders.

For Arsema, healing began at a Child-Friendly Space (CFS) supported by USAID/BHA and operated by World Vision. In this nurturing environment, she found more than a safe space—she discovered community, care, and hope.

"I used to cry a lot because of my injury and my losses. I was depressed and couldn't play with other children or my family," she shared. The CFS provided Arsema with counseling, indoor and outdoor games, and daily energy biscuits to support her recovery. Beyond emotional care, the center helped her family with cash support, enabling access to medical checkups crucial for her physical healing.

The transformative impact of the CFS reignited Arsema's dreams. She has returned to school and aspires to become a teacher to help children affected by conflict. "The center gave me hope," she said smiling, a testament to her resilience.

### A Holistic Approach to Protection

The Northern Ethiopia Crisis left countless women and children vulnerable to the devastating effects of conflict, displacement, and violence.

Recognising the urgency of their plight, World Vision implemented comprehensive protection

interventions under the Northern Ethiopia Crisis Response (NECR). These efforts focused on three core areas: Child Protection, Gender-Based Violence (GBV), and Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS).

By addressing immediate protection needs and strengthening community systems, NECR brought hope and safety to thousands of conflict-affected women and children across Tigray, Afar, and Amhara. Protection key achievements:

- Delivered comprehensive child protection and GBV case management services to over 9,745 children and women, including 4,720 girls.
- Enhanced the psychosocial well-being of 83,242 women and children by establishing more than 60 women- and child-friendly spaces.
- Trained 5,841 stakeholders to improve protection service delivery and strengthened community-based protection mechanisms.
- Distributed dignity kits to 82,955 women and girls of reproductive age, ensuring access to hygiene essentials.
- Reached 371,522 individuals, including 164,641 children, with awareness-raising messages to reduce protection risks and promote positive behavior.

NECR's protection interventions were more than just services—they are lifelines for the most vulnerable. The establishment of child-friendly and women-safe spaces created environments where healing and recovery could flourish. Through psychosocial support, dignity kits, and awareness campaigns, NECR empowered women and girls to regain control and confidence. Stakeholder capacity-building ensured sustainable, community-driven protection mechanisms, paving the way for change.



## Restoring Hope, One Life at a Time

Arsema's story reflects the heart of NECR's mission: to protect, empower, and restore hope. The resilience of women and children like Arsema underscores the importance of compassion and collaboration in addressing protection needs.

Through its comprehensive protection programmes, NECR has not only shielded the vulnerable from harm but also provided them with the tools to rebuild their lives and dreams again. As northern Ethiopia moves forward, these interventions stand as a testament to the power of solidarity and the enduring strength of the human spirit.







# EDUCATION

# Building Back Better: Returning Happiness to Classrooms

## Conflict impact on schools

Two years of conflict in the Tigray region devastated the education system, destroyed nearly half of the schools, and forced millions of children out of school. Raya Chercher district, located in southern Tigray, is one of the areas most severely impacted by the Northern Ethiopia conflict. The war caused widespread destruction, leaving the community displaced and livelihoods shattered. Education systems collapsed as a result.

Tsada Meda Primary School, located 220 kilometers south of Mekelle City, is among the schools heavily affected. The conflict caused extensive damage to the school buildings, school furniture looted, and destroyed essential water facilities.

Mekdes, an 11-year-old Grade 4 student at Tsada Meda, dreams of becoming a pilot. She shared, “I want to travel, experience the world, and safely transport people from one place to another.” When the conflict forced her school to close, Mekdes felt devastated. The destruction of her school robbed her off her joy and sense of purpose, leaving her disheartened.



When the conflict ended in November 2022, Mekdes returned finding her school in ruins. Reflecting on the aftermath, she said, “We used to learn outside under a tree, facing the wind, sunburn, and sometimes rain.”

The school’s director, Hayelom Temesgen, who has been teaching at Tsada Meda Primary School for over six years, highlighted the emotional toll that the conflict has had on the children. “Beyond the physical damage to the school, the war has caused deep psychological trauma. Many students experience hopelessness, emotional instability, and nervousness,” he said. He also noted that some students remain distressed and emotionally fragile.



## Building Back Schools

To address the crisis, World Vision, with funding from Global Affairs Canada, implemented a recovery and emergency response initiative called the Nexus Project. One key component of the project focuses on education recovery, helping to rebuild the teaching and learning process while prioritising children's protection. The project has established child-friendly spaces, constructed two new classrooms, provided scholastic materials for students, and conducted teacher capacity-building programmes. Additionally, the project rehabilitated water and sanitation facilities to ensure easy access for students and the surrounding community.

The newly built classrooms have transformed learning conditions for Mekdes and her classmates, transitioning them from studying under a tree to learning in proper classrooms. Mekdes expressed her gratitude: "Thanks to your support, we are now attending classes in proper classrooms. We are safe from the wind and sun, and we're happily learning. We feel motivated and aspire to achieve success that can help our community."

Director Hayelom emphasised the significant impact of the project on the school. "Students used to learn outside without protection. Thanks to the support, they now learn in proper classrooms. This has improved not only their safety but also the quality of their education. The students are attending classes regularly and progressing in their studies."

The project also rehabilitated the school's water supply system, which had been destroyed during the conflict. This restoration has benefited not only the students but also the surrounding community, ensuring access to clean water. Director Hayelom added that many students had dropped out of school after the war, primarily because their families could not afford school supplies.

However, the project provided essential educational materials such as exercise books and pens, enabling students to return to school and focus on their education. "Providing these materials has significantly improved students' attendance, attention, and academic performance," he said.

Habtom Tsegaye, the Raya Azebo District Education Representative, praised the project's efforts. "This school was one of the most affected by the conflict. Thanks to the support of World Vision and the Government of Canada, Tsada Meda Primary School is now offering better education than other schools in our district. As a government, we are deeply grateful for this support and look forward to future partnerships to continue rebuilding our education system."

## NECR's Broader Impact

Beyond Tsada Meda, World Vision's Education in Emergencies efforts have achieved significant results across northern Ethiopia:



Renovated and equipped 100 schools, enabling 100,558 children to access learning during emergencies.



Distributed teaching and learning materials, hygiene kits, and recreational supplies to 71,391 children.



Trained 4,028 teachers to deliver safe and quality education during crises.

By addressing the multifaceted needs of children in crisis, these efforts are not just rebuilding schools but restoring hope, fostering resilience, and paving the way for a brighter future. Through initiatives like the Nexus Project, World Vision demonstrated its unwavering commitment to ensuring that no child is left behind, even in the most challenging circumstances.





“

Thanks to your support, we are now attending classes in proper classrooms. We are safe from the wind and sun, and we're happily learning. We feel motivated and aspire to achieve success.

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# SHELTER/NFI



## Sheltering Hope: Restoring Families Through Emergency Aid

The Northern Ethiopia Crisis Response (NECR) has been a beacon of hope for families displaced and affected by conflict. Through its Shelter and Non-Food Items (NFI) sector, the response has provided essential support to internally displaced persons (IDPs) and host communities, addressing their critical housing and material needs while fostering dignity and resilience.

To date, the NECR Shelter and NFI sector has achieved remarkable milestones:

- 16,977 households received Emergency Shelter and NFI (ESNFI) full kits that meet cluster standards.
- 9,867 households were equipped with non-food items kits to meet their basic needs.
- 8,522 households benefited from shelter repair kits, helping them rebuild their homes and lives.

These efforts not only alleviate immediate hardships but also lay the foundation for long-term recovery and stability for those affected by the crisis.

### The Story of Aregashe from Boru Meda in Dessie City

In Boru Meda Kebele, Dessie City, the impact of these interventions is evident in the lives of beneficiaries like Aregashe Sheferaw, a 31-year-old mother of four. The conflict left her family displaced and stripped of their belongings, forcing her into an uncertain and challenging future. Aregashe describes her circumstances following the conflict: "The conflict has caused damage to my home. My main source of income, livestock, was stolen. As a result, my life has become increasingly more difficult. My physical condition is getting worse. Moreover, the children are still scarred and unstable."

WVE has been implementing emergency response projects targeting conflict-affected IDPs and host communities in South Wollo, Eastern Amhara.



Among these projects, BHA/USAID has granted an integrated emergency multisectoral response project in Dessie City, and the Hilton Foundation has granted multipurpose cash support in Dessie and Kombolcha City, providing different forms of support for the communities.

BHA/USAID has distributed an integrated emergency multisectoral response project, including NFIs and dignity kits, to 1040 targeted participants selected from 8 kebeles in Dessie City.



Through integration with the Hilton Foundation fund, 700 participants received cash support amounting to 12,000 ETB (around 230 USD\*). All the participants who received NFIs and dignity kits from BHA/USAID also benefitted from the multi-purpose cash distribution project.

Through World Vision's integrated emergency response, supported by USAID/BHA, Aregashe received dignity kits and NFIs consisting of a water jerrican, buckets, and other essential items. She also received multipurpose cash support.

"These items and the cash are a lot for me and my family during such a difficult time," she shared with gratitude. "Thank you for the support and for creating hope for my family."

For Seada, a 24-year-old mother from the same neighborhood, the aid was a lifeline. With a severely injured husband and a young child to care for, the

NFIs, cash, and dignity kits symbolized care and respect during her hardship. "The dignity kits symbolize respect for women," she expressed. "The support is extremely beneficial. Thank you very much, World Vision and donors," she added.

The assistance has also been recognized at the community level. Seid Yessuf, Head of the Dessie City Mayor's Office, lauded the transparency and effectiveness of World Vision's support, especially in the hard-hit areas like Boru Meda, where over 108 homes were damaged or destroyed. "This immediate and honest assistance is greatly appreciated," he remarked.

With every household reached, the NECR reaffirmed its commitment to making a lasting impact, providing a foundation for resilience, and ensuring that no one is left behind.



# Partner's Voices



"I witnessed World Vision's cash distribution project, funded by European Humanitarian Aid, supporting internally displaced people from the Oromia region into the Amhara region. This cash assistance empowers families fleeing conflict, giving them dignity and the choice to prioritize essentials like food and medicine for their children. We're deeply grateful for this impactful support, and we hope to continue uplifting Ethiopia's communities together."

**Siara Costa, Coordinator for Disaster Management,  
World Vision Germany**



"The two-year conflict left many women facing severe physical and psychological gender-based violence, causing them to isolate themselves at home, alone and traumatized. When World Vision opened the Women's Safe Space in town, it became a vital refuge—offering security, understanding, and a place free from harm or judgment. Here, women and girls receive compassionate counseling, engage in supportive discussions, and find connection with others who understand their pain. This space has offered them a path to healing, helping them reclaim their lives and rebuild with renewed strength."

**Zenebu Assfaw - Social affairs coordinator, Hiwane District,  
Tigray Region**



"Nexus programming in the Afar region, funded by World Vision Canada, has demonstrated the powerful impact that coordinated efforts in education, livelihoods, WASH, and child protection. We witness firsthand how these elements come together to create lasting change. Through this pilot, we've gathered invaluable lessons and identified challenges, all of which strengthen our commitment to integrating Nexus programming more deeply into our future work."

**Vongaishe Changamire | Education Technical Specialist |  
World Vision Canada**



# Partner's Voices



“After conflict left our health center damaged, World Vision’s support restored it with essential medical equipment, supplies, and furnishings—enabling us to deliver services stronger than before. What truly sets World Vision apart from others is its unwavering commitment to our growth. Through continuous capacity building, professional support, and regular follow-ups, they’ve empowered our center and staff to deliver quality healthcare to our community.”

**Elisa Yohannes | Head of Kurker Health Center| Dessie city, Amhara Region**





World Vision  
ETHIOPIA



# Adapting to the Crisis: Key Lessons from the Response

World Vision's Northern Ethiopia Crisis Response (NECR) has delivered essential support in the regions deeply affected by conflict and instability. Over the past four years, NECR has become an instrument for effective humanitarian action, showcasing strategies that maximise resources, build local capacity, and promote sustainable change. Here's an in-depth look at NECR's best practices and learnings, offering valuable insights for future humanitarian response in complex crisis environments.

## Integration with World Vision Ethiopia's Broader Network

A major strength of NECR is its integration within World Vision Ethiopia's established system, which provided cost efficiencies and fostered consistency across all response initiatives. NECR has leveraged by integrating its Special Operating Procedures (SOPs) into existing functions, streamlining operations from security protocols to project design and evaluation. This integration allowed NECR to optimize resources across technical specialists in HEA, Hubs, and Area Programmes (APs), expanding reach within affected communities.

Restructuring and decentralizing NECR operations effectively delivered support more closely to those in need. By integrating and sharing existing manpower across Hubs and APs in operational and neighboring districts, the response achieved significant cost savings. It strengthened local capacity in disaster management, leadership, and response coordination. Implementing the Emergency Management System (EMS) at the field level introduced field teams to enhanced response management practices.

Strengthening the security unit was another critical achievement over the past three years.

NECR established robust security protocols, with all travel and operations conducted under careful, informed security guidance. Decentralising security functions allowed for close, trust-based partnerships with the UN and other agencies, securing special access to high-risk areas and facilitating humanitarian work in volatile settings. The response was able to access intervention areas by gaining trust from local Command Posts and conflicting parties, enabling support to reach vulnerable populations effectively.

The response also marked a strategic expansion in the Tigray and Amhara regions and reestablishing World Vision's presence in the Afar region after a decade. NECR scaled from 7 districts before the response to over 50 districts in Tigray alone, positioning itself for sustained impact. The strategic positioning in Afar came with a long-term development intention in mind. Accordingly, a new AP designing has been conducted and the AP commenced operation in Chifra.





## Flexible and Adaptable Operations

NECR's success stems from its flexibility and real-time adaptability, employing a blend of direct implementation, strategic agility, trusted partnerships, and cash and in-kind support. Through strong partnerships and close collaboration with donors, the team adapted operations to meet emerging needs, reallocating and repurposing resources as required. To deliver life-saving support in areas with disrupted infrastructure, NECR launched mobile health units, nutrition outreach programmes, non-formal education initiatives, and child-friendly spaces.

This adaptability extended to protection services, where NECR provided safe environments for survivors of gender-based violence (GBV) and addressed the psychosocial needs of children and conflict-affected populations. Building local capacity was also a priority, with NECR integrating with existing small-scale irrigation projects in Afar to improve food security and livelihood sustainability, setting the foundation for broader, long-term impact.

## Diversifying Funding Streams

NECR's strategy included a diverse funding base, with substantial support from WFP, USAID, OCHA, GAC, and various UN agencies. This multi-source funding enabled NECR to implement comprehensive, multi-sectoral programmes aligned with ongoing WVE initiatives. Impressively, 92% of NECR's funding applications were successful with a total of more than 110 ongoing and closed projects.

Additionally, NECR strategically used small Private Non-Sector (PNS) funds as leverage, allowing for the integration of emergency relief with development projects. This approach supported social structure rehabilitation and paved the way for sustainable growth beyond immediate response, demonstrating that diversified funding can bridge emergency needs with future development opportunities



## Building Strong, Sustainable Partnerships

NECR's agility in partnerships has proven essential in meeting crisis demands. Active participation in 95% of regional assessments allowed NECR to respond proactively and identify new funding opportunities quickly. Extensive collaborations with clusters, humanitarian NGOs, and local stakeholders at the national, regional, and zonal levels enabled NECR to respond swiftly to operational needs.

Localisation was a key pillar of NECR's partnership model. Through sub-grants to local NGOs, the response team actively built the capacity of local actors, ensuring sustainable impact. This collaborative approach proved particularly valuable in Tigray, where, due to limited government structure, NECR relied on community partnerships for targeting, monitoring, and eventually handing over project activities.



## Impactful Supply chain Management

NECR Supply Chain Management (SCM) team established strong, strategic partnerships with key humanitarian organizations, including the WFP Logistics Cluster, OCHA, WHO, UNHCR, and others. These alliances enabled WV to utilize cargo and convoy transportation, leveraging partner warehouses and transportation resources without incurring additional costs for transport, loading, or offloading. This collaboration was instrumental in streamlining logistics under challenging circumstances.

A significant achievement from this partnership was the successful facilitation of four full charter flights carrying 35 metric tons of medical supplies for the Tigray response. Coordinated in partnership with logistics and health clusters, this initiative saved approximately US\$ 350,000 in transportation and operational costs. By optimizing resources through these partnerships, WV was able to rapidly address urgent health needs in conflict zones, ensuring timely support for the most vulnerable. NECR also presented an opportunity to foster trusted relationships with local and federal government bodies, as well as logistical partners, reinforcing WV's reputation as a trusted humanitarian organization across Ethiopia.

This collaborative approach not only broadened SCM's reach but also amplified the team's strength and professional growth within the emergency sector, solidifying World Vision as a reliable partner in Ethiopia's humanitarian landscape.

## Piloting the Nexus Model

A pioneering feature of NECR has been its integration of the Nexus model, which bridges emergency relief, long-term development, and peacebuilding efforts. This model enabled NECR to address urgent post-conflict needs, rebuild community trust, and establish a foundation for lasting recovery. By coordinating peacebuilding initiatives alongside development projects, NECR demonstrated the practical value of combining humanitarian and development efforts for maximum effectiveness.

The NECR experience illustrates how humanitarian responses can maximise impact through integration, adaptability, partnership, and innovative approaches like the Nexus model. These practices and achievements offer valuable insights for humanitarian professionals seeking to create sustainable change in crisis-affected areas. By fostering resilience and empowering communities, NECR has set a model for the future of humanitarian and developmental work in complex environments.



World Vision  
ETHIOPIA







## Play-Based Literacy and Mental Health Support Boost Education for Conflict-Affected Children

A joint humanitarian response initiative by World Vision Canada and WV Ethiopia has successfully combined play-based literacy and mental health support to improve the lives of conflict-affected children in Ethiopia's Afar region, action research findings reveal.

World Vision's action research project, implemented in the conflict-stricken Chifra district of Afar Regional State, focused on integrating play-based learning with Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) to support out-of-school children aged between 6 and 14. The initiative, which ran from July 2022 to September 2023, aimed to provide these children with safe, inclusive learning spaces that prioritised literacy development and emotional well-being.

"This project acknowledges the challenges faced by children living in conflict zones, particularly their need for safe learning environments that address both educational and mental health needs," Mesfin Jonfa, World Vision Ethiopia, Education in Emergency Manager said.

The project set out to gather evidence on practical approaches that could inform future educational initiatives in conflict settings. The main goals included assessing the effectiveness of play-based learning in improving literacy, evaluating the impact of MHPSS on children's mental well-being, and identifying strategies to support education in emergencies. Recognising that conflict and displacement often hinder traditional educational methods, the project used a holistic approach to meet the specific needs of children affected by trauma.

Key components of the project included capacity building for teachers, who were trained in play-based learning methods and socio-emotional support techniques. Additionally, reading corners, camps, and peer support clubs were set up to foster a culture of reading and provide children with emotional support networks. Parents and community leaders also received training in positive parenting to strengthen family and community support.



Using a mixed-methods research approach, the study combined quantitative data on literacy improvements with qualitative insights gathered from interviews and focus groups with teachers, parents, and community members. Baseline and final assessments were conducted to measure the children's literacy skills and socio-emotional competencies.

Results from the project showed significant improvements in literacy, with children's average reading scores reaching 57%—a marked increase from the baseline score. However, disparities were noted, with boys generally outperforming girls, which highlights the need for targeted support to address gender-based barriers in education.

The research also tracked well-being outcomes using the Kiddy-KINDL scale. Findings indicated moderate improvements in children's overall well-being, though results varied across socio-emotional competencies. Notably, girls displayed higher empathy levels than boys, suggesting potential gender differences in emotional development that merit further study. The findings also showed that livelihood support is viewed as supportive for improved children's enrolment and attendance.

The project encountered several challenges, including limited teacher capacity, inadequate classroom resources, and socio-cultural barriers that often restricted girls' access to education. Addressing these obstacles will be crucial for sustaining the programme's positive outcomes, according to the research team.

To ensure long-term impact, the researchers recommended designing exit strategies that reinforce local capacity, aligning future projects with community priorities, and securing adequate resources for play-based and MHPSS activities. Additionally, they stressed the importance of culturally relevant reading materials and sufficient play resources to maintain the project's momentum.

This action research underscores the potential of integrating literacy with mental health support in conflict-affected regions. By providing both educational and emotional resources, World Vision's initiative in Chifra has demonstrated a path forward for similar interventions in other crisis-affected areas. With continuous support and adaptations tailored to local contexts, such projects could play a critical role in helping vulnerable children build brighter futures.







# Humanitarian Accountability and Community Engagement

NECR prioritises the active involvement of affected populations, including vulnerable groups, throughout its projects to ensure responsiveness to community needs. From the very beginning, NECR collaborates with communities to identify and prioritise needs, ensuring project designs are grounded on local realities. Beneficiaries participate at various stages, including project identification, implementation, and providing feedback to improve programming.

Transparency with beneficiaries is key. From the outset, the project participants informed about the project’s scope—what services will be provided, to whom, when, and how. Information materials were prepared and disseminated, and project visibility materials displayed to ensure clarity. Beneficiaries and partners were actively involved in key processes like beneficiary selection and feedback mechanisms, particularly during distributions.

NECR employed strategies to ensure meaningful community participation in providing feedback and lodging complaints, ensuring accountability to beneficiaries and stakeholders alike. To enhance community engagement in Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP), NECR trained community members and Community Health and Development (CHD) committees on accountability principles. In addition, 239 frontline emergency staff and 302 casual workers received training on AAP, the Core Humanitarian Standard (CHS), safeguarding, and digital accountability reporting. These efforts fostered a culture of accountability, especially in food assistance programmes.

In response to donor requests, NECR upgraded its Community Feedback and Response Mechanism (CFRM), focusing on data collection, case management, and confidentiality. Donors expressed concerns regarding food diversion in Ethiopia’s assistance programmes and sought improvements in complaint management and error mitigation.

To address this, NECR adopted the SMAP tool for digital case reporting, enhancing the tracking and understanding of complaints.

In collaboration with the Global Accountability Team, NECR trained 32 frontline staff on using SMAP and established Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for its implementation. As a result, NECR fully digitised its CFRM case management, improving its ability to track, manage, and visualise cases for informed decision-making. NECR recorded 8,605 community complaints across various projects, with 365 of these handled through SMAP, marking a significant step in enhancing digital accountability.

Additionally, NECR pioneered a toll-free call center as an alternative reporting channel, particularly for sensitive cases like Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) and safeguarding. This initiative involved collaboration across several teams and ensured a safe, confidential reporting mechanism was in place.

Through active community involvement, transparent communication, and the adoption of digital tools like SMAP and the toll-free call center, NECR has strengthened its accountability and responsiveness, improving project outcomes, especially in food assistance and safeguarding.







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