



## OCHA FIELD OFFICES AND THE FTS

### What is the FTS?

The Financial Tracking Service is a global, on-line, real-time database of humanitarian funding needs and contributions. It serves to improve resource allocation decisions and advocacy, by clearly indicating to what extent populations in crisis receive humanitarian aid, and in what proportion to needs. The FTS offers a series of analytical tables that show humanitarian aid flows to specific crises, and also allows users to produce custom tables on demand. It covers all countries for which humanitarian funding is reported. FTS is managed by OCHA and located on [www.reliefweb.int/fts](http://www.reliefweb.int/fts).

### How can the FTS help OCHA field offices?

- **Advocacy & fundraising:** Financial tracking provides raw material for advocacy, by identifying crises with the greatest resource needs, highlighting under-funded crises and sectors, monitoring changes in humanitarian resource needs in evolving situations, and tracking the timeliness of donor response to urgent needs. Financial tracking also gives credit where it is due.
- **Coordination:** FTS offers an overview of which implementing organizations and donors are working in emergencies, in which sectors and to what scale. It also provides details about the projects of each of the implementing organizations.
- **Publicising project proposals, including OCHA's own:** The FTS shows not only contributions, but also proposed projects (in Consolidated Appeals or CAs) with their budgets and unfunded balances. Field offices can therefore use the FTS to publicise humanitarian projects and draw attention to funding needs, including their own.
- **Donor visibility:** The FTS publicises donor contributions to various crises, which donors appreciate.

### How can OCHA field offices help the FTS?

- **Stimulate reporting** FTS is a recording service that can only post what is reported to it. Regular reporting mechanisms do exist, but they are imperfect. Donor field offices are often in the best position to spot errors or omissions and therefore we need your support in ensuring that the most up to date and accurate data is reflected on FTS. See below instructions for easy ways to report. Seriously incomplete data undermine FTS' reliability and its usefulness for coordination, transparency, accountability and visibility. Conversely, up-to-date, accurate information makes FTS a powerful coordination tool which provides all stakeholders with an overview of humanitarian funding flows, gaps and priorities in each emergency.
- **Inform FTS of errors or omissions:** e-mail [fts@reliefweb.int](mailto:fts@reliefweb.int).
- **Make suggestions for improving FTS.** FTS is currently undertaking a series of improvements to make data more complete and accessible to users. All stakeholders should feel free to suggest improvements. E-mail: [fts@reliefweb.int](mailto:fts@reliefweb.int).

### How can OCHA field offices access FTS?

FTS can be accessed online at [www.reliefweb.int/fts](http://www.reliefweb.int/fts). File sizes are small, so downloads are fast even with slow connections. We hope the choices on the home page are self-explanatory, but if not, you can start by clicking the "help" link.

### What to look for on FTS

- For countries with a CAP, click "Focus on...CAP" on the FTS home page, then click the country you cover. From that page, check Table C (requirements and funding per appealing organization), Table F (List of commitments/contributions and pledges to projects listed in the Appeal, grouped by donor), Table E (List of Appeal Projects - grouped by sector - with funding status of each), and Table H (Other Humanitarian Funding - to projects not listed in the Appeal). Note which sectors and which projects are most under-funded (and any that are well funded). Investigate what has been the impact of lack of funding (and therefore of

implementation), and use that evidence to advocate for more or better-distributed funding. Look at humanitarian aid outside the CA, and assess its inter-relation with projects in the CA.

➤ For countries without a CAP, do a simple search from the home page, selecting your destination country (and/or donor) of interest. For additional information and more filtering options, go to the advanced search ("Make financial tables using my own criteria") and read the instructions.

➤ Also, ensure that the information on the FTS is correct. **If you note any omissions or errors, please ask the relevant agency field office to follow up with their headquarters**, and also inform [fts@reliefweb.int](mailto:fts@reliefweb.int). Note that FTS posts contribution information from agency headquarters, not agency field offices (with the exceptions of UNDP and NGOs, both of whose field offices can report directly to FTS). However the field offices are often better at spotting errors and omissions, so their attention is needed.

### **How can agencies share project funding information to FTS?**

Reporting methods are not very formal. NGO field offices or UN agency HQs can inform FTS of contributions by e-mail (to: [fts@reliefweb.int](mailto:fts@reliefweb.int)), fax, letter, via our on-line form ([www.reliefweb.int/fts](http://www.reliefweb.int/fts), then click the "contribution" link at left), or whatever verifiable method they find most convenient. For example, they can simply forward to FTS a copy of the funding contract. (In some countries where OCHA has an information officer or NGO liaison officer, s/he may facilitate sharing project finance information.) We aim to not cause field staff any significant extra work. If a reporting agency does not use our on-line form, we only ask that they specify at least the following:

1. The amount in original currency (e.g. euros, USD), or if in-kind, the amount, description, and value of goods.
2. Donor country and organisation (e.g. US / OFDA, EC / ECHO).
3. Date of contribution.
4. Whether the contribution is a pledge, commitment, or disbursement (see definitions on FTS home page).
5. The relevant CAP project code (if the project was registered in a CA) or project description.

We are equally interested in information on funds that come from private fundraising and unearmarked funds from official donors that are used for humanitarian action. NGOs and agencies should report such allocations or expenditures as well.

### **FAQ: Does FTS cover only CAP contributions, or countries with CAPs?**

No. FTS is a global humanitarian financial tracking service: in 2007, it posted 8630 humanitarian contributions for 130 countries, from 400 donor governments and organisations, to 750 implementing organisations.

The FTS database contains all humanitarian contributions reported by appealing agencies and donors, both to projects included in the CAP and projects that are implemented outside of the appeals. FTS also tracks humanitarian funding for countries where there is no Consolidated Appeal Process.

### **Why should NGOs include their project proposals in the CAPs?**

The Consolidated Appeals Process (CAP) is both an appeal for funding and a tool used by aid organisations to plan, implement and monitor their activities together. The humanitarian agencies and NGOs that work together in the field are all encouraged to engage in this process in order to provide a coherent overview of their objectives, planned activities and funding needs. Over the years, the CAP has become the humanitarian sector's main tool for coordination, strategic planning and programming. As a planning mechanism, the CAP has contributed significantly to developing a more strategic approach to the provision of humanitarian aid. As a coordination mechanism the CAP has fostered closer cooperation between governments, donors, aid agencies, the Red Cross Movement and non-governmental organisations, and as such we strongly encourage the participation of all humanitarian NGOs. Speaking with a common voice, UN agencies and NGOs are better able to raise funds for immediate action, demand greater protection, get better access to vulnerable populations and work more effectively with governments and other actors.

### **How does FTS define humanitarian aid for statistical purposes?**

For activities outside CAPs, FTS has let donors and implementing agencies self-define humanitarian activities and contributions. To achieve more consistency, FTS and a working group of the Good Humanitarian Donorship initiative have developed a fairly broad definition to apply in case of doubt. The definition is posted on the FTS website: <http://ocha.unog.ch/fts/exception-docs/AboutFTS/Definitions-Glossary.doc>