



Collaborative  
Cash Delivery  
Network



# CCD ETHIOPIA ONE-YEAR IN

COLLABORATION IN REALITY

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## ABBREVIATIONS

ACF	Action Against Hunger	IDP	internally displaced person
CCD	Collaborative Cash Delivery Network	LMMS	Last Mile Mobile Solution®
CDA	Common Donor Approach	M4H	mobile for humanitarian
CRS	Catholic Relief Services	MEAL	monitoring, evaluation, accountability, and learning
DCA	Danish Church Aid	MEB	minimum expenditure basket
DRC	Danish Refugee Council	MoU	memorandum of understanding
ECHO	European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations	MPCA	multi-purpose cash assistance
ECWG	Ethiopia Cash Working Group	NGO	non-governmental organisation
ERM	Emergency Response Mechanism	NRC	Norwegian Refugee Council
ET-ብር	Ethiopian birr	OFDA	Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (of the United States government)
€	Euro	PSNP	productive safety net programme
FSP	financial service provider	SCI	Save the Children International
GAC	Global Affairs Canada	US\$	United States dollar
GSMA	Groupe Spécial Mobile Association	UN	United Nations
IRC	International Rescue Committee	WVE	World Vision Ethiopia

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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**Cover photo:** Beneficiaries in Dolo Ado, Ethiopia waiting to receive their third cash distribution in March 2020. More than 320 households were supported as part of the ECHO-CCD 2019 consortium's multi-purpose cash assistance.

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We would like to thank the generous contributions of staff members from World Vision Ethiopia, Action against Hunger, Catholic Relief Services, CCD Ethiopia, ECHO, International Rescue Committee, Oxfam, Save the Children, World Bank, World Food Programme, and World Vision International who shared their time and thoughts with us in interviews, discussions, and surveys. We are particularly grateful for the assistance and support given by Solomon Bekele who hosted and organised the content gathering trip.

*This document covers humanitarian aid activities implemented with the financial assistance of the European Union. The views expressed herein should not be taken, in any way, to reflect the official opinion of the European Union, and the European Commission is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information it contains.*



Funded by  
European Union  
Civil Protection and  
Humanitarian Aid

## BACKGROUND

### CCD ETHIOPIA

Founded in January 2019, Ethiopia's national network has 14 members – 13 of whom are part of CCD's global network. Founding members include: Action Against Hunger (ACF), CARE, Concern Worldwide, Catholic Relief Services (CRS), Danish Church Aid (DCA), Danish Refugee Council (DRC), International Rescue Committee (IRC), Mercy Corps, Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), Oxfam, Save the Children (SCI), and World Vision (WVE). ACTED and GOAL joined in December 2019.

Members joined CCD to pursue new ways of working to better deliver cash assistance through a shared cash value chain built on the comparative advantages of each actor adapted to the local context, complementing each other's programming to reduce duplication and maximise impact.

Members have all signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) and agreed on a Governance Framework. The national network is overseen by a rotational Steering Committee and its chair, a member-neutral Collaboration Manager. The committee is responsible for CCD's strategic direction. The current committee includes: ACF, CARE, CRS, NRC, Oxfam, and WVE.

Making CCD a reality within a country's context is a process. Its model has provided a framework to move things forward for the Ethiopian cash community. CCD understands it will take time to work towards its goals, but this gives the network an opportunity to try out different models and adapt them to the Ethiopian context to ensure CCD is a value-add within the cash community.

The national network decided, amongst other activities, to establish a consortium as one of its first initiatives. However, its collaborations are not limited to this, and they are currently working towards identifying collaboration opportunities and priorities and deciding how to leverage its collective expertise to effect change in programming and harmonise cash delivery to increase scale, efficiency, effectiveness, and collective impact.



To this end, CCD Ethiopia is pursuing collaborations across the country and cash value chain by:

- **establishing frameworks** to identify priorities, advocacy, collaborative operations, donor relationships, etc.
- **building relationships and trust** between members
- **combining voices** to advocate for issues relevant to local cash actors and non-governmental organisations (NGOs)
- **utilising collaboration models** based on context, strengths, and need
- **facilitating faster resolutions** for challenges
- **improving collective preparedness** for cash programming
- **enabling a unified and visible local network** of cash NGOs.

### ECHO-CCD 2019 CONSORTIUM

In March 2019, the [European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations \(ECHO\)](#) funded a €4.4 million multi-purpose cash assistance (MPCA) project in the Wollegas zones of the Oromia region and the Somali West region to support drought-affected households and persons internally displaced (IDPs) due to conflict.

The consortium consists of five CCD members, with activities allocated to different organisations based on each member's expertise. In the Wollegas, WVE administered digital beneficiary management, SCI oversaw monitoring, evaluation, accountability, and learning (MEAL), and ACF and IRC managed cash transfers, including registration. All agencies collaborated on how to harmonise targeting processes. In Somali West, SCI and WVE were responsible for cash transfers and IRC managed MEAL.

**US\$1.4M** distributed to 16,700 IDPs and drought-affected households\*  
\*as of Dec 2019 (1<sup>st</sup> of 3 distributions)

Approximately 50% of the project's total distributions were delivered over three rounds by the end of 2019. Two more rounds of cash delivery will be completed in March and June 2020.

## OPERATIONAL CONTEXT

### ETHIOPIA

NGOs and United Nations (UN) agencies conducting cash programming in Ethiopia's humanitarian sector have stated that the country is unique in its context.

A joint emergency operation in South Gonder *woreda*, Ethiopia – a collaboration between CCD partners (CRS, CARE, SCI, WVE) and other agencies. © CRS

It is a large, highly populated country with a variety of humanitarian needs and many vulnerable people in need of assistance.

According to an Ethiopia Cash Working Group (ECWG) chair, “more than 10% of the population are in need of humanitarian assistance on a daily basis”.

The country is also susceptible to repetitive natural/climatic crises, and there are several security concerns related to internal or oppositional party conflicts.

The government structure is unique in the fact that there are enabling as well as restrictive government policies in place for cash programming, and there are still certain regulations instituted because of fears of how cash assistance could potentially be utilised to support violence. The political system also determines the types of models that cash programming will use. Fortunately, under the current government, cash programming has grown, allowing citizens to access markets and commodities more often through this assistance. With this, however, the government’s capacity is reportedly marginal, and they are unable to respond to the level of need in an efficient, timely manner.

The government does have institutions in place to oversee these types of activities and work with partners, but a lack of human capacity proves a challenge. Coordination structures are also in place, but there is a lack of flexibility to adapt and evolve programming. While a concern, the government is generally open to piloting new ways of working and learning to resolve these issues.

Currently, most agencies are still providing cash in hand because the infrastructure is not well developed yet (e.g. there are few bank branches outside of metropolitan areas), and technology is not widespread across the country or population. Thus, mobile money and cash point transfer processes are not ready at even the administrative level because of the lack of financial service provider (FSP) agreements, technical expertise, etc.

## PSNP IN ETHIOPIA

Ethiopia’s productive safety net programme (PSNP), is currently filling the food shortage gap by providing food (approximately 80% of the programme) to the chronically food insecure during pre-harvest shortages and cash to access markets post-harvest (as part of a cash-for-work programme). About 20% of all beneficiaries are directly supported by the PSNP year-round (e.g. disabled, elderly, and chronically ill people, and children).

PSNP previously restricted cash components from being involved in non-emergency responses that were not run by the government, allowing NGOs to only implement other aspects (e.g. food items) in intervention areas, but this is changing. Moreover, they, in coordination with partners and donors, are putting in place a social protection platform specifically for humanitarian responses.

Even within the current framework, however, there is room for CCD members to support the PSNP with technical assistance, lessons learnt in various locations and contexts, and gender and protection assessment indicators. CCD can also encourage the government to use community-led, participatory targeting to help reduce the inclusion errors that are a major gap in their aid.



Tinebeb, at a “Community Conversations” meeting in Oromia. She is helping her community resolve issues through dialogue as part of an activity to help improve food security and diversify the household incomes of PSNP beneficiaries. © Will Baxter / CRS

But this learning does not have to be one-way. CCD, donors, policymakers, and other implementers can also leverage lessons learnt from PSNP’s operations and how they have adapted e-cash transfers within their programming from their presence in ECWG and learning events.

## ETHIOPIA CASH WORKING GROUP

ECWG was re-established in April 2016 “to strengthen the policy development and operations of cash and voucher assistance in Ethiopia through advocacy, improved coordination, and information sharing”. More than 24 humanitarian organisations, including CCD Ethiopia, NGOs, UN agencies, donors, and government representatives, are members. Humanitarian cash response programming in Ethiopia supports households of host communities, IDPs, refugees, and IDP returnees with shelter and non-food items, multi-sectoral support, food, education, and protection programmes via cash, vouchers, or in-kind modalities using direct cash, mobile payments, vouchers, or bank transfers.

**US\$23M**

(ET-ብር649 million) distributed to  
433,474 households\*

\*from October to December 2019

Woman receiving cash at CCD Ethiopia's member's project in Gelana woreda, West Guji zone, Oromia region © World Vision



http://localhost:8080/finms/reports/paym

World Vision

Distribution Date: 2018-09-24      Payment Number: [redacted]

ATP for Flood Induced Emergency resp.

231342198	Payment Amount	3,800 ETB
	Method of Payment	Cash
	Payment Agency	N/A
	External	N/A
	Account Type	N/A
	Account Holder	N/A

Remarks: Shows above is the amount of payment due to the named household based on participation in a cash payment project. This slip serves as a statement only for the records of the recipient.

Work Record	
Work Period	N/A
Total Workdays in Period	N/A
Number of Days Worked	N/A

## EFFORTS TOWARDS CCD OBJECTIVES

CCD's global network aims to address weaknesses within cash programmes by connecting agencies with various strengths (e.g. MEAL, beneficiary registration, etc.) to support other NGOs. At the country-level, the Ethiopian network's goal is to harmonise cash delivery for increased scale, efficiency, effectiveness, and collective impact.

Based on insights compiled from surveys and interviews conducted with members of the Ethiopian cash community and CCD members in January 2020, here is an overview of how CCD Ethiopia is working towards global and national objectives, one-year in.

### INTEROPERABILITY AND REDUCED BARRIERS TO COLLABORATION

One of CCD's purposes is to harmonise and standardise programme design, operations, workflows, and processes across members to promote interoperability and reduce barriers to collaboration. Over the past year, CCD Ethiopia has been working to establish the necessary environment to foster effective collaboration.



National network members at their December 2019 meeting in Addis Ababa © CCD Ethiopia

### ESTABLISHING FRAMEWORKS

**Governance Framework:** In order to enhance the clarity around the various initiatives and ensure decision-making is collaborative and representative of the wider membership, an overarching Governance Framework was developed and agreed upon by members.

**Data sharing:** As part of its efforts to facilitate faster resolutions, CCD Ethiopia volunteered to pilot the global network's new data-sharing guidance and agreement template. They adjusted the template to better reflect their context and needs. Without an operational data-sharing agreement in place, members would not just lose time by replicating data across organisations, but

not knowing who each member's programmes support could lead to challenges with targeting and duplicate beneficiary registrations. The agreement is currently under review by all members' legal teams and should be agreed upon in 2020.

**Standardising operating procedures:** Four implementing agencies are already using common standard operating procedures. A working group is being set up to review, improve, and implement learnings and feedback to ensure continued improvements of procedures and tools.

**CCD collaboration unit:** This unit hosts the network's Collaboration Manager and is currently led by CRS. It exists to drive collaboration across members, assist with technical support, and invest in national-level cash collaborations.

### BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS AND TRUST

Relationship building, pilots, and response simulations amongst local CCD members build trust and preparedness so they are ready to quickly collaborate in crises.

**Mapping expertise to establish trust:** CCD Ethiopia has mapped the technical expertise and operational presence of its members, which will allow the network and Steering Committee to pair the most appropriate combination of implementers, tailored to the specific needs identified by each consortium. This process creates a framework for a transparent decision-making process. The network has found that when people see why a decision has been made based on agreed upon parameters, then there is a level of trust built, even if they do not agree with the decision itself.

This will also ensure that future CCD interventions will complement, rather than duplicate, existing or alternative interventions. With this, members can trust that consortia, operational alliances, and other collaboration efforts will be formed around the best placed organisations, rather than agencies accustomed to working together, and should reduce competition amongst the network and across the ecosystem.

### COLLECTIVE IMPACT

CCD believes in an approach that brings actors together to collectively define problems within a context and create a shared vision to solve them.

### COMBINING VOICES

**Through consortia:** Before CCD Ethiopia even had a Governance Framework or MoU in place, they were labouring towards this goal. In March 2019, the first CCD consortium was funded by ECHO. This consortium was able to use the weight of their collective voice to advocate with FSPs and banks

to accept digital identification from [Last Mile Mobile Solution®](#) (LMMS), rather than requiring agencies to provide separate paper identification, which requires duplicative, time-consuming work for the agencies. Once one FSP agreed, others also readily agreed in order to remain competitive. This did not only improve the processes and cost efficiency for this consortium, but it will improve the cash ecosystem beyond this project and is a necessary step towards allowing digital payments and mobile money.

**Joint proposals:** CCD Ethiopia was built out of a collective proposal from late 2018 that resulted in the ECHO-CCD 2019 consortium. In January 2020, all 14 members and the Steering Committee endorsed another shared proposal submitted by SCI on behalf of all CCD Ethiopia members.

Members have also expressed a desire to have all members' proposals for cash and voucher assistance projects to be shared with the Steering Committee so it can ensure that members' projects uphold CCD's principles and optimise efficiency by using the best-positioned members as implementing partners, according to geographical and technical footprints.

**Exerting influence:** CCD's collaborative way of working across an extensive network of international NGOs gives it some sway to be able to advocate for best practices and beneficiaries.

One such instance arose when the Ethiopian government declared that NGOs could only target returnees as beneficiaries because they had mandated that every IDP should return home. As a group, CCD members advocated for the use of best practices when defining beneficiary targeting and to be able to support returnees, IDPs, and vulnerable host communities. The government approved this modification because of the number of NGOs insisting on it.



Beneficiaries of the ECHO-CCD 2019 project having their identities confirmed during a cash distribution in the Wollegas in September 2019. © Otto Farkas / World Vision / CCD Ethiopia

## SHARED CAPACITY AND POOLED RESOURCES

Currently, actors in humanitarian crises duplicate programmatic activities, compete for funding, and subcontract the same service providers. This is a deeply inefficient model. CCD endeavours to develop models where capacities are amplified and shared and resources pooled between members for greater operational efficiency.

**Shared technologies:** CCD is looking for digital systems to share data in a fast, secure way. LMMS was used by the ECHO-CCD consortium as it was free product that could easily be shared with members since it was developed by World Vision.

Ethiopia's CCD members are committed to digitalising beneficiary management and moving towards e-payment systems, such as mobile money, e-vouchers, and/or bank transfers, etc., to harmonise practices and be more cost efficient.

**16** consortium staff, country directors, and CCD members attended CCD's first learning event in November 2019

**Knowledge sharing:** The learning event focussed on:

- increasing members' understanding of CCD's collaboration modalities
- sharing learnings from the ECHO-CCD 2019 consortium (on targeting, verification, and registration) and CARE (on gender mainstreaming) to identify solutions for challenges that had arisen
- building motivation for engagement
- identifying priority areas for future work (quick wins versus long-term goals of transforming humanitarian cash programming in country).

**Technology unit:** CCD identified technical support as an essential need as technical advisers often do not have time to improve their practice and learn from each other. Ethiopia will form a common unit to serve partners within the network.

## AGILE AND CONTEXT-APPROPRIATE SERVICES AND PRODUCTS

CCD works at the global level, developing collaboration models, products, and services that support the entire network. At the same time, these are tested, iterated, and improved upon by inclusive, local CCD networks around the world.

### UTILISING COLLABORATION MODELS

**Consortia:** As this national network formed in a more organic way with ongoing initiatives to foster collaboration at operational and other levels, in

order to ensure that decision-making was collaborative and representative of all, a consortium was formed. This allowed members to embark on a joint rapid cash feasibility assessment in the Wollegas in March 2019 in collaboration with and on behalf of ECWG members, and then continue this work with the donor to deliver cash in the Wollegas and, later, Somali West.

While the ECHO-CCD 2019 consortium has been implemented successfully so far, members agreed that there is room to improve. Suggestions include:

- having sub-grant agreements in place between members will help future consortia deploy assistance more rapidly
- technical difficulties (e.g. with LMMS) should be resolved before compelling partners to utilise a specific technology
- donors should be told upfront about how CCD's collaboration model operates using geographical/technical mapping to identify the most appropriate agencies for implementation (i.e. CCD will select the implementing agencies based on their geographical footprint and programmatic strengths, not the donor)
- field teams and national staff should be trained on working collaboratively versus in coordination.

**Operational alliances:** Recently, the network has focussed on developing an “operational alliance” – a way for members to cooperate on cash-related activities that occur within their agencies' other programmes, enabling them to find other ways to collaborate and leverage their collective expertise and advantages to help each other, even when not working together in a formal consortium.

They are currently establishing ways they can work at the field level to link multiple cash projects and donors in the same geography along the cash programme cycle. Some options include sharing assessment operationalisation (i.e. splitting the assessment responsibilities across agencies and analysing results together), standardising transfer values locally to share with ECWG, sharing tools and systems to lower costs, and using a shared agency for MEAL. CCD is working towards piloting this model in Somali West – a region where multiple members are delivering cash via separate donors and projects.

**Rapid response cash fund:** CCD Ethiopia plans to test a new rapid response model to increase the speed of delivery and enable members already working in a crisis-affected area to have the funds to respond swiftly, whilst having the quality assurance and additional benefits of CCD's collaborative approach embedded into the

response. The fund will have a single grant contract agency to simplify the process for donors and accelerate cash disbursement. This action capitalises on members' comparative advantages and specialities, as well as collective coverage.

## IMPROVING COLLECTIVE PREPAREDNESS

**Establishing rapid response mechanisms:** The cash fund's purpose would be to ensure that cash assistance can be quickly and efficiently delivered. Initially it was designed to meet the needs of people affected by election unrest,<sup>1</sup> a gap identified by all members as likely, as well as difficult to predict. This model could also be used to crowdfund at the country level, so CCD is prepared to respond appropriately to developing emergencies (e.g. locusts, floods, COVID-19, etc.)

This structure should not overlap with members' interventions, but, if unrest or a disaster occurs in project locations, it would allow members access to crisis-modifier type funds to help them adjust to increased needs. Or, if appropriate, CCD could use it to initiate a new CCD response to meet needs while working with members to avoid duplication.

## SYSTEMS CHANGE

Cash programming has long served as a catalyst and proxy for systems change in the humanitarian sector. While CCD's focus is on revolutionising how cash programming is collaboratively delivered for better impact, we believe that this work can inform sectoral and multi-sectoral programming approaches, as well as the aid system as a whole.

**Strengthening national cash collaboration:** CCD is an active supporter of the ECWG. The network's involvement, in part, has brought in new members to the working group, reenergised existing members, renewed interest, and helped the group become more functional. CRS is overseeing these efforts, as lead of CCD's collaboration unit, and managing funding to assist the ECWG. With this, they funded a workshop where the ECWG was able to successfully finalise a minimum expenditure basket within their context and a separate capacity-building session on gender mainstreaming presented by CARE.

They are also sharing tools and learnings with the wider cash community. Through these activities, CCD seeks to complement, not duplicate, the ECWG's coordination work.

An ECWG chair declared that CCD has benefitted the Ethiopian cash sector with their openness to share experiences, development of standard operating procedures, MEAL tools, and guidance documents.

<sup>1</sup> As of April 2020, elections were postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic; CCD Ethiopia will revisit how it can fill this gap once new dates are announced.

## FACILITATING FASTER RESOLUTIONS

**Jumpstarting mobile money:** The Groupe Spécial Mobile Association (GSMA), a global system for mobile communications, is a trade body that represents the interests of mobile network operators around the world. GSMA approached CCD Ethiopia to explore how its mobile for humanitarian (M4H) programme could support humanitarian cash projects in Ethiopia.

M4H works to accelerate the delivery and impact of digital humanitarian assistance. To achieve this, it:

- acts as a bridge between mobile operators and humanitarian partners to build a learning and research agenda
- catalyses partnerships and innovation for new digital humanitarian services
- advocates for enabling policy environments
- monitors and evaluates performance
- disseminates insights and profile achievements.

To start, they have partnered with CCD's current consortium (represented by WVE) to assist with e-transfers and digitisation. As part of this, GSMA contracted a technical consultant to:

- lead the contextual analysis, design, adoption, and scale-up of mobile money solutions for the ECHO-funded consortium
- build CCD's capabilities and improve consortia efficiency in the deployment of e-transfers and beneficiary management systems

- expand the mobile money ecosystem
- assess the feasibility of scaling the proof of concept beyond this context
- establish viable models to increase the effectiveness, efficiency, reach, and collective impact of humanitarian cash programming in Ethiopia.

## PREPARING THE FUTURE

CCD strives to act as a marketplace and matchmaker for all relevant cash actors and establish a fully adaptable, flexible approach to engage new technologies, involve different actors, and adjust to context changes.

## ENABLING A UNIFIED AND VISIBLE LOCAL NETWORK

**Embracing alternative approaches:** Should there be a need identified where CCD is not the best placed to respond (e.g. market functionality or security limitations), CCD will liaise with other actors and mechanisms such as the Emergency Response Mechanism (ERM), SWAN consortium, or CCD members' individual responses.

**Engaging with key cash actors:** The ECHO-CCD 2019 consortium conducted beneficiary targeting on behalf of the Somali disaster management bureau because their office knew that CCD members' cash experts were better equipped and had more experience than their office to implement.



Beneficiaries in the Wollegas waiting for cash to be distributed by the ECHO-CCD consortium.  
© Otto Farkas / World Vision / CCD Ethiopia

## REALITY CHECK

### ARE WE DELIVERING

#### ESTABLISHING FRAMEWORKS

**Standardising operating procedures:** Having the ECHO-CCD 2019 consortium kick off while the network was still in the formation process gave Ethiopia a unique opportunity to prepare some agreements (e.g. service provider contracts between consortium members) that would usually come much later in the process.

Defining a standing service provider contract that has been pre-approved by each organisations' legal departments, will help speed up CCD processes in the future and help them become more efficient than other consortia operating within the context.

#### BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS AND TRUST

**Mapping expertise to establish trust:** CCD's global network encourages interested organisations to evaluate how CCD will work in their context as part of their initial scoping conversations. This is intended to allow the in-country NGOs and Steering Committee to map strengths and geographical footprints to pair the most appropriate combination of implementers, tailored to the specific needs identified by each consortium.

Because of the organic way in which Ethiopia's network was set up, the Governance Framework was not yet signed, and mapping was not finalised when CCD's first joint project, the ECHO-CCD 2019 consortium, was scaled up. Not having an agreed upon decision-making process in place to select implementers in a newly added region, contributed to a breach in the fragile trust between these traditionally competitive agencies. While the donor set the requirement stating that operations in the new region must be conducted by existing consortium members, rather than pushing back and bringing in other CCD members with a stronger presence in the region, consortium members set up new operations to comply.

The donor's representative acknowledged that partner selection in Somali West was problematic and hampered efficiency. He agreed that CCD partners operating in the project area should have more influence over what roles are implemented by whom. However, this was restricted by ECHO at the head office level and out of his control.

Rationalising the consortium's decision will come at the detriment of the network. CCD must implement changes to ensure that members and donors alike respect its collaboration model and adhere to the collaboration principles, including

equality. The opportunity to work alongside other NGOs and access joint funding is a large incentive for members to participate. If this is taken away, non-consortia members will have little reason to remain in the network if they feel like they are not getting the same opportunities as others.

Members suggested that, going forward, CCD shares its technical mapping, geographical footprint, and explains the collaboration model to donors and why these are the basis for all of CCD's work. Grant agreements also need to acknowledge or state that CCD will choose the best placed agency to operate within an area and role.<sup>2</sup>

**Shared technologies:** There is a definite need to share technologies to ensure that all partners can access beneficiary data. However, rather than coming to a mutual decision on which solution would work best within this context, WVE, who oversaw digital beneficiary management for the consortium's initial implementation area, used the World Vision-developed digital registration system, LMMS. Since it was their own product, it could be easily shared with all partners, without the need to involve a third-party vendor. While this may have been efficient, this is not conducive behaviour for building trust with other consortium members nor the wider network's membership.

Some concerns about LMMS included the need for a server, preventing work from being completed remotely, and technical glitches. However, other consortium members considered the use of this new modality a success in that this technology allowed them to avoid printing paper signatures for FSPs.



WVE's response team explains how LMMS technology operates. © Kebede Gizachew / World Vision

After the first distribution, the consortium was able to overcome these challenges, leading to distribution times being halved during the implementation in the Somali region.

<sup>2</sup> CCD's global team has launched a beta version of the [Response Builder](#) tool that will also support in-country networks in their ability to enable decisions.



Beneficiaries register during a Joint Emergency Operation Programme distribution conducted by CCD partners (CARE, CRS, SCI, and WVE) and other agencies in southwestern Ethiopia. © Will Baxter / CRS

## SHARED CAPACITY AND POOLED RESOURCES

**Knowledge sharing:** Now that the network is more established with frameworks and agreements in place, members are looking forward to shifting their focus to building the capacities of their teams.

One founding member said they appreciated that CCD members were able to immediately start working together in a collaborative consortium (rather than the typical top-down coordination approach) to test the collaboration model. However, they want to prioritise capacity building and resource pooling in the next phase. Instead of focusing on building more consortia, they would like to see all members using their experience to train each other, standardise procedures based on best practices, set up sub-grant agreements within the existing Governance Framework to facilitate faster responses going forward, and advocate with donors about the benefits of supporting humanitarian cash responses using CCD's approach.

While CCD models have, in some ways, helped efficiency and cost effectiveness (e.g. FSPs accepting digital identification, thus reducing duplicative work printing beneficiary IDs), costs are still not meeting the necessary transfer ratio (80% to beneficiaries). This will likely improve over time as members work to cut costs (e.g. reducing indirect cost recovery charges, operational tasks shifted to Collaboration Manager to reduce staff time/overhead, cost analyses conducted on all CCD projects, etc.).

## UTILISING COLLABORATION MODELS

**ECHO-CCD 2019 consortium:** CCD's learning event in November highlighted the importance of gender mainstreaming in cash programming and was acknowledged as a priority by all members present. This led to a concerted effort by the consortium to increase mainstreaming of gender, child, and general protection within the project

cycle. It also included the development/adaptation of the guiding principles, implementation and periodic monitoring of the exercise, and incorporation of capacity-building activities.

While founding members reportedly joined CCD due to its future-looking concept and long-term vision to change the humanitarian cash landscape in Ethiopia, they worry that the focus on the consortia model may be pressurising other organisations to feel compelled to join so their cash programmes remain relevant.

## IMPROVING COLLECTIVE PREPAREDNESS

### Establishing rapid response mechanisms:

Considering the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, Ethiopia is looking at adapting the model they designed to respond to post-election issues to be appropriate for a COVID-19 emergency response. They will focus on establishing architecture (e.g. constant review and improvement of standard operating procedures and tools) to enable stronger, more efficient cash programmes.

## FACILITATING FASTER RESOLUTIONS

**Cash distributions:** The ECHO-CCD 2019 consortium was able to cut distribution times, and thus beneficiary waiting times, from one day to approximately two hours.

**I have an identity card, and we get our cash on time. The system is fast and saves time when receiving the money.**

– Halima, beneficiary, ECHO-CCD 2019 project

### Executing standing sub-grant agreements:

A benefit of having multiple NGOs in the consortium meant each agency's legal team has reviewed CCD's service provider contracts. Having these pre-approved will speed things up immensely; the revised template can now be shared with other members' legal teams for review and approval.

## ENABLING A UNIFIED AND VISIBLE LOCAL NETWORK

**Enabling a unified network:** Because of a lack of understanding and collective vision early on, as well as the absence of a Collaboration Manager, the launch was difficult because some members could not see the difference between CCD as a network and CCD's consortium as a model. They did not understand why they should continue to participate if they were not part of the ECHO-CCD consortium. However, the Steering Committee was able to build a shared understanding and agreement on how CCD would move forward and the types of work they would focus on outside of consortia. Members now see progress and activity that is relevant to them, outside of the consortium's work.

## WHAT CAN CCD ETHIOPIA TEACH OTHER NETWORKS

### COMMUNICATION IS KEY

Prioritise finding a way to financially support an in-country Collaboration Facilitator or full-time Collaboration Manager during the scoping/startup phases, either by applying for operational grants or having members contribute to an operational fund to support CCD. Having this role established early will help with relationship and trust building and ensure all members are engaged equally.

Some suggestions on these roles included:

- Maintain the Collaboration Manager role as a hosted, but separate, position that does not serve within any member organisation.
- Make the role more senior level so they can hold country directors responsible for the agreements made by their agencies.
- Hire a full-time role to manage the consortia or project operations to report to the Steering Committee, with a dotted line to the Collaboration Manager. The terms of reference should look for applicants with skillsets such as strong project management experience, creative problem solving, and a communications background. Technical skills are not necessarily required.

Engage with other in-country CCD networks to learn from their experiences.

A founding member said that they would have found it helpful to have had exposure to other CCD countries or visited their projects. They suggest for other CCDs to review existing secondary data to help them develop and improve their processes, and share information, including technical support, guidance, etc., with other networks.

**Open lines of communication build trust and better working relationships.** Set up a mechanism as part of the governance and other processes so members can share feedback in an honest, kind, and constructive way. Versions of this should be accessible for any consortia members, general members, field teams, and beneficiaries. This should also include a way to anonymously convey issues (separate from safeguarding reports). Incorporate this into your ongoing monitoring and evaluation work.

Define the communication processes for any projects or consortia during setup. How are conflicting reports from the field relayed externally? Is there a point person to vet communications? Who should sign off on donor communications?

Establish a process for all members to regularly share the names of any joining or departing staff at the national and field team levels, as well as in-country decision makers, with the Collaboration Manager to minimise disruptions and issues.

Institute regular meetings between and across consortium/project members, field and national teams, technical experts, and agency decisionmakers. Share minutes with the Steering Committee to ensure full transparency and that relevant information is communicated across the membership.

Send out monthly updates to all members. This could be the steering committee minutes, any upcoming or recent decisions made, dates for upcoming events, etc.

As part of the Governance Framework or MoU, have all members agree to inform the Steering Committee when working on a proposal that could include inter-agency sub-contracting, so they can reach out to CCD members with the appropriate strengths and geographic footprint to support the grant-seeker. If co-member agencies are working together on other projects that include a cash component, these should also be reported to the Steering Committee to ensure that this work also follows CCD's collaboration standards.

### IT IS NOT A ONE-WAY STREET

CCD can also benefit from lessons learnt from the ECWG members, PSNP, and others. They can support this by organising learning events for the entire cash community that are applicable for a broader audience, including individual donors, NGOs, policymakers, other implementers of cash programming, etc.

One of the ECWG co-chairs advocates for all CCDs to share information for the benefit of the wider cash community (e.g. technical support, guidance, etc.).

### EFFICIENCY IS KING

ECHO's representative working with CCD Ethiopia on its first consortium repeatedly emphasised the need for efficiency, harmonisation, effectiveness, reducing duplication, and, perhaps most importantly, ensuring taxpayer money is used effectively.

ECHO had been pushing for their partners globally to find ways within their contexts, without prescribing methods, to harmonise their cash programmes to improve efficiency and decrease duplication for a couple of years before CCD Ethiopia came together, which made this project the perfect fit. Their goals included more assessments, work with FSPs, and organisational experts sharing their expertise within the field.

Acting as an operational alliance, even when not collaborating on a specific project or consortium is another way to help improve efficiency. Members can contribute staff to a “surge roster” or “expert pool” to allow field teams skilled in certain roles to move across agencies.

CCD members also believe that integrating the Common Donor Approach (CDA), a donor-initiative intended to enable collaboration between partners, early on will help make CCDs more effective and efficient and ensure accountability and transparency.

Some other benefits for catalysing CDA include the potential for influence with donors given the scale of members’ programming, collaboration beyond financial pools, reporting that is more focused on the “how” of doing cash, and programme diversity enhancing collaboration opportunities.

ECHO Ethiopia’s representative agreed. In his feedback, he felt that CDA’s effort to bring donors around to doing cash in a more harmonious way would also send a message to partners that donors are prioritising interoperability and efficiency between FSPs; good data protection; and improved, more cohesive ways of working with partners (other NGOs, CWGs, etc.). One of the ways that CCD excels at this, from ECHO’s perspective, was the segregation of responsibilities that allows for accountability and the capacity to capitalise on specialisations and comparative advantages of different NGOs to create a more effective programme. Having a clearly defined terms of reference for each agency and role within these alliances will make it clear who is responsible for what and see where there is room for improvement. In his view, having NGOs work in this way will create a more efficient and effective standard than a large-scale model.

Other suggested ways of implementing CDA in a way that benefits the cash value chain is to:

- apply a common approach across in-country members to contract FSPs
- employ one platform to share data securely
- harmonise transfer rates to ensure it is the same across NGOs and regions
- use common monitoring systems so CCD can evaluate based on the same indicators

- collaborate with major donors (e.g. ECHO, OFDA, GAC) to get feedback on which implementation methods they have seen work well in similar contexts.

### BUILD COLLABORATIONS THAT FIT YOUR NEEDS

While ECHO’s Ethiopia representative acknowledged that consortiums are easy for donors to support, he was not convinced that they work well as their rigidity does not optimise the potential for what could happen and allow implementing agencies to act agilely. He thought that having a CCD in country could help donors and agencies think about new ways to improve programmes, such as employing sub-grants to:

- involve NGOs with a hybrid of comparative advantages and geographical presences
- make use of available secondary expertise
- develop a structure of “floaters” who can assist across organisations.

He suggested that there be one NGO (on rotation) leading grant operations to improve efficiency. He thought a dedicated Consortium Manager could also improve processes.

Be willing to experiment. CCD Ethiopia is currently trialling various models to see which fits their context and needs best.

### OPPORTUNITIES FOR GROWTH

#### INTEROPERABILITY AND REDUCED BARRIERS TO COLLABORATION

**Updating Governance Frameworks:** It is important to have a basic MoU, policies, and frameworks in place so members can start working together, but these should be updated as lessons are learnt during projects. New points could include how to share staff, office, cars, etc. to streamline operations and implement feedback



Halima is an IDP living in the Somali region. She fled intercommunal conflict with her mentally ill husband and 7 children two years ago. Receiving cash assistance has given her freedom to buy what she needs most, food for her children. “I had farmland, goats, and I was leading a good life. I lost my brother and my property and was left destitute due to the conflict. We arrived here with nothing to eat or feed our children.” – Halima, beneficiary, ECHO-CCD 2019 project

mechanisms to help members communicate in an honest, kind, and constructive way.

**Standardising operating procedures:** Ensure consistent use of zero tolerance policies across all organisations against staff showing biases and other protection concerns.

Our community has faced a number of challenges because of the drought and recurrent flooding ... and have been in dire need of food and other necessities. [The ECHO-CCD consortium] has provided support to all needy people without any discrimination.

– Umar, chairperson of Kobe *kebele*, Somali region

Resolve any technical difficulties and concerns with shared technologies before utilising in future implementations.

**Fostering relationships and trust:** Put in place mechanisms within all interagency/project/consortia/sub-contracting agreements, that detail and assign communications tasks (e.g. timelines and contacts; approval processes for contact with various actors, such as donors; reporting to the Steering Committee; etc.).

Adopt a shared collaboration platform to chat, share files, communicate with working groups, discuss learnings from each other contexts, etc.

Trickle down communications (e.g. newsletters, etc.) from CCD global to national members via the Collaboration Manager, Executive Committee, and global working group members.

## COLLECTIVE IMPACT

**Exerting influence:** A ECWG co-chair suggested that CCD would be well placed to support governmental efforts towards a social protection platform by designing responses informed by assessments, not just checklists, and improve the system’s flexibility to be more timely and take into consideration the preferences of affected populations.

**Combining voices:** Advocate on vulnerability criteria to be prioritised as part of targeting, the application of methodology to influence criteria definitions, verification, and registration processes.

Be more effective at increasing financial inclusion rates via advocacy and networking.

Communally encourage donors to:

- only support NGOs who are utilising CCD’s collaborative approach
- understand CCD’s collaboration model and agree to CCD selecting the implementing agencies according to strengths and geographical footprint.

## SHARED CAPACITY AND POOLED RESOURCES

**Building skills:** One of the obstacles that a member organisation faces in their cash programming work is the low level of awareness, skills, and knowledge on cash management, both internally and externally.

This should be a focus of the collaboration unit. The unit should also address the need for technical advisors to create links, engage in co-solutioning, and develop innovations that can be reiterated across agencies, as the NGOs’ cash advisors are deeply involved in programme implementation and do not have the necessary distance/time/brain space to support.

Prioritise providing members appropriate trainings and materials for field staff and other non-experts participating in cash programming as an ongoing need. Other suggestions include:

- having members’ technical teams get together to share knowledge
- educating field teams and national staff on working collaboratively versus in coordination
- building capacity of all agencies in gender mainstreaming so work can be undertaken by a CCD member rather than a consultant
- creating lines of communications across agencies (either through communities of practice or informally through messaging services, e.g. WhatsApp)
- disclosing evidence (e.g. documenting cost benefits at the national level)
- mobilising resources jointly
- facilitating CCD’s approach on other collaborative projects
- contributing staff towards human resource intensive tasks
- sharing service provider lists.

## AGILE AND CONTEXT-APPROPRIATE SERVICES AND PRODUCTS

**Establishing rapid response mechanisms:** Seek funding for a surge roster. Help improve existing mechanisms to be timelier, including instating sub-grant agreements between all members to be able deploy assistance more rapidly.

## SYSTEMS CHANGE

**Strengthening national cash collaboration:** Generate evidence to show how the collaboration models work and benefit beneficiaries, users, and donors, and spread learning to other networks.

Link CCD with Ethiopia’s Humanitarian Response Plan to incorporate early action at forecast time.

Abdella, chairman of a livelihood collective, in the fields that their community farmers irrigate and tend in Dire Dawa, Ethiopia. With guidance from CRS and its partners, they dug a borehole to access groundwater and now use a pump to irrigate their crops in the dry season.

“We gained knowledge on how to use technology to increase our productivity”, said Abdella. “We dug the borehole by hand with shovels. All the group members helped. We worked nights and days. It took 24 days.” They grow tomatoes, hot peppers, potatoes, onions, oranges, papayas, and guavas. Together the group of six men and six women sells up to ET-ብር 40,000 (US\$1,400) each season (three times a year). This has enabled them to “save money for maintenance, fuel, oil, and grease” Abdella reported.

These natural resource management activities are part of CRS’ development food security activity, which is helping improve the food security and diversify the household incomes of 240,500 PSNP beneficiaries in nine *woredas* in Ethiopia. The activity is part of a consortium project managed by CRS’ NGO partners and led by CRS.

Abdella said, “We were already farmers. We knew how to farm and plant crops. But [this project] shared knowledge on how to use technology to increase productivity. [Their] experts provided awareness on how to use irrigation.”

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## CCD ETHIOPIA MEMBERS



NORWEGIAN  
REFUGEE COUNCIL



Save the Children



Collaborative Cash Delivery (CCD) Network is a global network of international NGOs who operate in every global humanitarian crisis that provides cash programming. CCD’s partners are estimated to deliver 80% of the “last mile” cash assistance. The collaborative cash partners are committed to transforming the delivery of cash programming through the collective impact of cash programme delivery.

[www.collaborativecashdelivery.org](http://www.collaborativecashdelivery.org)

