CHAPTER 7: HOW QUICKLY AND FOR HOW LONG?

The need for a longer-term humanitarian assistance and resilience approach in protracted and recurrent crises has prompted the advent of multi-year, UN-coordinated appeals. In 2013, Somalia was the first and only country to launch a multi-year appeal. In 2014, a further 13 countries had multi-year strategic response plans (SRPs).

The Somalia plan integrates life-saving and livelihood support to address the cycle of recurring crises brought on by drought and conflict. Within its multi-year framework (called a consolidated appeal process (CAP) appeal because it was introduced in 2013, before the changes to the system), annual SRPs are developed to reflect changes and short-term shocks.

This framework could be an opportunity to secure multi-year funding, supporting predictability, continuity and long-term approaches in programming. However, while the umbrella document for the Somalia CAP provides an indication of financial requirements for the full three-year timeframe, the annual response plans present strategies with one-year financial requirements only; and multi-year initiatives are not easily distinguishable from short-term projects.

The two largest donors in Somalia (the United States (US) and the EU institutions) continue their 12 or 18-month funding cycles but the following donors are providing multi-year funding:

- **Sweden** – US$15 million over three years (2013-2015), of which US$9 million is for the multi-year (2013-2016) Somalia Resilience Program (SomReP); Sweden cites the multi-year CAP as the main reason for its multi-year funding.

- **Denmark** – over US$11m to Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) over two years (2012-2013), and over US$20 million over three years (2013-2015) including grants to FAO and SomReP. Notably, this funding comes from both development and humanitarian budget lines; grants were awarded prior to the multi-year CAP but are in line with its priorities.

The Somalia Humanitarian Donor Group (chaired by European Commission’s Department of Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection (ECHO) and Sweden) is currently considering the effects of this multi-year CAP. One concern is that its strong resilience focus may overshadow insufficiently sign-posted urgent humanitarian needs. Indeed, in June 2014, the Emergency Response Coordinator (ERC) issued an urgent request to the UN Security Council for an immediate injection of US$60 million7 to meet the most urgent funding needs within the critically underfunded appeal. A full evaluation of the Somalia multi-year CAP is not in OCHA’s plans, but such a review would yield lessons for all multi-year appeals – including effects on volumes and duration of humanitarian assistance and other resource flows, as well as challenges in balancing urgent response with resilience-building.

In focus: Multi-year approaches and the Somalia appeal

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