What is FTS?

The Financial Tracking Service (FTS) is a global, on-line, continuously updated database of humanitarian funding needs and international 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. 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 international humanitarian funding is reported. FTS is managed by OCHA and located at http://fts.unocha.org.

How can FTS help NGOs?

- *Publicizing proposals:* FTS shows not only contributions, but also proposed projects (if they are registered in a Humanitarian Response Plan or Flash Appeal) with their budgets and unfunded balances. NGOs can therefore use FTS to publicize their humanitarian projects and draw attention to funding needs.
- *NGO visibility:* If informed of contributions, FTS can show each NGO's full effort in a given crisis.
- *Fundraising*: FTS shows major donors to each crisis, including those that have made uncommitted pledges for which NGOs can apply.
- *Advocacy:* 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 information at a glance on which implementing organizations and donors are working, in which crises and sectors, and to what scale. Such organisations and donors can therefore pool information via FTS.

How can NGOs access FTS?

Online at http://fts.unocha.org. File sizes are small, so downloads are fast even with slow connections. If you cannot download, ask your HQ to download and e-mail it to you. We hope the choices on the home page are self-explanatory. If not, start by clicking the "help" link.

How can NGOs help FTS?

- *Share humanitarian project funding information with FTS.* FTS depends on appealing agencies (and donors) to provide the raw data. FTS is not telepathic: it is a recording service that can only post what is reported to it. Seriously incomplete data undermine the reliability of FTS and its usefulness for advocacy and coordination – and understate NGOs' full humanitarian efforts. Conversely, full information makes a powerful advocacy tool and helps all stakeholders see the full extent of humanitarian activities and resources in each country
- *Inform FTS of errors or omissions:* E-mail: fts@un.org
- *Encourage your headquarters* to use FTS and to share project funding information with FTS.
- *Make suggestions for improving FTS.* FTS is always improving to make data more complete and accessible to users. All stakeholders should feel free to suggest improvements. E-mail: fts@un.org

How can NGOs share project funding information with FTS?

Reporting methods aren't too formal. NGO field offices or HQs can inform FTS of contributions by e-mail (to fts@un.org) or via our on-line form (http://fts.unocha.org, then click the "report a contribution" link at left), or whatever verifiable method you find most convenient. (In some countries where OCHA has an information officer or NGO liaison officer, s/he may facilitate sharing project funding information.) We aim

to not cause you any significant extra work. If you are not using our on-line form, we only ask that you specify at least the following:
1. donor country or organization
2. date of contribution (or decision)
3. amount in original currency (e.g. euros, USD), or if in-kind, the amount, description, and value of goods
4. one-line description of the contribution
5. Humanitarian Response Plan or Flash Appeal project code (if relevant)

If any financing for humanitarian projects came from your NGO's own private fundraising, or from other non-official sources like the DEC, or unearmarked funds from official donors, please cite that.

FAQ: Doesn't FTS cover only response plan contributions or only countries with HRPs?

No—and we have changed our on-line presentation to make it look less that way. The FTS database contains all humanitarian contributions reported by appealing agencies and donors, whether to projects registered or not registered in response plans/appeals, and for countries where there is no HRP or Flash Appeal.

Why should NGOs bother to register project proposals in HRPs?

HRPs and Flash Appeals increases donors' confidence that appealing agencies' projects are linked to the humanitarian community's collective strategy and goals. NGOs and UN agencies alike should perhaps think less in terms of "seeking funding for their proposals through the HRP" (though we would all be pleased if donors decide to fund projects on the basis of their summaries in the HRP documents, as they sometimes do), and more in terms of registering their proposals—which they will still pursue through their usual funding channels—in the response plan as a way of publicizing them and certifying the proposals' coherence with the common humanitarian action plan, and dovetailing with other proposed activities. Inclusive listing of planned projects also helps to publicize the full scale of humanitarian action and resource needs in a given crisis.

How does FTS define humanitarian aid for statistical purposes?

For activities outside of formal HRPs and Flash Appeals, 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