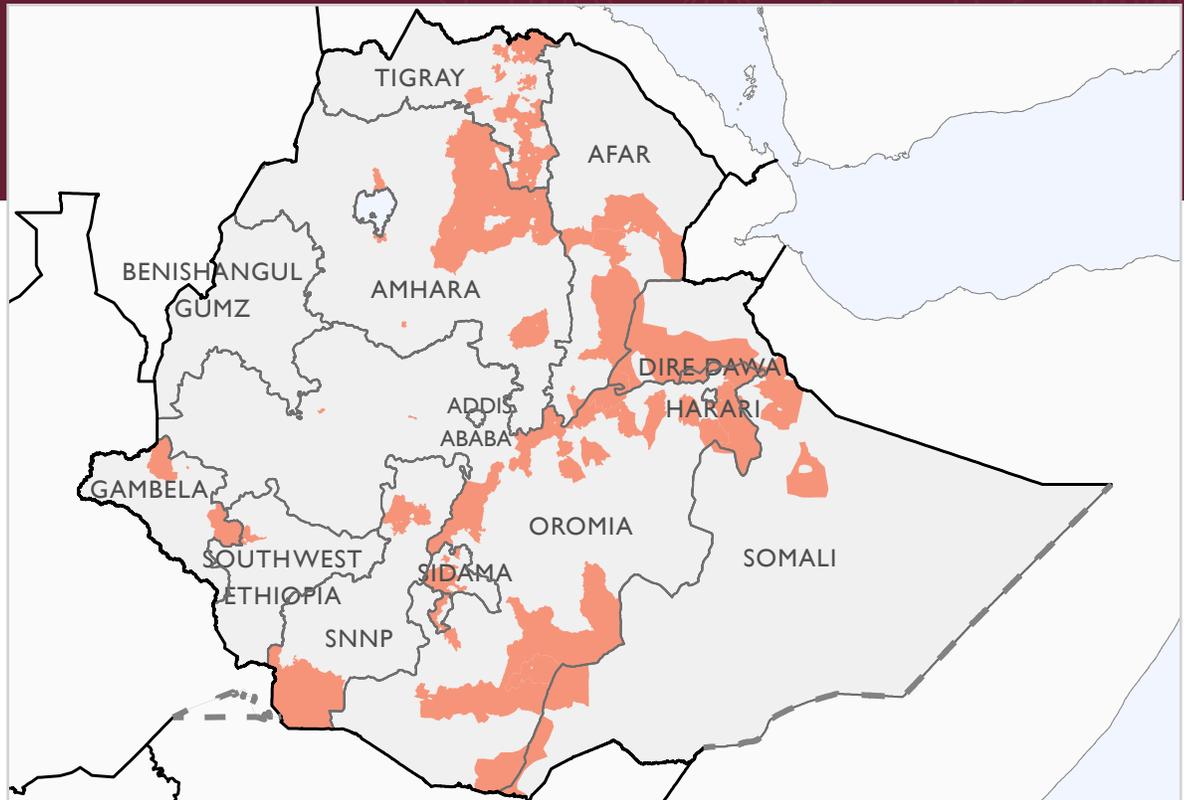




**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

# USAID Ethiopia Resilience Fact Sheet

Resilience  
Focus Zone



## Background/Risk

Millions of Ethiopians are poor or are at risk of falling into poverty, defined as living on less than \$1.90 per day. Prolonged conflict and recurrent natural disasters are threats to sustaining development outcomes and have burdened the national government and international humanitarian donors. The COVID-19 pandemic compounded these issues as production decreased, supply chains were disrupted, and the price of staple goods increased, destabilizing livelihoods nationwide.<sup>1,2</sup> USAID's development programs in Ethiopia aim to address the root causes of poverty through multisectoral, integrated interventions. This layered programming aims to build capacities at the household and community levels and reinforces the connections between communities and their local and regional governance systems. It also improves the functioning, resilience, and reach of market systems to enable populations in targeted areas to reduce their reliance on humanitarian assistance.

## Program Strategies

To increase resilience, USAID's activities collectively aim to reduce the risk of disasters and strengthen vulnerable populations' response to shocks. USAID frequently leads in the evolution and implementation of major social protection programs, notably:

1. The Productive Safety Net Program (PSNP) benefits more than eight million people across Ethiopia with food and cash transfers for labor contributions to public works that support improved natural resource management. Components supporting livelihoods and nutrition strengthen support to vulnerable households, expanding coverage in response to a shock at less cost than humanitarian assistance.
2. Community-based health insurance, when layered with PSNP, increases resilience.
3. Additional resilience core activities in the highlands and lowlands of Ethiopia build on the PSNP household

interventions to strengthen local and regional market systems, disaster risk management systems, and employment opportunities.

4. Economic growth activities layer with resilience activities to link market systems development to enterprise development services in and beyond agriculture and improve access and availability of nutritious, safe, diverse foods year-round. In addition to increasing market reach, activities will also support market systems to become more resilient so that they continue to function in the face of shocks and stressors.

### Activities and Strategic Partnerships

USAID-funded Resilience in Pastoral Areas (RiPA) activities strengthen household and community resilience in the prioritized zones of Afar, Somali, and Oromia Regions, as well as the South Omo Zone of the Southern Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples' Region. These activities provide technical assistance to government staff and community leaders to improve community disaster action planning. They also improve crop and livestock systems and input supply, access to finance, livelihood diversification options for people transitioning out of pastoralism, and household nutrition and hygiene practices. The RiPAs will strengthen existing vocational systems to develop the lowland workforce and connect youth with jobs in their region. USAID is working closely with the federal government on policies that will improve private sector opportunities and increase domestic revenue.

USAID is a major contributor to the PSNP in highland districts, primarily through Resilience Food Security Activities (RFSAs) that support up to 1.5 million beneficiaries. RFSAs address the basic food needs of chronically food-insecure people through seasonal transfer of food and cash and the creation of community assets that generate economic benefits. Highlands resilience activities work to empower women, youth, and extremely poor households; increase livelihood opportunities; and enhance linkages to financial services and input and output markets.

USAID's education and youth programming promotes resilience among children and youth by providing skills in reading, cognitive development, soft skills, financial literacy, and business development support to prepare them for a constantly changing labor market. Education funds

will build the capacity of the Ministry of Education and Regional Education Boards to plan responses to shocks that close schools, and to create a safe and inclusive learning environment. Strengthened water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH), health, and nutrition services lead to improved performance in school. The Feed the Future Ethiopia Growth through Nutrition activity supports the implementation of the national government's multisectoral Food and Nutrition Policy.

The Feed the Future Food and Agriculture System Transformation activity will increase access to healthy diets by improving competitiveness, inclusiveness, and resilience of the food and agriculture system. It aims to increase the availability, convenience, and desirability of safe, diverse, nutritious foods while also increasing incomes. The activity focuses on aligning food and agriculture supply with market demand, increasing food safety and quality, increasing enterprise growth and employment, and increasing partnership between public and private sectors to advance key social priorities. The Feed the Future Ethiopia Land Governance activity improves land governance in the lowlands to increase land tenure security, access to finance, and reduce violent conflict, all of which directly improve agricultural productivity and resilience.

### Evaluation and Learning

USAID's Program Office manages evaluation and learning activities, with task orders and research goals identified by the Mission's Highlands and Lowlands Resilience Projects. Both projects have participated in activity design and the development of monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL) task orders relevant to resilience learning. The Lowlands Project will use the findings from several ethnographic research studies to address cultural resistance to behaviors that are difficult to change, such as latrine use.

Highland Resilience—Platform for Adaptive Learning (R-PAL) activity research will generate the evidence base USAID will use to design and adapt its highlands resilience portfolio to be smart, impactful, and implementable at scale. R-PAL will develop and test different integration models, including integration with the Government of Ethiopia's resilience investments, to identify the value addition, challenges, and issues impacting long-term sustainability of outcomes.

Contact John Meyer, Senior Strategy and Impact Advisor, Center for Resilience at [johnmeyer@usaid.gov](mailto:johnmeyer@usaid.gov) to learn more.

<sup>1</sup>Mercy Corps. 2020. Economic Impact of COVID-19 in the Somali Region of Ethiopia. USAID and European Union (EU) Trust Fund.

<sup>2</sup>Aragie, Emerta; Taffesse, Alemayehu Seyoum; and Tamru, Seneshaw. 2020. The short-term impact of COVID-19 on Ethiopia's economy through external sector channels: An economywide multiplier model analysis. ESSP Working Paper 154. Washington, D.C.: International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI).

<https://doi.org/10.2499/p15738coll2.134182>