

Building Resilience in Ethiopia – Technical Assistance (BRE-TA) component

BRE-TA Project Completion Report

Covering the period March 2019 to March 2024

Version finalised in March 2024 (update of version shared with FCDO on 29 January 2024, with parts of the VfM assessment in Annex I redacted to remove commercially sensitive data)



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Preface

This report was partly written by, and compiled and edited by, Kandi Shejavali, with contributions from the following members of the Building Resilience in Ethiopia – Technical Assistance (BRE-TA) team: Mark Essex; Nils Riemenschneider; Stephanie Allen; Rajan Soni; Frances Hansford; and Fred Merttens.

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The management team and technical leads were supported by members of the wider BRE-TA team, as well as external specialist experts, all of whom provided critical contributions that helped make the project's achievements possible. However, it was the financing from donors and the engagement of counterparts in government that were central to the project's ability to deliver any results at all.

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List of recurring abbreviations

AAR	After-action review	EW4All	Early Warning for All Initiative (of the United Nations)
ADPC	Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre	EWRD	Early Warning and Response Directorate (of the EDRMC)
AF	Adaptation Fund	EWS	Early warning system
BEP	Bulletins Enhancement Plan	FCDO	Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (of the Government of the United Kingdom)
BRE	Building Resilience in Ethiopia	FSCO	Food Security and Coordination Office (of Ethiopia's Ministry of Agriculture)
BRE-TA	Building Resilience in Ethiopia – Technical Assistance	GC	Gregorian calendar
BoA	Bureau of Agriculture	GCF	Green Climate Fund
BoF	Bureau of Finance	GDP	Gross domestic product
CDP	Centre for Disaster Protection	GESI	Gender equality and social inclusion
CIS	Climate information services	GoE	Government of Ethiopia
CMCO	Commodity Management Coordination Office	GRM	Grievance redress mechanism
CRGE	Climate-resilient green economy	GSD	Gender and social development
CS/GESI	Conflict sensitivity/gender equality and social inclusion	HEI	Higher education institution
DCT	Donor Coordination Team	HFA	Humanitarian food assistance
DRF	Disaster risk finance or disaster risk financing	HRM	Human resources management
DRFS	Disaster Risk Financing Strategy	IAR	Intra-action review
DRAP	Drought Response Assistance Plan	IDP	Internally displaced person
DRIP	Disaster risk-informed planning	IFMIS	Integrated Financial Management Information System
DRM	Disaster risk management	JEOP	Joint Emergency Operation Programme
DRR	Disaster risk reduction	KII	Key informant interview
EBB	Evidence-based budget	KPI	Key performance indicator
EDRMC	Ethiopian Disaster Risk Management Commission	LASS	Linkage to Social Services
ENCU	Emergency Nutrition Coordination Unit	M&E	Monitoring and evaluation
EPHI	Ethiopian Public Health Institute	MAM	Moderate acute malnutrition
EPRP	Emergency preparedness and response plan	MDAs	Ministries, departments, and agencies
EW	Early warning	MEFF	Macroeconomic and Fiscal Framework

MEL	Monitoring, evaluation and learning		
MoA	Ministry of Agriculture		
MoE	Ministry of Education	SAP	Simplified Approval Process
MoF	Ministry of Finance	SAPHE	Sustaining and Accelerating Primary Health in Ethiopia
MoH	Ministry of Health	SNNP	Southern Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples
MoLSA	Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs	SRSN	Shock-responsive safety net
MoP	Ministry of Peace	STC	Sub-Technical Committee
MoPD	Ministry of Planning and Development	TA	Technical assistance or technical assistant (determined by the context in which the abbreviation appears)
MoWSA	Ministry of Women and Social Affairs	TO	Tasking Order
MTR	Mid-Term Review	ToC	Theory of Change ToRs Terms of reference
NPDC	National Planning and Development Commission	ToT	Training of trainers
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs	TSS	Technical Support Specialist
ODA	Official development assistance	TWG	Technical Working Group
OPM	Oxford Policy Management	TYDP	Ten-Year Development Plan
OR	Operational research	UNOCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
PCR	Project Completion Report	USAID	US Agency for International Development
PEFA	Public Expenditure and Financial Accountability	VfM	Value-for-money or value for money
PFM	Public financial management	VRAM	Vulnerability and Risk Analysis and Mapping
PHEM	Public Health Emergency Management	VRAM-EPRP	Vulnerability Risk Assessment Mapping – Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan
PMO	Prime Minister's Office	WFP	World Food Programme
PPIC	Project Partners Implementation Committee	WHO	World Health Organisation
PSNP	Productive Safety Net Programme		
PW	Public works		
RCCE	Risk communication and community engagement		
RHB	Regional Health Bureau		
RPHI	Regional Public Health Institute		
RTA	Regional Technical Advisor		
SAM	Severe acute malnutrition		

Annex A: Progress against the logframe

A.1 Progress towards relevant logframe indicator targets

As noted in section 2.6, BRE-TA's four workstreams together contributed to Output 1 of the wider BRE programme's logframe, which along with the other ten outputs fed into the BRE programme's Outcome 1:

- **Outcome 1:** "Government of Ethiopia to lead and deliver an effective, more self-financed and accountable response to climate and humanitarian shocks."

As noted the BRE-TA specific Output being targeted was:

- **Output 1:** "Technical assistance to the Government of Ethiopia (GoE) to lead and deliver an effective and accountable humanitarian response"...

...with the associated indicators:

- **Output indicator 1.1:** "Technical assistance to Government of Ethiopia to plan, prepare, prevent, deliver, and budget for humanitarian response delivered and well received"; and
- **Output indicator 1.2:** "Significant contributions to strategic plans, systems and procedures in disaster risk management, disaster risk finance, public health emergency management and shock responsive safety nets".

The table that follows shows BRE-TA's progress towards the targets for Output 1 indicators 1.1 and 1.2, for March 2024, both of which exceeded expectations.

Table 1: Achievement of BRE-TA logframe final targets for Output 1

Output 1	Output indicator 1.1	Target (March 2024)	Progress made during 2023 towards March 2024 target, as of December 2023
<i>TA to the Government of Ethiopia to lead and deliver an effective and accountable humanitarian response</i>	<i>Technical assistance to Government of Ethiopia to plan, prepare, prevent, deliver, and budget for humanitarian response delivered and well received.</i>	<i>Core deliverables from TOs delivered to government and signed off.</i>	<p>By the end of December 2023, BRE-TA had fully programmed, delivered and closed 20 TOs covering work across the four workstreams; and had delivered 126 key deliverables to and got signed off by government to help them plan, prepare, prevent, deliver, and budget for humanitarian response. The following are of particular note from 2023:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DRM - EDRMC signed off (1) the new DRM Policy and Legal Framework and submitted them to the Office of the Prime Minister (wherein they were forwarded for approval to the Council of Ministers and Ministry of Justice respectively); (2) the M&E baseline of the DRM Policy; and (3) the Early Warning Reform Roadmap and Implementation Plan. • PHEM - EPHI signed-off (1) The VRAM-EPRP risk-informed planning Guideline and national exercise to complement the 12 regional and 267 woreda risk-informed plans; (2) The strategy for engaging 'Higher Education Institutions in COVID-19 Pandemic Response' and moreover a 'Framework For Sustainable Engagement in PHEM' leading to MoUs signed between Amhara PHI and nine universities in Amhara and Oromia RHB and Jimma University; (3) New emergency nutrition modules approved and

Output 1	Output indicator 1.1	Target (March 2024)	Progress made during 2023 towards March 2024 target, as of December 2023
			<p>adopted by 15 universities; (4) PHEM Leadership Training materials accredited by EPHI, including Facilitator Guides and Participant Workbooks; and (5) 14 regions/city administrations prepared regional PHEM strategies and implementation plans.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SRSN - FSCO signed-off the (1) Public Works guideline for SRSN; (2) Gender and Social Development (GSD), Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) and Nutrition issues in SRSN rapid assessment; (3) the SRSN Training of Trainers Modules delivered and Job Aids in five languages. • DRF – MoF signed-off (1) the Disaster Risk Financing Strategy (DRFS) as approved by the DRFS Steering Committee in December 2023; (2) the \$25m Concept Note for the GCF Simplified Approval Process on 'Building Climate Change Resilience of Vulnerable Households in Selected Localities of Ethiopia'; (3) the Climate Information Services (CIS) Manual to increase use of Agro-Met advisory information in the woreda level planning process of GCF project target woredas; and, (4) Guidelines for Woreda Climate Smart Development Planning – Volumes 1 and 2.

Output 1	Output indicator 1.2	Target March 2024 covering the reporting period to end-December 2023 (annual milestone)	Progress made by end of February 2024 towards the final Target March 2024
<p>TA to the Government of Ethiopia to lead and deliver an effective and accountable humanitarian response</p>	<p><u>Significant contributions to strategic plans, systems and procedures in disaster risk management, disaster risk finance, public health emergency management and shock responsive safety nets</u></p>	<p><u>Significant contributions, to strategic plans, systems and procedures in disaster risk management, disaster risk finance, public health emergency management and shock responsive safety nets, as exemplified by the completion of the following Intermediate Outcomes or comparable deliverables:</u></p>	
		<p>1. Disaster Response Management (DRM) workstream: Intermediate Outcome of <u>DRM policy approved</u>, thereby contributing to the long-term vision 'Government has a fully functional DRM system and capacity to manage humanitarian and climate shocks'.</p>	<p>Significant contributions towards the DRM workstream's long-term vision are exemplified by the completion of a number of major deliverables. The DRM Policy was approved In February 2024, and overall six intermediate outcomes were achieved from a total of eight comparable deliverables.</p>
		<p>2. Public Health Emergency Management (PHEM) workstream: <u>Integrated Emergency Nutrition workplan developed and used</u>, thereby contributing to the long-term vision of 'Improved PHEM systems'.</p>	<p>Significant contributions towards the PHEM workstream's long-term vision are exemplified by the completion of a number of major deliverables. The indicative target for March 2024 was achieved, in an 'Integrated Emergency Nutrition plan developed and used', as were all six of the PHEM workstream's intermediate outcomes.</p>

Output 1	Output indicator 1.2	Target March 2024 covering the reporting period to end-December 2023 (annual milestone)	Progress made by end of February 2024 towards the final Target March 2024
		<p>3. Shock Responsive Safety Net (SRSN) workstream: <i>Common budgets and resource plans used through development of <u>shock responsive safety net financing plan</u>, thereby contributing to the long-term vision of 'A single, government-led shock-responsive safety net where PSNP and HFA work together'.</i></p>	<p>Significant contributions towards the SRSN workstream's long-term vision are exemplified by the completion of a number of major deliverables. The indicative target for the SRSN workstream for March 2024 was achieved, namely 'Common budgets and resource plans used through development of shock responsive safety net financing plan' primarily the preparation of the DRAP, as were all eight of the SRSN workstream's intermediate outcomes.</p>
		<p>4. Disaster Risk Financing (DRF) workstream: <i>National DRFS developed, thereby contributing to the long-term vision of 'Ethiopia's public finances are better prepared for climate and humanitarian shocks'.</i></p>	<p>Significant contributions towards the DRF workstream's long-term vision are exemplified by the completion of a number of major deliverables. The indicative target for the DRF workstream for March 2024 was achieved, with the 'National DRF Strategy developed' and approved by a ministerial Steering Committee, as were all nine of the DRF workstream's intermediate outcomes.</p>

Achievement of the logframe targets was predicated on the following assumptions holding:

- Technical assistance would be high quality.
- Technical assistance would lead to stronger capacity to coordinate and deliver.
- Government partners would be willing to work with technical assistance providers, including after elections, and adopt and implement outputs developed with TA programme in a timely fashion.
- Government partners would be willing and able to lead and manage a system capable of preparing for and responding to climate and humanitarian shocks.
- Delivery through government systems would offer better value for money and be more sustainable.
- GoE would have the capacity and resources to work with a TA project even through major shocks/crises, e.g., the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Implementation would lead to the desired impact, and external factors would be favourable.
- Project would remain flexible and responsive to contextual changes and GoE requirements.

The assumptions largely held, in an even more challenging than expected operating context, thanks in large part to the flexible and patient project management approach. This was noted by FCDO in changes to the logframe in September 2022, where the Outcome Assumptions were 'Updated to reflect that contextual developments have reduced Ethiopia's resilience to disasters and the GoE's ability and willingness to deliver an increasing share of the response'.

Table 2: Information on the 20 Tasking Orders completed

TO#	Workstream, title and main government partner (and date approved)	TO Budget (£)	Summary of Tasking Order
TO#1	Public Health Emergency Management (PHEM) workstream, initial TA to Ministry of Health (MoH) and Ethiopian Public Health Institute (EPHI) (Approved on 26/03/2020)	£372,201 budget	Helped prepare National PHEM Strategy and first year implementation plan, and PHEM Leadership Strategy and Roadmap, regional roll-out of regional PHEM strategies and revising PHEM Guidelines and Standard Operating Procedures for front-line health workers. Prepared 'Vulnerability Risk Assessment Mapping – Emergency Preparedness Response Planning' (VRAM-EPRP) in vulnerable woredas.
TO#2	Disaster Risk Finance (DRF) workstream, initial TA to Ministry of Finance (MoF) (Approved on 26/03/2020)	£49,515 budget	Initial TA in 2020 to MoF on Mainstreaming Climate Change and Disaster Risk resulting in a new pillar incorporated into the Ten-Year Development Plan.
TO#3	Operational Research (OR) for MoF, MoH and EPHI on emergency health financing (Phase 1) (Approved on 02/04/2020)	£41,550 budget	First Phase of applied policy research into how govt finances health and nutrition emergencies
TO#4	Shock Responsive Safety Net (SRSN) workstream, initial TA to Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) (Approved on 06/04/2020)	£510,252 budget	Studies on options to improve Nutrition management, assessments of SRSN implementation systems (includes targeting, delivery systems and structures, and PSNP contingency budget). Knowledge Management assessment of NDRMC and MoA; and (2) Job aid and SRSN Training of Trainers materials on the new SRSN.
TO#5	DRF workstream, Quantifying Disaster Related Fiscal Risk (Approved on 03/04/2020, 2nd amendment requested 27/10/2021 for £140,320.	£417,765 budget	Quantifying disaster related fiscal risks through training MoF staff in modelling disaster related fiscal risks.
TO#6	Flexible BRE-TA Support for COVID- 19 (all workstreams) (Approved on 27/04/2020)	£544,780.71 budget	COVID-19 focused TO: (1) EPHI supporting Communications and TA for Somali Regional Health Bureau. (2) Opportunity Cost of COVID-19 Expenditure Reallocations. (3) Operational Research and analysis on COVID-19. (4) Study for MoF in 2020 on non-traditional resource mobilisation; and (5) Intra-Action Review (IAR) for MoH and EPHI (and regions) on COVID-19.
TO#7	M&E team (Approved on 01/09/2020)	£13,575 budget	Developed Theories of Change, outcome statements and assessment tools.
TO#8	Disaster Risk Management (DRM) workstream, initial TA to National DRM Commission (NDRMC) (Approved on 02/07/2020)	£63,935 budget	Applied policy research stage and technical support to EDRMC on reforming DRM sector, captured in four analytical research notes and the 'DRM Synthesis Report'.
TO#9	DRF workstream, budget tagging, regional planning and climate finance (Approved on 21/09/2020)	£1,528,666 budget	TA to Climate Resilient Green Economy (CRGE) unit in MoF (CRGE) on: (1) Climate and Disaster Budget Tagging; (2) Climate smart local development planning; and (3): Climate finance capacity strengthening.

TO#	Workstream, title and main government partner (and date approved)	TO Budget (£)	Summary of Tasking Order
TO#10	M&E team (Approved on 31/08/2020)	£46,575 budget	Internal TA delivered through BRE-TA staff and short-term consultants
TO#11	Operational Research (Phase 2 of emergency health financing and evaluation of SWAN programme) (Approved on 12/08/2020)	£1,127,760 budget	Operational Research Phase 2 on financing health and nutrition emergencies ended; and evaluation of SWAN consortium's rapid response mechanism and COVID-19 studies.
TO#12	SRSN workstream, strengthening shock responsive elements of rural PSNP (Approved on 08/12/2020)	£1,504,967 budget	Follow-on TO#4 for SRSN training, Federal TA and five Regional TAs based in MoA offices to help strengthen delivery protocols, including through MIS and strengthen management arrangements for delivering services through the SRSN, also addressing EWS weaknesses and resources for SRSN.
TO#13	Operational Research on urban impacts of COVID-19 (Approved on 16/09/2020)	£189,187 budget	Analysis on 'The effect of COVID-19 and government response measures on poor and vulnerable groups in urban areas in Ethiopia'.
TO#14	DRM workstream, support to reforming DRM sector (Approved on 26/02/2021)	£374,850 budget	Technical advice to EDRMC on reforming DRM sector, assessment on policy coherence within DRM sector and M&E framework to track progress of DRM mainstreaming as intended in DRM policy and strategy, preparing a legal framework.
TO#15	DRF workstream, building disaster risk into Public Financial Management systems (Approved on 28/06/2021)	£501,574 budget	TA provided to MoF: (1) Evidence Based Budgeting (EBB); (2) Value for Money (VfM) assessment of MoA; (3) DRF Knowledge Exchange (held in Nov. 2021) and subsequent support to developing a DRF strategy; and (4) DRF strategy.
TO#16	TO#16 – Improved Early Warning for Early Action. (Approved on 1/10/2021)	£246,630 budget	'Early Warning for Early Action' activities - synthesis review for EDRMC to build consensus around all the advice and guidance in recent EW reports; main activity of supporting the development of a 'roadmap' to a well-functioning EWS at federal and regional levels.
TO#17	DRF workstream, supporting the MoF's CRGE access more climate finance funding. (Approved on 13/10/2021)	£251,540 budget	Support to CRGE unit in MoF to prepare three funding proposals and build capacity of those preparing them and future proposals.
TO#18	PHEM workstream, builds on first set of activities (VRAM-EPRP, PHEM leadership and Emergency Nutrition) (Approved on 24/02/2022)	£773,185 budget	Continues TO#1 support to MoH and EPHI on (1) PHEM leadership capacity building, (2) Risk informed planning (VRAM-EPRP), and (3) Emergency public health nutrition. And absorbed TSS in MoH and EPHI at request of FCDO.
TO#19	DRM workstream, supporting the drought response in 3 regions (Approved on 28/03/2022)	[£1,672,333] budget	TA response to the La Niña and negative Indian Ocean Dipole induced drought in the pastoral areas of southern and south-eastern Ethiopia.
TO#20	SRSN workstream, PSNP support through short-term funding of 14 Technical Support Specialists (TSS) (Approved on 21/04/2022)	£328,357 budget	TSSs at request of FCDO.

A.1 Main deliverables by workstream

From 20 Tasking Orders BRE-TA's 126 deliverables were highly appreciated by government.¹

To give a sense of what was required in producing a deliverable, for example applied policy advice and recommendations for government, the process involved:

- getting government counterparts to focus and agree on what they needed (in the form of signing off on initial terms of reference (ToRs));
- then getting the request and related ToRs written up in a TO and in a way that was convincing to BRE-TA's donors;
- then waiting for the TO be approved by the donors;
- then engaging qualified and affordable teams of largely Ethiopian consultants to do the specified work alongside the government;
- then getting the consultants through OPM's due diligence and contracting so that the work could be done; and
- then, after the output had been delivered, getting government counterparts (assuming they were still in the role) to push the deliverable upwards through the relevant channels within their MDA for political sign-off (often called 'validation').

These seemingly simple steps were completed repeatedly over the five years of the project for each of the interventions. And it was very much the preparatory efforts of the early years, when the immediate relevance of BRE-TA deliverables was not always widely appreciated, that led ² to **the 'bigger results', as written up as intermediate outcomes, mainly achieved in 2022 and 2023.**³ This was because these preparatory steps, in building the case for reform, were useful to government counterparts. Taking the time to prepare well helped them navigate the more politically and technically contested reform areas.

The BRE-TA project's main deliverables (126 in total) are listed in the tables below by workstream (and were shared with donors as part of Quarterly Reporting).

¹ Per FCDO Annual Reviews and the VfM assessments conducted on the programme.

² The first three years of programme implementation saw few moments of tangible success. Fortunately, there were several 'bigger results' in the final years (despite conditions remaining very challenging). BRE-TA's donors should be credited with keeping the faith in the approach and 'playing the long game', and not further complicating matters by being overly prescriptive.

³ Such as the DRM Policy and Legal Framework, the Disaster Risk Financing Strategy, the SRSN Operational Manual, or the national VRAM-EPRP Guideline.

A.2 Main deliverables from the DRM workstream

Vision of the Disaster Risk Management (DRM) workstream: “Government has a fully functional DRM system and capacity to manage humanitarian and climate shocks”.

Table 3: 27 key deliverables from the DRM workstream

Building block	Building block outcome statement	Intermediate outcome statement	Main deliverables (payment-related and other significant deliverables)
DRM Coordination and Leadership	Effective institutional and governance arrangements in place from national to local levels for coordinated DRM operations	New DRM policy approved by Council of Ministers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Literature review of DRM good practice - Draft legal framework and directives - Study on policy coherence and alignment towards improved development and disaster risk reduction (DRR) and management
		Knowledge and understanding of new DRM policy and legal framework increased in four sectors and five key regions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - N/A
		Improved leadership capacity in EDRMC to coordinate DRM operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Donor mapping of DRM investments study - Effectiveness of NDRMC’s coordination role - Report on identification of KPIs and development of an M&E Framework to mainstream DRM policy implementation
DRM Mainstreaming	DRM becomes an integral part of the country’s development agenda at federal, sectoral and regional levels	DRM integrated into national and regional TYDP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Appraisal of selected regional short-term plans - NPSDRM M&E Baseline study for tracking implementation of new DRM Policy
		DRM mainstreamed into four priority regions’ agriculture/pastoral sectoral development plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - DRM Mainstreaming Gains in Key Ministries - DRM Synthesis Report (‘chapeau study’) - DRM Mainstreaming roadmap
		Disaster risk-informed planning (DRIP) capacity strengthened in five sectoral ministries and four regions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - DRIP Training Manual and Federal DRIP training report - Regional DRIP training report
DRM Information	A well-functioning, government-led Early Warning System leads to improved early action in a disaster	EWS implementation plan in place	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Synthesis review identifying good EWS practice and lessons learned - Roadmap detailing actors and roles in building a well-functioning EWS at federal and regional levels - Progress report of BRE-TA support to operationalise the roadmap and contribution to capacity building within NDRMC
		Improved capacity within EDRMC to generate, disseminate and use EW information for early action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - La Niña and negative Indian Ocean Dipole induced drought assessment report - Summary progress report on Somali, Oromia and SNNP regional drought response support - Summary progress report to DRM Technical Working Group on drought support. - Summary progress report to Ministry of Agriculture’s Pastoral Task Force (PTF).

Building block	Building block outcome statement	Intermediate outcome statement	Main deliverables (payment-related and other significant deliverables)
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rapid Regional Coordination System Review (led by the five RTAs in regional DRM offices) - A briefing in PPT to the Agriculture Task Force (ATF) on 'El Niño Forecast in Ethiopia' (end of July 2023) - A note for publication on the potential impacts of El Niño on food security in 2024 - A note on the need for a Livestock Recovery Plan for Southern Ethiopia - A technical brief on the likely El Niño for use by government partners - A write-up of a validation workshop held on the 'Early Warning Bulletins Enhancement Plan and Diagnostic Study' - A note from the DRM and M&E team on implementation of TO#19 monitoring visit to Somali Region

A.3 Main deliverables from the PHEM workstream

Vision of the Public Health Emergency Management (PHEM) workstream: "Improved PHEM systems".

Table 4: 36 key deliverables from the PHEM workstream

Building block	Building block outcome statement	Intermediate outcome statement	Main deliverables (payment-related and other significant deliverables)
PHEM system design	PHEM system provides effective leadership for health and nutrition emergency preparedness, response, recovery	National PHEM strategy adapted by several regions (incorporating implementation plan)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Regional adaptations of national PHEM strategy to guide annual planning - Regional Adaptation Progress Report - Lessons learned note on Vulnerability Risk Assessment Mapping – Emergency Preparedness Response Planning conducted in priority woredas - PHEM Strategy document, costed and with framework for its implementation. - Annual Implementation Plan prepared based on the above strategy document. - Roadmap for strengthening PHEM leadership capacity at all levels of the system. - Updated PHEM guidelines, tools and SOPs - Lessons learned from redesigning and restructuring of EPHI's Centre for PHEM.
		PHEM leadership capacity development program established at EPHI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Baseline assessment on current PHEM leadership challenges and practices - PHEM Leadership Training Needs Assessment - Competency-based PHEM leadership training modules developed and accredited/certification - Competency-based PHEM leadership training modules developed and accredited/certification - A brief communique to mark the launch of the PHEM Leadership Training Programme in EPHI

Building block	Building block outcome statement	Intermediate outcome statement	Main deliverables (payment-related and other significant deliverables)
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A write-up of 'Public Health Emergency Management (PHEM) Leadership Training for High-Level Management (HLM) Training Report' - PHEM Leadership Training – Facilitator Guide; and Participant Workbook (for Lower Level Management)
		Standardized training and planning for Emergency Nutrition Management established at EPHI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Public health emergency Nutrition Scoping study - Guidelines and tools for integration of MAM into SAM surveillance system - National emergency nutrition intervention guideline and first year nutrition plan - Emergency nutrition Training Needs Assessment (TNA) - Emergency-Nutrition (E-Nut) Training curriculum - A 'Summary Report Training of Trainers on Modularized Competency based Emergency Nutrition Training Manual for Afar, Amhara and Tigray Region'
Region and woreda PHEM structures and processes	Effective, timely woreda-level preparedness and response to health and nutrition emergencies	Risk-informed planning (VRAM-EPRP) becomes part of national, regional and woreda plans.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - VRAM-EPRP report at federal level - VRAM-EPRP report at regional level - Guideline for scaling up of VRAM-EPRP - A note on 'Vulnerability and Risk Assessment and Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan Development for Cluster of Woredas from Amhara and Benishangul-Gumuz Regions'
		Recommendations from reviews to improve services taken up (e.g., AAR/IARs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Regional Intra Action Review Report (R-IAR) for six regions submitted to government - Training regional, zonal and woreda health emergency officers on Community Event-Based Surveillance (CEBS) - Report on role of Higher Ed. Inst's. (HEI) in implementation of COVID-19 Response - Framework for sustainably engaging HEIs in PHEM systems strengthening - Intra Action Review (IAR) of COVID-19 Task Force - Report on implementation of IAR recommendations - A briefing given to the PHEM TWG on 'Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in COVID-19 Pandemic Response: Findings and Framework for Sustainable Engagement' - A back to office note on an event for 'Community leaders and volunteers on cholera outbreak response'.

Building block	Building block outcome statement	Intermediate outcome statement	Main deliverables (payment-related and other significant deliverables)
Financing PHEM	Predictable, adequate, timely, well-coordinated resources available for emergency health and nutrition response	A national health and nutrition emergency financing strategy covering preparedness, response and recovery integrated in DRFS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The report prepared for FCDO's health team on 'Maternal, Neonatal, and Child Health Service Packages and Cost Estimates in Primary Healthcare Setting in Ethiopia' - Operational Research into health financing - Assessing the efficiency and effectiveness of emergency health financing mechanisms in Ethiopia Phase 1 and Phase 2: In-Depth Context Analysis - A Policy Brief for on financing health and nutrition emergencies prepared by the Operational Research team with the DRF workstream

A.4 Main deliverables from the SRSN workstream

Vision of the Shock-Responsive Safety Net (SRSN) workstream: "A single, government-led shock-responsive safety net".

Table 5: 19 key deliverables from the SRSN workstream

Building block	Building block outcome statement	Intermediate outcome statement	Main deliverables (payment-related and other significant deliverables)
SRSN Delivery	Efficient and accountable government-led delivery of cash and food to people in need	Stronger SRSN coordination mechanisms established	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Shock Responsive guidelines (replaced ICFRP) and subsequent consultation/ familiarization workshop - Standard operating procedures (SOPs) for shock-responsive element of PSNP - Institutional readiness and stability, and capacity assessments completed - Commodity Management Assessment and Action Plan
		Harmonized service delivery mechanisms in place for SRSN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provision of training and dissemination of job aid. - Learning note on strengthening regional SRSN - Cascading SRSN ToT support - The guideline for implementing public works under the SRSN, and the write-up of the discussions at the SRSN-PW validation workshop.
		Gender and social inclusion integrated into Grievance and Redress Mechanism of SRSN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Contribution to improving GRM (as it relates to SRSN)

Building block	Building block outcome statement	Intermediate outcome statement	Main deliverables (payment-related and other significant deliverables)
SRSN Resources	Predictable and adequate resources from multiple sources available for SRSN	Drought Risk Financing options integrated into the government's DRFS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rapid contingency budget case study - Quantifying govt's annual fiscal commitments for SRSN - Systems and structures Assessment - contingency budget and targeting in PSNP and HFA; policy brief - Progress note on developing the Drought Risk Financing Strategy (DrRFS)
		Strengthened PSNP-SRSN capacity to develop, implement, and monitor timely annual Drought Response Assistance Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Short report taking stock of what has been achieved so far on SRSN – PPT by Tim Conway to DWG Dec 2023
SRSN Information	Well-functioning Early Warning System provides quality, timely and accessible information to inform SRSN operations	Improved reliability of Early Warning dashboard to inform drought response plans.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review of good practice in DRM/SRSN knowledge management AND mapping and gap analysis
		Moderate Acute Malnutrition (MAM) and Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM) surveillance systems integrated into SRSN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Documentation of existing knowledge management and nutrition scoping systems for PSNP and HFA - Nutrition and Scalable Safety Nets in Ethiopia - Desk Review - Nutrition and Scalable Safety Nets in Ethiopia - Strengthening the contribution of the PSNP shock responsive component to the management of malnutrition – An Options Paper - A note on how the SRSN and nutrition recommendations have been picked up in the national Integrated Plan for Nutrition Interventions (led BY EPHI and ENCU).
		Consolidated MIS module enhancement plan rolled-out for SRSN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - [Additional from Q4 2023 - Handover note to the Food Security Coordination Office regarding the Productive Safety Net Program's Management Information System]

A.5 Main deliverables from the DRF workstream

Vision of the Disaster Risk Finance (DRF) workstream: “Ethiopia’s public finances are better prepared for climate and humanitarian shocks”.

Table 6: 44 key deliverables from the DRF workstream

Building block	Building block outcome statement	Intermediate outcome statement	Main deliverables (payment-related and other significant deliverables)
Money out	Increased efficiency and effectiveness in climate change and disaster risk expenditure	Increased capacity in VfM methodology in MoF and MoA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Value for Money (VfM) summary inception report (includes literature review) - Outcome report on Synthesis workshop on VfM consultations - VfM Study final report
		Improved oversight and coordination of climate change projects at regional level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Analytical Framework: Mainstreaming Climate Change and Disaster Risk (CC/DR) into TYDP - Analytical Framework for M&E of mainstreamed CRGE and DRM strategies - Mainstreaming CRGE and DRM indicators into TYDP Assessing indicators of 4 additional sectors - Assessment report on coordination & implementation gaps; and 1b. Report implementation challenges - CRGE Regional Coordination Guidelines - Final CRGE Coord. Guidelines (follow-on to deliverable 2) - Indicators for assessing CRGE Coordination Guidelines - Digital reporting tool to support GCF M&E system - Inputs to revise CRGE Operational Manual - Technical Volume (includes Finance Training Manual for local, regional and federal officials to understand external reporting to GCF) - The final 'Knowledge Management and Communication Strategy for the Climate Resilient Green Economy Facility focusing on developing an Ethiopian Climate Change Portal'
Money in	Increased ex-ante resources from govt. savings and other sources mobilized for mitigating residual risks	DRF strategy with more and diversified disaster risk financing instruments in place	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - DRF Knowledge Exchange materials and workshop summary note - The FINAL (abridged and full) versions of the Disaster Risk Financing Strategy (DRFS) approved by the Steering Committee
		Govt. capacity to mobilize more climate finance from Green Climate Fund (GCF) and Adaptation Fund (AF) improved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - One page summary note outlining selection criteria of projects - Proposal development support for drafting two funding proposals - Training on developing Climate Finance Proposal - Capacity building materials - The Concept Note BRE-TA helped prepare for the GCF Simplified Approval Process (SAP) - Project/Programme Title: Building Climate Change Resilience of Vulnerable Households in Selected Localities of Ethiopia

Building block	Building block outcome statement	Intermediate outcome statement	Main deliverables (payment-related and other significant deliverables)
		Four BRE-TA focal institutions submit and defend Evidence Based Budgets (EBB)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Evidence Based Budgeting (EBB) Progress Note - A note on Evidence Based Budgeting and the final budget allocations to BRE-TA's focal ministries - A draft note on the 'gender responsiveness of fiscal policy' (part of a package of other gender and fiscal policy related analysis BRE-TA has prepared)
Limit costs	More predictable, accountable and timely allocations of resources to preventative measures in budget	Climate smart local development planning guidelines used in preparing annual plans in GCF woredas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Final assessment report on climate smart local planning - Validated guidelines and tools for climate smart local planning - Validation workshop on final guidelines for CRGE - Guidance on assessing climate-smartness of Woreda plans - Lessons learnt paper on climate smart development planning - Climate Information Services (CIS) landscape review - Guidelines for Woreda Climate Smart Development Planning – Volumes 1 and 2 - The Draft Climate Information Services (CIS) Manual to support woreda planners in understanding production and use of weather forecasts and Agro-Met advisory information for use in the woreda level planning process of GCF project target woredas
Understand costs	Financial preparations to anticipate the potential cost of climate change and disaster risks clearly integrated in annual and medium-term budgetary forecasts	Disaster-related fiscal risks identified, quantified, and captured in govt. plans (e.g., DRFS, MEFF, budget)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Quantifying disaster-related fiscal risks - Discussion paper on institutionalizing Fiscal Risk in MoF - Extended fiscal model and guidelines - Report on institutionalizing fiscal risks in MoF - Identifying non-traditional sources of funding and recommendations for moving forward - Opportunity Cost of COVID-19 emerging expenditure reallocations - Policy brief following on from Opportunity Cost study - Summary of Ethiopia's baseline Climate PEFA Assessment and Remedial Measures
		Govt. uses IFMIS to tag and track financial provisions for preparing for and responding to climate shocks and disaster risks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Budget Tracking Draft Assessment Report and Finalized Assessment Report - Results of piloting budget tagging select sectors - Climate and disaster budget tagging guidelines at federal level - Final sector level guidance on budget tagging - Integration of new CC and DRM tags into IFMIS - Note for COP27 on BRE-TA's budget tagging and climate smart woreda planning

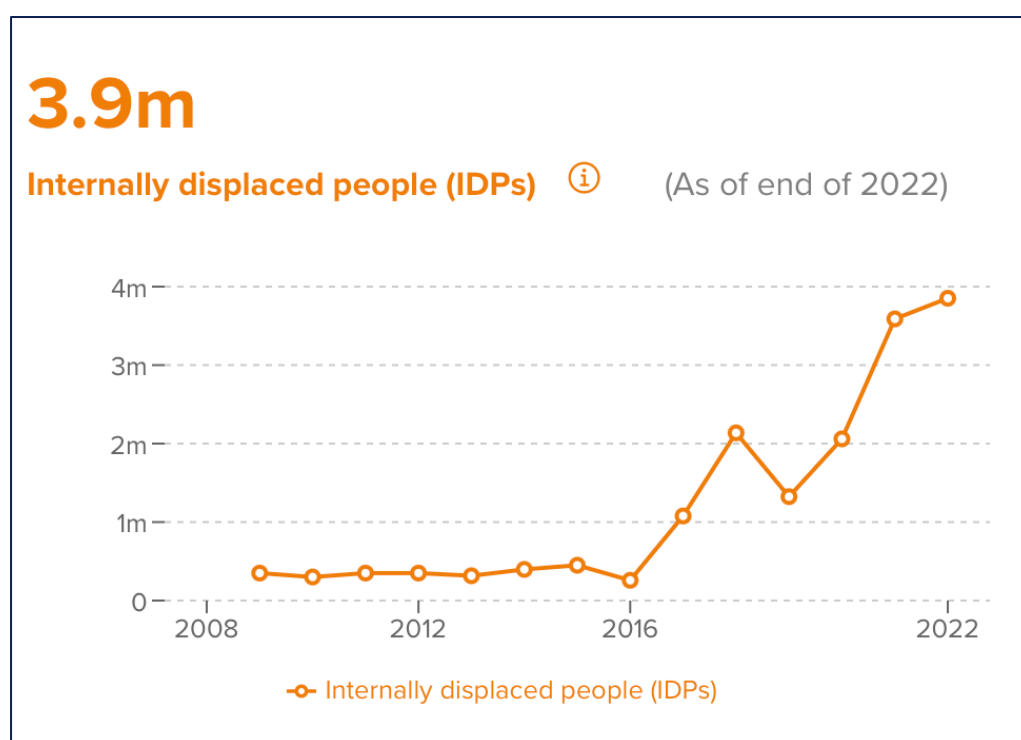
Annex B: The major contextual evolutions in BRE-TA's life cycle

B.1 BRE-TA's operating context

Shocks continued to be experienced over the 4.2 years of BRE-TA's core implementation period, which had profound implications for the project.

- Two years after the start of BRE-TA and publishing the 2019 report, OCHA described the situation as: "The humanitarian situation in Ethiopia remained difficult throughout 2021. Conflict and insecurity added to underlying vulnerability because of displacement, drought, locusts, and floods. COVID-19 has been an additional stress on the economy and the health system. The number of people needing humanitarian assistance increased from 23.5 million at the end of 2020 to 29.7 million by the end of 2021."⁴
- From the time BRE-TA began, the number of Ethiopians in need of humanitarian assistance grew by nearly 350% – meaning that around 25% of the country's population of 118 million people required some form of humanitarian assistance.

Figure 1: Number of internally displaced people in Ethiopia



Source: Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, Country Profile: Ethiopia, Displacement Data (<https://www.internal-displacement.org/countries/ethiopia>)

The major contextual changes that induced these falls in welfare – mainly wars and contagion – occurred after the project began and are worthy of closer examination as

⁴ Source: Ethiopian Humanitarian Fund, 2021 Annual Report <https://www.unocha.org/publications/report/ethiopia/ethiopia-humanitarian-fund-annual-report-2021>.

they had profound consequences on BRE-TA's operating environment. Three of these issues also created significant uncertainty around continued UK funding for humanitarian assistance in Ethiopia – the internal conflict in the North, COVID-19, the war in Ukraine.

B.2 The five major contextual evolutions during BRE-TA's implementation

B.2.1 The COVID-19 pandemic as a national state of emergency in Ethiopia (April to September 2020)

B.2.1.1 COVID-19's impact in Ethiopia

The COVID-19 pandemic had nationwide health and multisectoral implications in Ethiopia, including a slowdown of economic activities leading to a reduction in income-generating activities and increases in food prices. These had a disproportionate impact on vulnerable groups.

A more granular picture emerged from a series of studies on the effects of COVID-19 on Ethiopia, summarised in a Policy Brief commissioned by BRE-TA for the Ethiopian government.⁵ The research suggested “that, despite an overall recovery in employment and income levels⁶, and the gradual re-opening of schools...the economic and social costs of the pandemic continue to be substantial.” The key findings from the seven studies were:

1. **The recovery in employment rates** following the national state of emergency in 2020 **included a shift towards agricultural work and self-employment**, suggesting an increase in more informal, less reliable jobs.
2. **There were differences in experience of the pandemic**, between urban and rural populations and between those with different socioeconomic backgrounds.
3. **There was increased stress on girls and women**, who faced greater domestic and childcare burdens, and were particularly at risk due to worsening mental health and disruption in their education. This resulted in wider educational inequality, with significant gaps across both income levels and gender, and limited access to and support for distance education, especially in rural areas.
4. **Mental health and psychosocial well-being worsened** due to: increased levels of anxiety about vulnerability to COVID-19, job losses, and reduced income; uncertainty around educational and economic futures; social isolation from peers and relatives; economic stress; and household tensions.
5. **There was an increased risk of child marriage**, particularly in rural areas and during traditional wedding seasons.

⁵ Harris D. et al. (2021) 'The impact of COVID-19 in Ethiopia: Policy Brief' Gender and Adolescence Global Evidence, Policy briefs, www.gage.odi.org/publication/the-impact-of-covid-19-in-ethiopia-policy-brief/ [last accessed 29 December 2023].

⁶ A study by John Hoddinott and IFPRI colleagues show that the Productive Safety Net Project (PSNP) seems to have been effective in protecting vulnerable households in rural areas. See Gilligan, D.O., Hoddinott J., Taffesse, A.S., (2008) 'The impact of Ethiopia's productive safety net programme and its linkages', IFPRI Discussion Paper, www.ifpri.org/publication/impact-ethiopia's-productive-safety-net-programme-and-its-linkages [last accessed 30 December 2023].

B.2.1.2 Implications of COVID-19 on BRE-TA's work

There were four important implications from these studies for BRE-TA's ongoing work:

- The need to constantly bring issues of gender equality and social inclusion (GESI) to prominence when supporting government officials in their efforts to minimise the effects of shocks on poverty and vulnerability.
- The growth of the informal sector (thus diminishing tax revenues to finance DRM and other government functions) during crises.
- The emerging recognition of mental health issues as an integral aspect of human suffering, needing to be taken into consideration in DRM.
- The value of the PSNP during crises in protecting vulnerable households, especially in rural areas.

B.2.2 The conflict in the north (November 2020 to November 2022)

B.2.2.1 The crisis in Tigray

The conflict in northern Ethiopia, which erupted in November 2020, had a long-term negative impact on Ethiopia's economy, developmental trajectory, and disaster risk management (DRM) interventions, and resilience capacity in three affected regions. The immediate and short-term effects quickly became apparent, unfolding month by month, **with a direct bearing on the wider BRE programme and extending to BRE-TA's work.**

The conflict, often referred to in international discourse as an incipient and brutal civil war, had four dimensions of note:

1. **A major humanitarian crisis...and large number of internally displaced persons (IDPs).**⁷ Statistics pertaining to the human cost of the war are highly contested. The figures given here for fatalities, famine, and displacement are from sources not party to the conflict:

“2022 estimates from Belgium's Ghent University put the number of war fatalities at 300,000 to 500,000, including 50,000 to 100,000 from fighting, 150,000 to 200,000 due to famine, and 100,000 from lack of medical attention.”⁸

“There are more than 2m displaced in northern regions due to the Tigrayan conflict.”⁹

⁷ IOM estimated that IDP numbers likely spiked in July 2021 with 4.17 million IDPs across the country. Of the total displaced population, the main causes of displacement were: conflict, 3.5 million IDPs (84%); drought, 308,607 IDPs (7%); flash floods, 157,522 IDPs (4%); and seasonal floods 112,469 IDPs (3%). Source: OCHA Relief Services: <https://reliefweb.int/report/ethiopia/ethiopia-national-displacement-report-9-round-26-june-july-2021>

⁸ Casualties of the Tigray War, Civilian Deaths, Wikipedia, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Casualties_of_the_Tigray_War#:~:text=2022%20estimates%20from%20Belgium%27s%20Ghent,from%20lack%20of%20medical%20attention.

⁹ OCHA Relief Services Ethiopia National Displacement Report 9, Round 26: June - July 2021 <https://reliefweb.int/report/ethiopia/ethiopia-national-displacement-report-9-round-26-june-july-2021>

Box 1: IPC analysis of the humanitarian situation in Ethiopia, May-June 2021

An IPC analysis update conducted in Tigray and the neighbouring zones of Amhara and Afar concludes that over 350,000 people are in Catastrophe (IPC Phase 5) between May and June 2021. This is the highest number of people in IPC Phase 5 since the 2011 famine in Somalia.

This severe crisis results from the cascading effects of conflict, including population displacements, movement restrictions, limited humanitarian access, loss of harvest and livelihood assets, and dysfunctional or non-existent markets.

As of May 2021, 5.5 million people (61% of the people in the area) are facing high levels of acute food insecurity: 3.1 million people are in Crisis (IPC Phase 3) and 2.1 million people in Emergency (IPC Phase 4). This is despite the major humanitarian food assistance that has reached up to 5 million people in the last few months.

In the areas where data was sufficient to conduct a projection analysis, the situation is expected to worsen through September 2021, with 4.4 million people (74% of the population analysed) in Crisis or worse (IPC Phase 3 or above). Among these, an estimated 400,000 people are expected to face Catastrophe (IPC Phase 5). These estimations take into account an expansion of humanitarian assistance to reach 60% of the population. If the conflict further escalates or, for any other reason, humanitarian assistance is hampered, most areas of Tigray will be at Risk of Famine.

This IPC analysis serves as an urgent call for the delivery of crucial life-saving assistance for the millions affected. Urgent action is needed to scale up the geographic coverage and quantity of assistance: more people need more assistance, more consistently, in all affected areas.

Source: Ethiopia: Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC), Acute Food Insecurity Situation May - June 2021 and Projection for July - September 2021 (available at: <https://www.ipcinfo.org/ipc-country-analysis/details-map/en/c/1154897/?iso3=ETH>)

2. **Destruction of infrastructure.** Health, education, and safe drinking water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) facilities were damaged, destroyed, and/or shut down in Tigray, Amhara and Afar regions, alongside administrative centres, airports, roads, bridges, agricultural, electricity and telecommunications facilities, banking, and fuel stations.
3. **Lack of access to the northern conflict-affected areas**, which constrained provision of humanitarian aid, technical DRM support, and in-situ TA in 2020-21. However, humanitarian access to Tigray slowly improved at the start of 2022 with limited access to much of Tigray and limited relief supplies to parts of Amhara and Afar. The project's TA to Tigray resumed in mid- 2023.
4. **International reverberations.** The Tigrayan conflict drew several regional neighbours and international development partners into the fray with political and diplomatic implications. Eritrea, the UAE, Sudan, South Sudan, and Egypt all took an active interest (and sides) in the military and territorial campaigns, increasing the volatility and longevity of the conflict.

Several Western countries, providers of official development assistance (ODA) to Ethiopia, expressed concerns over the government's role in the war, the impact of the conflict on human rights, and the escalating humanitarian crises. As a result, they sought to leverage their aid to align with their diplomatic positions. Both sides, ODA providers and the government, perceived the other as instrumentalising aid for political purposes.

One of the unforeseen consequences of this polarisation was the emergence of a populist 'No More' movement, which argued against foreign influence in Ethiopia's internal affairs.

B.2.2.2 Implications of the conflict in the north for BRE-TA

Implementation of BRE-TA had to continue despite this climate of conflict and mutual suspicion, both of which had direct bearing on significant, cross-sectoral issues of DRM reform. Indeed, the project was able to successfully operate. This paradox encapsulates BRE-TA's success: **despite a polarised political context, the project's approach and its underlying theory of change enabled BRE-TA to continue functioning productively in particularly unfavourable conditions.**

Taking the COVID-19 pandemic and Tigrayan conflict together, **the operating context in 2020 and for some time beyond had another important implication for BRE-TA:**

- As the situation worsened and the immediate needs of dealing with the multiple crises reduced time available for engaging with systems reform, **government counterparts were forced to move out of a 'planning-mode' and into a 'survival mode'** (whereas, initially, the emergence of multiple challenges early in the year had made clear within government the urgent need for improving sectoral systems and how they relate to the overarching DRM architecture).

With government counterparts' attention elsewhere, **BRE-TA's core reform efforts were bound to obtain less traction.** Nevertheless, the Ministry of Peace (MoP) and the Ethiopian Disaster Risk Management Commission (EDRMC or 'the Commission') did eventually step up to lead this reform process towards the end of 2020, establishing the 'DRM Reform Team'. While the high-level political commitments to this reform initiative may not have been as public or robust as BRE-TA had hoped for, it was an extremely encouraging development that continued during the subsequent years.

B.2.3 Elevation in status of the EDRMC (October 2021)

B.2.3.1 EDRMC's move to the Prime Minister's Office

One of the most significant changes in government structure of relevance to BRE-TA occurred in late 2021, with **EDRMC moving from the Ministry of Peace to the Prime Minister's (PM) office. Several BRE-TA technical studies¹⁰ had recommended this restructuring**, arguing that placing the Commission to the centre of government would affirm GoE's political and executive to address multiple and converging humanitarian crises and harmonise humanitarian relief efforts.¹¹ Therefore, this development was seen both as a major BRE-TA achievement and an enabler of BRE-TA's subsequent work.

B.2.3.2 Implications of EDRMC's elevation on BRE-TA's work

Indeed, EDRMC's performance improved after its elevation to the PM office, **enabling BRE-TA to have greater impact.**

¹⁰ The studies included: "Synthesis of BRE-TA reports for strengthening the DRM system in Ethiopia (chapeau study)", June 2021; a "Study to Assess the Effectiveness of the National Disaster Risk Management Commission's Coordination role in recent disasters in Ethiopia", April 2021, by Bill Gray and Dr. Eleni Asmare; and "Towards Policy Coherence: Alignment of Key Policies to Improve Disaster Risk Reduction and Management: Supporting the DRM Reform Process." December 2021, by Dr Hailu Elias, Rajan Soni and Kebede Bekele.

¹¹ Not least through a new DRM Policy, which after several iterations is now in its final form and is awaiting approval by the Council of Ministers.

Two examples of EDRMC's improved performance since its move to the PM's office were indicative of the opportunities offered by the new institutional landscape:

- **EDRMC was better able to organize and lead the relief/humanitarian operation** to Tigray and adjacent regions of Amhara and Afar. As a result, access to and offtake of humanitarian assistance somewhat improved in conflict-affected areas, which was not the case during the 2015/16 El Niño and Indian Ocean Dipole episode which was similarly overlaid with internal conflict. Under the guidance of the DRM Council, paperwork and clearances for humanitarian access were completed by EDRMC. Relief efforts improved in the drought-affected pastoral areas and in collaboration with regional DRM bureaus, the Commission mobilised more resources to save lives and livelihoods. (But it is important to place these small improvements in a wider context of extremely fraught diplomatic relations, especially during the Tigray conflict, with donors often reporting delays in import approvals, work permits for key staff, and general tensions with EDRMC.)
- **In collaboration with MoF, the EDRMC was able to mobilize resources** for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of war-affected areas from bilateral, multi-lateral and domestic sources, notably a rehabilitation fund of \$300 million from the World Bank.¹²

B.2.4 The war in Ukraine (February 2022 to date)

B.2.4.1 The Russo-Ukrainian war's repercussions in Ethiopia

The repercussions of the Russo-Ukrainian war that started in February 2022 were felt in Ethiopia, as elsewhere around the world, with rising wheat prices and increasing fuel costs.

Box 2: IGC's reporting on rising prices of key commodities and imports

Ethiopia, along with the rest of the world, experienced a sharp rise in the prices of key commodities with the onset of the war in Ukraine (figure 1). The 12-month moving average price of crude Brent petroleum in June 2022 increased by 64% from June 2021, while the price of wheat increased by 48%, with edible oil prices increasing by roughly 49% in the same period. Similarly, given that Russia is the biggest exporter of nitrogen-based fertiliser and the second and third most important global supplier of potassium and phosphate, respectively, the Russia-Ukraine war has impeded supply and led to global increases in their prices.

Source: Impact of the Russia-Ukraine War on Ethiopia, International Growth Centre (IGC) London School of Economics (available at: <https://www.theigc.org/blogs/impact-russia-ukraine-war-ethiopia>)

Looking specifically through a GESI lens, according to the UNDP, “[f]ood and fuel account for over one-third of the consumer price index in most African countries. The pass-through of consequent inflation will be swift and hard-hitting, especially for vulnerable groups like women and children.”¹³

¹² The World Bank announced on 13 April 2022 that it had approved a \$300 million rehabilitation fund for Ethiopia. In a press statement, the World Bank said the newly approved funds would be used to cover the needs of at-risk people in Afar, Amhara, Benishangul-Gumuz, Oromia, and Tigray regions, which host many internally displaced people. This will be administered by UNOPS, an indication of the political complexity of the crisis and the conditional requirement of this grant which stipulates the use of a third-party, rather than government systems, to deliver assistance to affected communities.

¹³ ‘The Impact of the War in Ukraine on Sustainable Development in Africa’, 22 May 2022. Synopsis on cover of report (available at: <https://www.undp.org/africa/publications/impact-war-ukraine-sustainable-development-africa>)

In Ethiopia, this distant war led to **shortages in food and edible oil, with inflation running at over 35%**.¹⁴ In response to increased wheat and fuel prices, the Ethiopian government, in its official agricultural policy, placed renewed emphasis on to promote wheat self-sufficiency through irrigation-based production and cluster-farming, and a growing proportion of the government budget went to fuel subsidies.

B.2.4.2 Implications of the war in Ukraine on BRE-TA's work

The increased costs for basic needs, and related shortages and policy response, had clear **consequences in terms of humanitarian needs and budgetary constraints**. However, the reported reduction in humanitarian aid did not directly affect BRE-TA during the period of the project's implementation, and, to date, there is no evidence that it influenced ODA flows to support Ethiopia's recovery from the devastating La Niña and negative Indian Ocean Dipole induced drought and conflict in the north.

B.2.5 Severity of the drought in mainly southern pastoral areas (April to December 2022)

B.2.5.1 One of Ethiopia's most severe La Niña and negative Indian Ocean Dipole alignments that drove severe droughts

Throughout the BRE-TA project cycle, drought conditions continued to worsen in most of the Somali, southern Oromia, and southern Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples (SNNP) regions, threatening the lives and livelihoods of pastoralists. OCHA's June 2022 Situation Update reflected this worsening situation¹⁵ (see [Box 6](#)).

Box 3: OCHA's June 2022 drought update for Ethiopia

Ethiopia is experiencing one of the most severe La Niña-induced droughts in the last forty years following four consecutive failed rainy seasons since late 2020. The prolonged drought continues to compromise fragile livelihoods heavily reliant on livestock and deepening food insecurity and malnutrition. More than 8 million pastoralists and agro-pastoralists in Somali (3.5 million), Oromia (3.4 million), SNNP (1 million) and South-West (more than 15,000 people) regions are currently affected by the drought, of which more than 7.2 million people need food assistance, and 4.4 million people need water assistance. Nearly 2.1 million livestock have died, while at least 22 million livestock are at risk and are very weak and emaciated with no or little milk production, the main source of nutrition for children.

Source: OCHA Services, Relief Web, Ethiopia: Drought Update No. 4, June 2022.

¹⁴ Ahmad Aba Jobir, Islamic Relief's Country Director in Ethiopia: "The inflation rate in Ethiopia stands at 35 per cent, and food prices have skyrocketed in the last few weeks. People are struggling to make ends meet, especially with unemployment hitting new record levels. There is a massive shortage of food commodities such as bread and oil, and prices have soared." Islamic Relief Worldwide (2022) War in Ukraine exacerbating food crisis in the Horn of Africa, News release, www.islamic-relief.org/news/war-in-ukraine-exacerbating-food-crisis-in-the-horn-of-africa/.

¹⁵ OCHA Services, Relief Web, Ethiopia: Drought Update No. 4, June 2022. <https://reliefweb.int/report/ethiopia/ethiopia-drought-update-no-4-june-2022#:~:text=Ethiopia%20is%20experiencing%20one%20of,deepening%20food%20insecurity%20and%20malnutrition.>

In 2023, the World Bank’s country profile for Ethiopia declared that “[t]he 2022 drought is the worst in forty years, severely affecting millions in the southern and eastern parts of the country. Overall, more than 20 million persons are facing severe food insecurity in 2023.”¹⁶

B.2.5.2 Implications of the drought on BRE-TA’s work

In response to a request from the Ethiopia Disaster Relief Management Commission (EDRMC) for TA to help respond to the drought at the federal and regional levels, BRE-TA deployed 24 embedded humanitarian advisors to work exclusively on the government’s response to the drought.¹⁷ This pivot by BRE-TA, an expansion of its customary role from TA for systems strengthening to include TA for humanitarian assistance, demonstrated two key features of the project’s approach:

- the ability to adapt to changes in the context; and
- its capacity to establish common cause between the Ethiopian government and donors, even at a time of difficult diplomatic relations.

Subsequently, all of BRE-TA’s four workstreams had a programmatic interest in the drought crisis, and by 2023 BRE-TA was one of the few projects that were active in highlighting (1) the drought’s potential impact on the pastoral production system and (2) reporting and documenting the resultant drought impacts – this at a time when the government and most development partners focused exclusively on civil war in the north.

¹⁶ The World Bank in Ethiopia, Overview, Context. Development Challenges

<https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/ethiopia/overview>

¹⁷ The Tasking Order for this intervention was swiftly approved by donors, viz., within a month for a process that normally took over two months from submission to approval (at the programme’s outset, the internal donor approval process took a year).

Annex C: Detailed description of the process that underpinned the intermediate outcome achievements, as told along the BRE-TA ToC

C.1 Overview of the BRE-TA ToC

Per section 2.6, the BRE-TA ToC is read from bottom to top, tracing a four-step process towards achieving BRE-TA's vision of "[saving] lives and [promoting] livelihoods through better shock response":

1. **building a shared understanding** with relevant stakeholders (notably, government and its development partners) to gain buy-in and assure ownership;
2. in close collaboration with sector stakeholders, **producing outputs requested by government**;
3. **adoption of the outputs by the relevant stakeholders** (notably government); and
4. **related implementation** (expected beyond the life cycle of BRE-TA) (see section 2.6 in the main narrative of this report).

This process was mirrored in the workstreams, as reflected in each workstream's ToC.

In alignment with the sequence of this process¹⁸, the story of BRE-TA's performance can also be told from the bottom of the ToC to the top. Accordingly, the story starts with building shared understanding with relevant stakeholders to gain buy-in and assure ownership.

C.2 Step 1 of the ToC: Building shared understanding with relevant stakeholders to gain buy-in and assure ownership

Donors and government MDAs were BRE-TA's key stakeholders, along with other TA providers in the sector. **While the project management team interfaced with donors, each of the project's four workstreams interfaced with a particular set of MDAs** (and, where relevant, with TA providers), providing demand-driven support to these partners to strengthen the systems they managed and/or used.

At the project-wide level, the process of building shared understanding with FCDO and USAID could be said to have started even prior to contract signing, with engagement around OPM's bid to implement the BRE-TA project and subsequent negotiations and agreement. However, the process **started in earnest once the project officially started** (in March 2019) and **deepened during the core implementation period** (October 2019 to December 2023) and beyond.

As in any project, **maintaining donor confidence and nurturing the donor-service provider relationship** was an ongoing priority throughout the project period. However, this

¹⁸ However, as a reminder of what was noted in section 2.6, the door to feedback loops between the different steps of the process was left open.

was particularly important for BRE-TA, given the time required to build trust within, and develop solutions with, government before being able to ‘have something to show’ donors in terms of *tangible* outputs, e.g., deliverables, and other results.

- This was seen, for example, in the timeframe between award of the BRE-TA contract in March 2019, to submission of the inception report in July 2019, to January 2020 when BRE-TA SRSN workstream was fully established as a trusted partner and the Food Security and Coordination Office (FSCO) in Ethiopia’s Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) started consulting BRE-TA in earnest on technical matters and inviting the team to provide support on SRSN-related strategic plans and discussions.
- It was only after that point that substantive work could begin, if it was to have any chance of being not only demand-led and responsive but also effective and sustainability.

In the meantime, **the BRE-TA management team had to fulfil its accountability obligations¹⁹ and ensure that donors understood the behind-the-scenes dynamics of a startup period that could potentially be seen as taking too long** (due to the need for the project team to build a shared understanding and gain trust and buy-in with government stakeholders (see the workstream-level discussion that follows)). Markers of the management team’s success in doing so include the faith FCDO and USAID had in keeping the project going in the face of conflict in the north and FCDO budget cuts in 2020 (there was a strong case for just focusing on life-saving humanitarian aid instead).²⁰ But for the donors, BRE-TA’s unusual approach and process also provided “an opportunity to understand the government system and the gap”²¹, which, along with the lessons learned (see section 5), may help inform future Ethiopia-related programming.

At the level of the workstreams, each workstream had to build shared understanding with its particular set of MDAs to gain buy-in and assure ownership before being in a position to demand-driven support to these partners to strengthen the systems they managed and/or used. **All four workstreams did so with a degree of success that is reflected in the significant intermediate outcomes achieved** (which will be described later in this section)

‘We can’t compete with BRE-TA in terms of policy influence...’

– TA provider, as quoted by a BRE-TA team member

and in observations from TA providers, one of whom confessed that BRE-TA was unbeatable when it came to policy influence in Ethiopia (see quote alongside).

- **Disaster Risk Management (DRM) workstream:** With the vision “Government has a fully functional DRM system and capacity to manage humanitarian and climate shocks”, the DRM workstream focused on refining and strengthening Ethiopia’s overall DRM system. This was done through support to the Ethiopian Disaster Risk Management Commission (**EDRMC**) and the Ministry of Planning and Development (**MoPD**), who thus **represented the key stakeholders whose buy-in and ownership had to be assured**.
 - **Signs of buy-in and ownership** by these entities was reflected in EDRMC’s support for a development partners’ coordination platform on DRM projects,

¹⁹ Including, for example: agreeing on modalities of implementation and following up accordingly (e.g., the Tasking Order process, see section 4); and regular reporting that, though self-reports, the BRE-TA team sought to strengthen by drawing on other sources (e.g., by verifying information with stakeholders) to complement the claims made.

²⁰ Notes from KIIs with donor respondents in September 2023.

²¹ Ibid.

- the re-establishment of the national DRM Technical Working Group (TWG), the assignment of an EDRMC focal point to interface with BRE-TA's DRM workstream (a BRE-TA DRM workstream TWG was established to approve workplans that were iteratively developed with EDRMC staff) and finally the establishment of the BRE-TA Steering Committee (which met three times).
- Only after these signs started to emerge could the workstream start providing support that fell into the following broad areas or 'building blocks' reflected in the DRM ToC (see DRM workstream annex):
 - **DRM Coordination and Leadership**, with its follow-on (i.e., beyond BRE-TA) outcome of "[e]ffective institutional and governance arrangements in place from national to local levels for coordinated DRM operations";
 - **DRM Mainstreaming**, which sought to establish "DRM [as] an integral part of the country's development agenda at federal, sectoral and regional levels"; and
 - **DRM Information and Knowledge**, with the following desired outcome: "A well-functioning, government-led early warning system leads to improved early action in a disaster".
 - **Public Health Emergency Management (PHEM)**: The PHEM workstream's vision was "improved Public Health Emergency Management (PHEM) systems". Its **key stakeholders included the following entities in the Ethiopian government's shock-responsive health system**: the Ministry of Health (**MoH**) and the Ethiopian Public Health Institute (**EPHI**).
 - After a non-negligible period of building trust and credibility, **signs of these stakeholders' buy-in and ownership** emerged in the form of, for example, relevant MoH directorates engaging with BRE-TA by actively participating in, and chairing, BRE-TA's Public Health Emergency TWG that jointly developed TA workplans. Another example of buy-in and ownership was the delegation of focal persons to work with BRE-TA, provide guidance, officially endorse BRE-TA outputs, and ensure follow-up. A clear sign of ownership was the Regional Health Bureaus official endorsement and diffusion of BRE-TA outputs (e.g., sharing them with woredas for follow-on implementation).
 - The PHEM workstream was then able to provide support that was channelled through the following building blocks of work reflected in the PHEM ToC:
 - **PHEM System Design**, with the desired outcome of "PHEM system provides effective leadership for health and nutrition emergency preparedness, response, recovery".
 - **Region- and Woreda-Level PHEM Structures and Processes**, which aimed at the following: "effective, timely woreda-level preparedness and response to health and nutrition emergencies"; and
 - **Financing PHEM**, whose desired outcome was "predictable, adequate, timely, well-coordinated resources available for emergency health and nutrition response".
 - **Shock-Responsive Safety Net (SRSN)**: The vision of the SRSN workstream was "a single, government-led shock-responsive safety net". This workstream's support was mainly provided to the Ministry of Agriculture (**MoA**) and **EDRMC** (but also involved the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (**MoLSA**) for the urban Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP) and the Ministry of Finance (**MoF**) for financing).
 - As mentioned earlier, one **sign of buy-in by SRSN workstream stakeholders** was the January 2020 point at which MoA's Food Security and Coordination Office (FSCO) started consulting BRE-TA in earnest on

technical matters and inviting the workstream to provide support on SRSN-related strategic plans and discussions. This represented the workstream's full establishment as a trusted partner after a significant period of trust- and credibility-building. **Related signs of buy-in and ownership** included the establishment of the SRSN TWG that met regularly to guide planning, implementation, monitoring, BRE-TA RTAs being invited to contribute to the development of regional PSNP annual plans, regions facilitating BRE-TA's access to data about SRSN activities for BRE-TA, and MOA/EDRMC sent introductory letter to regions to introduce BRE-TA and secure regional buy-in.

- With buy-in and ownership secured, the workstream was able to provide support organized according to the following building blocks (as reflected in the SRSN ToC (see annex on SRSN workstream)):
 - **SRSN Delivery**, with the desired outcome of an “efficient and accountable government-led delivery of cash and food to people in need”;
 - **SRSN Resources**, whose objective was “predictable and adequate resources from multiple sources available for SRSN”; and
 - **SRSN Information**, which sought a “well-functioning early warning system [that] provides quality, timely and accessible information to inform SRSN operations”.
- **Disaster Risk Finance (DRF)**: The DRF workstream's vision was “Ethiopia's public finances are better prepared for climate and humanitarian shocks”. Related work supported **key stakeholder MoF**.
 - MoF's **buy-in and sense of ownership** – following the DRF workstream's trust-building and credibility-establishing efforts – was evidenced by: government providing appropriate counterparts, pro-active requests, detailed comments on draft ToRs and deliverables and requesting updates; the DRF TWG meeting regularly; and MoF commitment to develop the country's DRF Strategy.
 - Subsequent support to MoF was organized by the following building blocks (that build up from one another in sequence) (as reflected in the DRF ToC (see DRF annex)):
 - **Understand Costs**, which aimed at “financial preparations to anticipate the potential cost of climate change and disaster risks clearly integrated in annual and medium-term budgetary forecasts”;
 - **Limit Costs**, with the desired outcome of “more predictable, accountable and timely allocations of resources to preventative measures in budget”;
 - **Money In**, which ultimately aimed at “increased ex-ante resources from government savings and other sources mobilized for mitigating residual risks”;
 - **Money Out**, a building block whose desired outcome was “increased efficiency and effectiveness in climate change and disaster risk expenditure”.

“The [BRE-TA]-supported technical discussions provided a crucial awareness and mechanisms for solutions to our challenges.”

– Government key informant

It is worth highlighting a **sign of buy-in and ownership that was common across the four workstreams**: the establishment of **workstream-level TWGs**. These groups were comprised of sector-specific, director-level technical leads from government and BRE-TA workstream staff and sub-contractors who had a deep understanding of the problems at hand and of the political economy of reforming those challenges as well as vested interests that favoured the attainment of the envisioned building block outcomes. The TWGs turned out to be critical to the management of the project (as highlighted in section 4.1) as well as to its success (see section 5.1).

Gaining buy-in and ownership was no small feat. At the start of the BRE-TA project, relationships between key stakeholders were often inexistant or weak, particularly the case for the DRF workstream and the MoF. Sometimes, as in the case of SRSN, these relationships were already very complicated by both prevailing and historical institutional tensions between the MDAs involved, and there was no substantial prior history of coordination between government development partners and humanitarian actors (see SRSN annex). The BRE-TA workstreams had to put intentional and persistent effort into (i) building – or, since team members were often individuals already known and respected by stakeholders, *maintaining* – trust and (ii) establishing – or maintaining and/or strengthening – credibility. This took time. It also took time to make the project’s unusual demand-led approach understood, and subsequently used, by stakeholders. Thus, **when buy-in and ownership was sufficiently achieved, they symbolised mini-victories for the BRE-TA team.**

C.3 Step 2 of the ToC: Producing outputs requested by government

With buy-in and ownership sufficiently established *at the workstream level*, the BRE-TA workstream teams, in close collaboration with the relevant stakeholders, went about **providing the support and producing the outputs requested by government** – and, importantly, getting those outputs validated. Government counterparts, in collaboration with BRE-TA team members, expressed their requests in the form of the Tasking Orders (TOs) described earlier (see section 2.5.1); given the project’s demand-led approach, BRE-TA was able to respond in a flexible and responsive way²² that had not been defined ex ante.

Examples of key outputs that were produced and validated, per workstream, include:

- **DRM**
 - Example outputs by DRM building block:
 - **DRM Coordination and Leadership**: DRM Policy and related legislation and DRM synthesis reports (which continue to inform the DRM system reform);
 - **DRM Mainstreaming**: DRM mainstreaming study; and
 - **DRM Information and Knowledge**: EWS roadmap implementation plan.

²² BRE-TA’s response was flexible both in terms of form as well as in terms of content. It is this flexibility that enabled the programme to respond, within the constraints of budget and scope, to government demand with the right kind of support at the right time. This helped position BRE-TA as a credible and trusted partner during a long and complex reform processes that rolled out in a challenging context (see section 2.4) and that often involved multiple entities that were not necessarily aligned in terms of vision and practices.

- **PHEM**
 - Example outputs, per PHEM building block:
 - **PHEM System Design:** National PHEM Strategy;
 - **Region- and Woreda-Level PHEM Structures and Processes:** Intra-Action Reviews (IARs); and
 - **Financing PHEM:** PHEM Strategy document with roadmap for health and nutrition emergency financing.
- **SRSN**
 - Example outputs, per SRSN building block:
 - **SRSN Delivery:** operational manual for implementing SRSN part of PSNP 5;
 - **SRSN Resources:** quantification of SRSN resourcing requirements through the Drought Response Action Plan (DRAP); and
 - **SRSN Information:** technical and policy briefs on scalability and integration of cash and food assistance.
- **DRF**
 - Example outputs by DRF building block:
 - **Understand Costs:** a model for the quantification of disaster-related fiscal risks, and a budget code to track climate change and disaster provisions (subsequently incorporated into the Integrated Financial Management Information System);
 - **Limit Costs:** framework for mainstreaming climate change and disaster risks;
 - **Money In:** development of evidence-based budgets (EBBs); and
 - **Money Out:** coordination guideline for regional Climate Resilience and Green Economy (CRGE) institutions.

An expanded list of workstream-specific outputs is reflected in each of the workstream ToCs presented in the workstream-specific annexes, and a full list is provided in [Annex A](#) (main deliverables).

However, the dryness of a written list of outputs masks the **considerable level of time and effort** that went into their production and validation and the **pertinence, richness, and significance of each of the deliverables**.

- **Level of time and effort:** Most of BRE-TA's deliverables were of good quality²³ but took far longer to complete than initially planned. To 'simply' produce policy advice, for example, multiple seemingly simple steps had to have been successfully completed, sometimes multiple times, over an extended period, sometimes two to three years. Given all this, by the time government had validated an output, the BRE-TA workstreams were extremely relieved that the activity was finally complete.

²³ Per FCDO annual reviews and the VfM assessments conducted on the programme.

- Nonetheless, the project was able to respond nimbly at key points in time, e.g., in the context of the unforeseen COVID-19 pandemic.²⁴
- **Pertinence, richness, and significance of the deliverables:** Most of, if not all, the outputs were game changers in driving the workstreams toward follow-on results; some were – or led to – global firsts (e.g., the IARs under PHEM and the joint climate and disaster budget tagging system that the government adopted following the production of the related budget code; and the first Climate PEFA in Africa).

“...it was clear that [BRE-TA] was incredibly valued and the input from [BRE-TA] had had a big effect.”

– Donor key informant

Meanwhile, *at the project-wide level*, the project management team facilitated to ensure – and to communicate – programmatic coherence between and across the multiple workstreams and building blocks. Figure 4 captures BRE-TA’s vision of this coherence.

In addition to the examples reflected in the figure, a concrete illustration of this coherence was BRE-TA’s SRSN and DRF workstreams collaborated with colleagues in the DRM workstream on sector-specific aspects of the DRF Strategy.

Ensuring the appropriate mix of inputs and activities and, once outputs were in production, ensuring high levels of quality and adaptiveness across the board was another key focus at the project-wide level. This meant that efforts had to be planned with intention and related resources actively managed. The fruit of these management efforts was reflected in the project’s score on the related VfM criterion – that of **efficiency** – which was ‘**good**’ in 2020, and ‘**excellent**’ in all subsequent years Box 4 summarises findings against the Efficiency criterion in 2023.

Box 4: VfM assessment of BRE-TA’s efficiency in 2023

- **Outputs were judged to be of high quality and relevance by project stakeholders**, and the work has been completed within budget and largely as planned. Delays to completion of deliverables, where they occurred, were largely due to the need to work at the pace of the government.
- There is **good evidence that the project was implemented adaptively**, even within the constraints of careful planning needed in the final year. The adaptive approach used across the project lifetime, with careful and patient work in the early years, paid off in later years and enhanced results significantly.
- **Sound planning processes involving key government counterparts were used to ensure an appropriate mix of inputs and activities.** A comprehensive planning process in late 2022-early 2023 ensured that finite resources were allocated to interventions with the potential to maximise outcomes, while some initiatives lacking traction were dropped.
- The project **followed good practice to manage key efficiency drivers**; variance of spend against budget was just 3% from January-October 2023.

Source: See VfM assessment for 2023 in Annex I of this report.

²⁴ Under the PHEM workstream, IARs at national and regional levels were conducted to inform the update of related COVID-19 response plans, improving coordination and communication at different levels.

C.4 Step 3 of the ToC: Output adoption (intermediate outcomes)

What mattered more than the outputs themselves was their integration or official adoption by relevant stakeholders, which represented the **achievement of intermediate outcomes**. These **intermediate outcomes – and, especially, follow-on implementation – spoke loudest in terms telling the effectiveness story of the project**. It must be noted at the outset, however, that for a systems-strengthening project like BRE-TA, where technical and policy issues are worked on with government through cycles of problem identification, refinement and improvement, **the idea of an outcome ever being definitively ‘achieved’ is somewhat anomalous**.

While achieving intermediate outcomes was outside the direct control of the BRE-TA project team, *at the workstream level*, BRE-TA was able to work behind the scenes to **influence and facilitate related processes**. For example, thanks to their presence on workstream-specific TWGs and their embeddedness in stakeholder MDAs, BRE-TA workstreams guided, from behind the scenes, the action steps that needed to be taken to clinch the outcomes. Whereas the earlier gaining of *buy-in and ownership* (first step of the ToC) was considered by BRE-TA to be a mini-victory and while producing validated *outputs* (second step of the ToC) provoked huge sighs of relief after often-extended processes, **the achievement of each intermediate outcome was a major win for the team**, particularly given their elevated level of ambition (see section 2.6).

By the end of the project, the BRE-TA workstreams were able to celebrate many such wins. Examples per workstream include:

- **DRM**
 - Example intermediate outcomes (IOs) achieved, per DRM building block:
 - **DRM Coordination and Leadership**: new DRM Policy and related legislation finalised (currently awaiting approved by Council of Ministers) (DRM IO1);
 - **DRM Mainstreaming**: DRM integrated into national and regional Ten-Year Development Plan (TYDP) (DRM IO4); and
 - **DRM Information and Knowledge**: improved capacity within EDRMC, to generate, disseminate and use EW information for early action (DRM IO8).
 - Out of the DRM workstream’s eight intermediate outcomes, five were achieved and three had not yet been achieved by the time of preparing this report (January 2024).
- **PHEM**
 - Example intermediate outcomes achieved, per PHEM building block:
 - **PHEM System Design**: national PHEM strategy adapted by several regions (PHEM IO1);
 - **Region- and Woreda-Level PHEM Structures and Processes**: recommendations from IARs taken up (intended to improve services) (PHEM IO5); and
 - **Financing PHEM**: a national health and nutrition emergency financing strategy integrated in DRFS (PHEM IO6) (achieved).
 - Out of the PHEM workstream’s six intermediate outcomes, all were achieved.
- **SRSN**
 - Example intermediate outcomes achieved, per SRSN building block:
 - **SRSN Delivery**: harmonised service delivery mechanisms in place for SRSN (SRSN IO2);

- **SRSN Resources:** strengthened capacity to develop, implement and monitor annual Drought Response Assistance Plans (DRAPs) in timely manner (SRSN IO5); and
- **SRSN Information:** moderate acute malnutrition (MAM) and severe acute malnutrition (SAM) surveillance system integrated into shock responsive safety net (SRSN IO7).
- Out of the SRSN workstream's eight intermediate outcomes, all were achieved.
- **DRF**
- Example intermediate outcomes achieved in each of the DRF building blocks (which build up on one another in sequence):
 - **Understand Costs:** government uses the Integrated Financial Management Information System (IFMIS) to tag and track financial provisions for preparing for and responding to climate shocks and disaster risks (DRF IO1);
 - **Limit Costs:** climate smart local development planning guidelines used in preparing annual plans in Green Climate Fund (GCF) woredas (DRF IO3);
 - **Money In:** three BRE-TA focal institutions submit and defend Evidence Based Budgets (EBB) (IO5); and
 - **Money Out:** improved oversight and coordination of climate change projects at regional level (DRF IO8).
- Out of the DRF workstream's nine intermediate outcomes, all were achieved.

Detailed discussions of workstream-specific intermediate outcomes are provided in the workstream-specific annexes.

Taking a project-wide perspective, a total of 28 out of BRE-TA's 31 intermediate outcomes could be celebrated as having been achieved by the end of the core project period in December 2023; the rest of the intermediate outcomes (three) were likely to be achieved in 2024.

The reason for the failure to achieve certain intermediate outcomes by the end of BRE-TA's core implementation period (i.e. by December 2023) was delays in GoE's internal approval process in respect of the new DRM Policy and legal framework

Aside from the cumulative number of outcome wins that there were to celebrate, the BRE-TA team was also gratified by the **significance of the outcomes** and the **contribution they had made** towards their achievement, as described in section 3 of the main narrative of this report. Beyond technical outputs and outcomes, it is worth mentioning that **the BRE-TA process produced something else: a shift in mindset among government officials.**

Government officials acknowledged²⁵ a “paradigm shift” in some areas of government from managing crisis to managing risk. BRE-TA staff too said²⁶ they observed, in government: enhanced understanding of risk management; an appreciation that problems are not solved by throwing money at them, but through relationship-building; and a desire to be self-financed. This **shift in the government’s conceptualisation of its own agenda and in its approach to delivering on that agenda and addressing the numerous challenges that come with the territory** is a highly valued result in the context of TA for development. It is this mindset shift that has underpinned, and, if sustained, will continue to underpin, the government’s willingness and ability to drive through (see ‘*Step 4 of the ToC: Implementation*’ below) the system reforms achieved during the BRE-TA project’s lifecycle.

“The BRE-TA discussions have led to increased understanding on pre-planned preparation, integration of institutions and anticipation of disasters.”

– Government key informant

C.5 Step 4 of the ToC: Implementation

The implementation step of the ToC not only **falls entirely outside of BRE-TA’s sphere of control** but also **beyond the project’s lifecycle**. Nonetheless, the team could, and did, influence the process, and early **signs of movement towards the project-wide higher-level outcome** – and, underpinning that at the workstream level– **were evident by the time the core project implementation period ended** in December 2023.

If **implementation** by government is successful (which, per the ToC, assumes capacity to do so and favourable external factors), then, over time, it **is expected to contribute to the government’s ability to lead and deliver a more effective shock response (BRE’s logframe outcome)**. Beyond that, it is expected to translate to saved lives and improved wellbeing for the Ethiopian people (BRE-TA’s vision).

“There are a lot of areas where we can see some movement towards the higher-level outcomes ...”

– Donor key informant

²⁵ Outcome harvesting workshop with government officials, 17 October 2023.

²⁶ Outcome harvesting workshop with BRE-TA staff, 19-20 October 2023.

Annex D: Workstream-specific progress: DRM

D.1 What was the vision?

The Disaster Risk Management (DRM) workstream’s vision was for “**Ethiopia to have a fully functional, government-led DRM system and capacity to manage humanitarian and climate shocks**”. To this end, BRE-TA’s support went primarily to the Ethiopia Disaster Risk Management Commission (**EDRMC**), alongside the Ministry of Planning and Development (**MoPD**) and regional DRM bureaus.

The support was structured around **three building blocks**:

- **DRM Coordination and Leadership;**
- **DRM Mainstreaming;** and
- **DRM Information and Knowledge.**

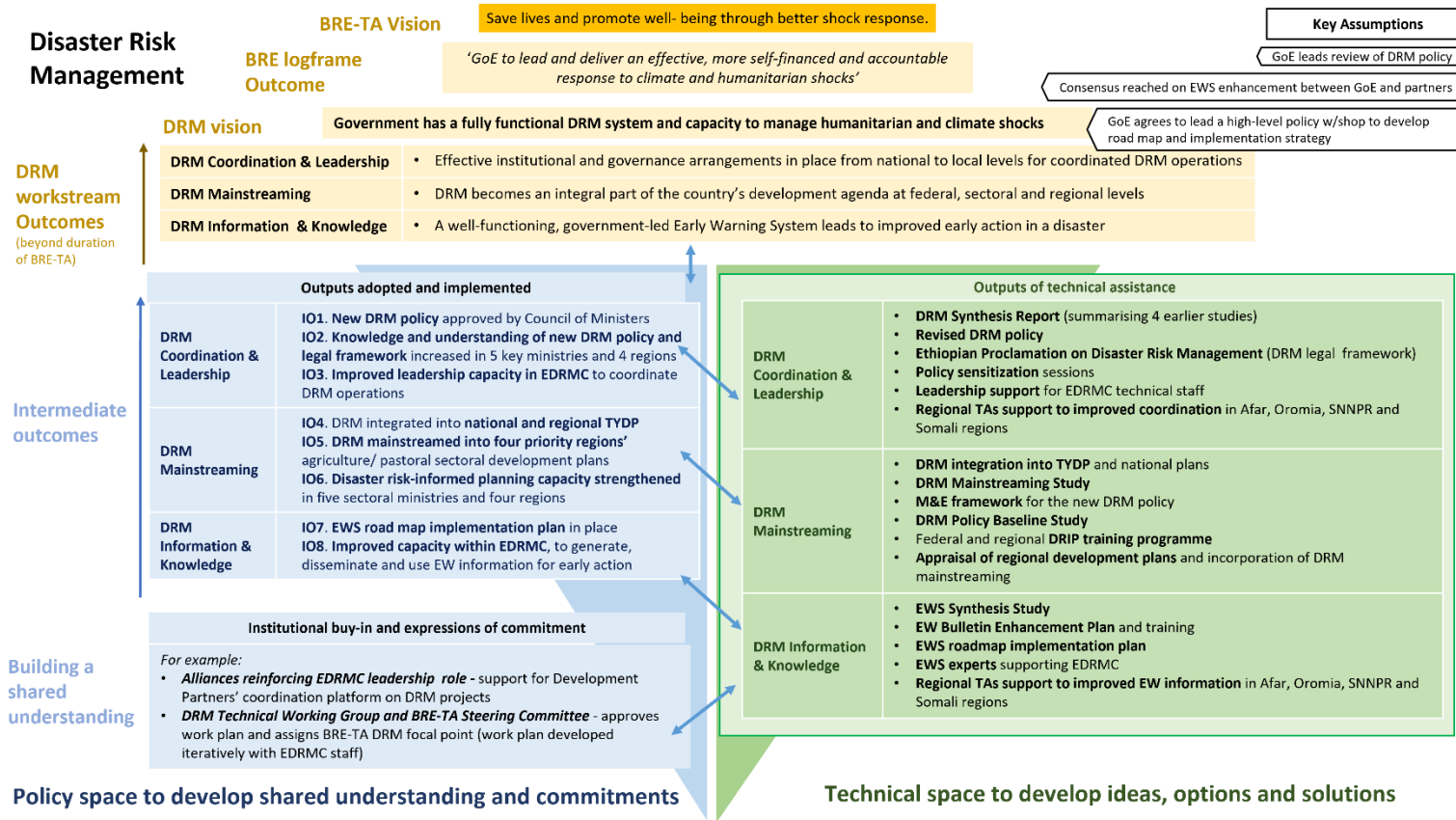
This structure is reflected in the DRM ToC (see figure overleaf).

The DRM ToC is based on the project level ToC (see sub-section 2.6 in the main narrative of this report), following the same four steps. However, where the project ToC is generic, the ToC for DRM provides workstream-specific information.

- The starting point in both cases is the same: **to build a common understanding with relevant stakeholders in government to work towards expressions of commitment**. In the DRM workstream, such commitment was shown with, for example, the creation of the DRM Technical Working Group (TWG) and BRE-TA Steering Committee.
- The expressions of commitments provide the ‘mandate’ for **generating the desired outputs** in close collaboration with government.
- The **outputs only matter if they get adopted and implemented** (assuming demand, capacity, and other favourable factors). For example, BRE-TA’s DRM workstream worked with the Government of Ethiopia (GoE) to develop the national DRM Policy and related legislation (an output) and worked towards getting it adopted (which, once it is, would be an achieved intermediate outcome).
- The **workstream outcomes**, which fall beyond the life of the project, are shown to provide the ‘direction of travel’. For example, the policy and legislation mentioned above are a critical step towards putting effective institutional and governance arrangements in place, a longer term workstream outcome.

Thus, each level of the ToC feeds into the next, all geared towards the workstream vision of an improved DRM system and capacity to manage humanitarian and climate shocks. An improved DRM system ultimately contributes to the more effective shock response reflected in the logframe outcome and project-level vision.

Figure 2: ToC for the DRM workstream



D.2 What was the overall achievement?

D.2.1 Summary of achievements

The table below provides a **summary of the extent of achievement towards each intermediate outcome**, per building block, across the workstream from the project's inception in March 2019 up to the end of activities in December 2023. The columns of the table serve as a summary of the IO-level stories recounted in the sub-sections to follow.

Table 7: Progress towards workstream intermediate outcomes, per the DRM ToC

Intermediate outcome (IO)	Extent of achievement	Status as of end of February 2024
IO1. New DRM policy approved by Council of Ministers	Achieved	The revised Policy and legal framework were completed during 2022, and EDRMC underwent organisational restructuring to fulfil its new role. The Policy was approved by the Office of the Prime Minister on 24 th February 2024.
IO2. Knowledge and understanding of new DRM policy and legal framework increased in 5 key ministries and 4 regions	Not yet achieved	Partially accomplished through (i) engagement of key ministries in policy reform consultations and (ii) staff who participated in DRIP training in six regions. However, the bulk of the work was delayed, awaiting approval of the DRM Policy that was not achieved until after BRE-TA's core implementation period.
IO3. Improved leadership capacity in EDRMC to coordinate DRM operations	Not yet achieved	EDRMC senior staff have been supported to take on new responsibilities. The EDRMC leadership has taken a more prominent role in facilitating dialogue on the importance of DRM at the highest levels of government. However, the leadership capabilities required to coordinate the reformed DRM system across government are significant, and more needs to be done.
IO4. DRM integrated into national and regional TYDP	Achieved	DRM was included as a new pillar in the TYDP in 2021. M&E system to track implementation of DRM mainstreaming in place.
IO5. DRM mainstreamed into four priority regions' agriculture/ pastoral sectoral development plans	Achieved	DRM mainstreamed into EFY2016 regional development plans in Afar, Amhara, Oromia, Sidama and SNNP (i.e., five regions, one more than the four originally planned)
IO6. Disaster risk-informed planning capacity strengthened in five sectoral ministries and four regions	Achieved	DRIP capacity strengthened through training in six regions (two more than originally planned), following training delivered to sectoral ministries (although not as comprehensive as hoped due to limitations on EDRMC capacity).
IO7. EWS implementation plan ('roadmap') in place	Achieved	The Roadmap for Early Warning System (EWS) reform was announced in December 2022. The Implementation Plan was validated in December 2023.

Intermediate outcome (IO)	Extent of achievement	Status as of end of February 2024
IO8. Improved capacity within EDRMC, to generate, disseminate and use EW information for early action	Achieved	Following the Bulletins Enhancement Plan (BEP) and revitalisation of the Early Warning (EW) Department, EDRMC is producing and disseminating improved and more regular EW Bulletins. Key regions have also improved their EW information.

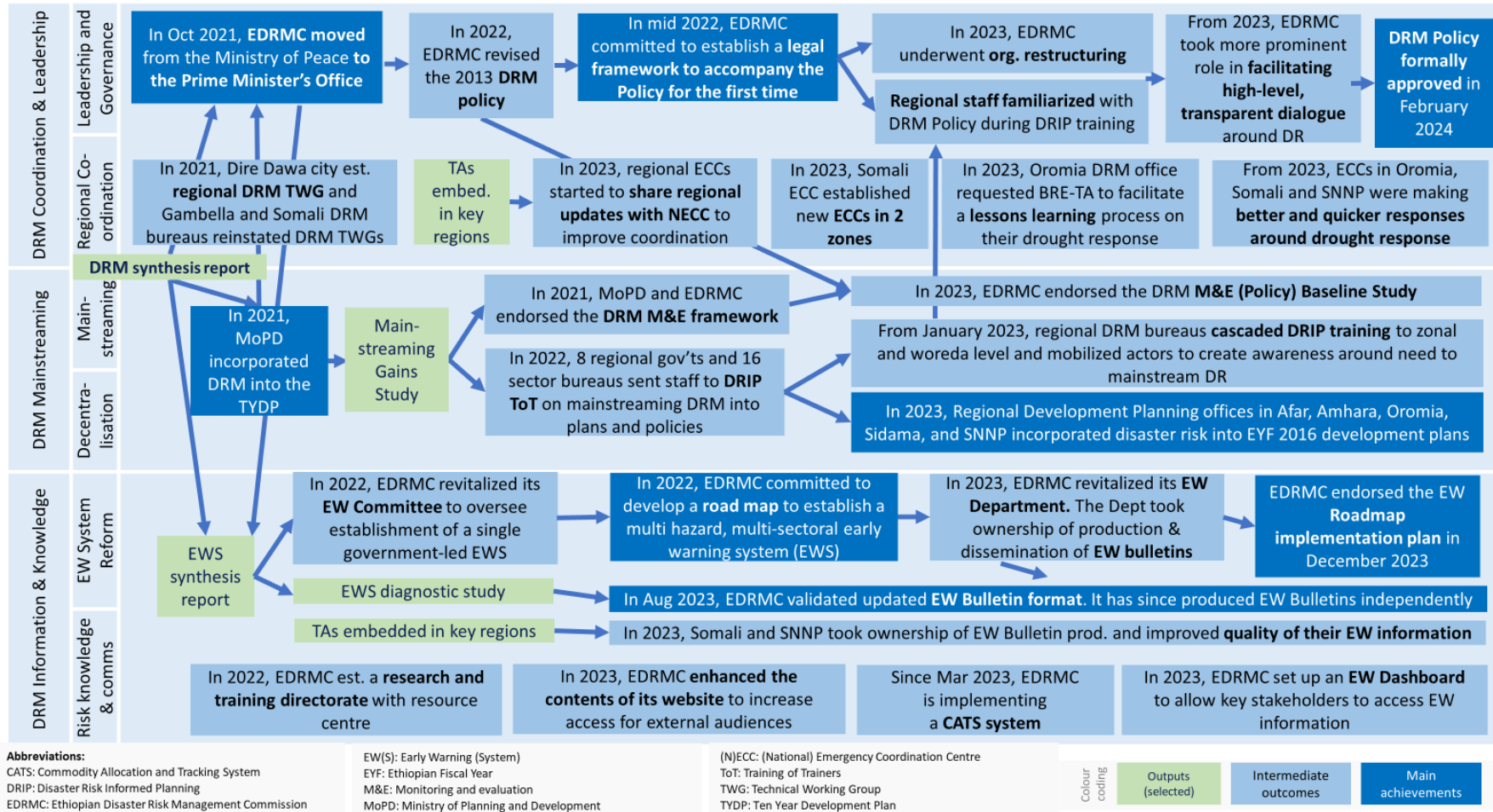
D.2.2 Outcome map for DRM

During the October 2023 outcome harvesting workshop with BRE-TA staff, the team developed an outcome map for each workstream – a **visual overview that shows how the results evolved and built on each other progressively**. The outcome map for DRM is shown in the figure overleaf.

In contrast to the ToC, which is *theoretical and prospective* in nature, the outcome map is based on what *actually* happened. As such, it is retrospective, showing a more or less sequential chain of events with key outputs and outcomes. It helps to illustrate the organic and synergistic nature of the DRM workstream, with work undertaken simultaneously on multiple fronts, and new areas of work building on the successes of earlier work.

The outcome map is largely aligned with the ToC. It is worth noting, however, that the map represents the BRE-TA DRM workstream’s perspective on its achievements. As DRM progress against the ToC is recounted in the upcoming sections, evidence from other sources is incorporated to support the claims represented in the map.

Figure 3: DRM intermediate outcome map



D.3 Progress against the DRM ToC

The following sections describe the DRM workstream’s progress on the ToC outcomes by building block. They cover: the problem that needed to be addressed; the achievements against expected intermediate outcomes; BRE-TA’s contribution; the potential for sustainability; and movement towards the higher outcomes. **The information used to report on DRM progress was triangulated from various sources**, viz:

- **BRE-TA internal documents** (such as quarterly and monthly reports);
- **deliverables** produced by BRE-TA with (and for) GoE;
- **informants** from the Ethiopian government who participated in outcome harvesting (October 2023) and field monitoring of TO#19 in BRE-TA supported regions²⁷; and
- **BRE-TA staff** during outcome harvesting workshops (held in October 2022 and October 2023) and other meetings.

The outcome harvesting exercises mentioned in the last two bullet points above were conducted separately with government informants and BRE-TA staff. **On the whole, the evidence from government officials concurred with the BRE-TA team’s assessment of (i) the achievement of intermediate outcomes and (ii) BRE-TA’s contribution to the outcomes.** Therefore, only instances where the evidence from the two groups diverged are noted.

D.3.1 Building block ‘DRM Coordination and Leadership’: EDRMC empowered to lead and coordinate a more effective DRM system through the revised DRM policy and legislative framework

Progress towards IOs in this building block

Figure 4: Building Block 1: main achievements



(a) What was the problem?

The two-pronged problem that the ‘DRM Coordination and Leadership’ building block of the DRM workstream sought to address emerged from the following circumstances:

- An up-to-date and relevant **Disaster Risk Management (DRM) Policy** forms the cornerstone of an effective national DRM system. It sets out clear roles and responsibilities across all relevant actors for identifying and managing risk, and responding to disasters, across sectors and regions. Ethiopia’s 1993 National Policy for Disaster Preparedness and Management was updated in 2013 to reflect a commitment beyond *reactive* disaster response and recovery to more *proactive* disaster risk management and reduction and to recognise DRM as the responsibility of multiple actors.

²⁷ Afar, Oromia, Somali, and SNNP regions.

- However, policymakers subsequently recognised that **the 2013 National DRM Policy needed revising to reflect changes in DRM institutional architecture, to mainstream DRM in different ministries/sectors more effectively, and to devolve DRM responsibilities to the regions**, thereby underpinning a robust multi-agency, multi-hazard, decentralised DRM system.
- **The EDRMC is responsible for leading and coordinating DRM in Ethiopia.** Its authority to lead DRM across government was diminished when it was moved from the Prime Minister’s Office (PMO) to the Ministry of Peace (MoP) in 2018.
 - There was a **need to bring the EDRMC to a more prominent role, and to enhance capacity within the Commission given the complexity of coordinating disaster management across regions and sectors.**
 - Furthermore, with the introduction of shared responsibility for DRM across different ministries, and the regional devolution of DRM responsibilities, **work was required to ensure that key ministries and regional institutions understood the roles** required of them for implementation of the Policy.

(b) What was achieved?

The **DRM Policy** was revised during 2022. The Policy sets out clear separation of coordination and operational roles across government institutions, from federal to woreda level, civil society, private organisations, and communities. For the first time, the Policy is also aligned with national Climate Resilience and Green Economy (CRGE) policies. This is important given that climate change has become one of the major drivers of shocks in Ethiopia (see sub-sections 2.3 and 2.4 in the main narrative of this report). EDRMC officials recognised that the new Policy is also more inclusive than the 2013 Policy.²⁸ It recognises that women, children and other vulnerable groups are disproportionately affected by shocks and that their needs must be met intentionally. For example, the Policy puts provisions in place for vulnerable groups to sit on local committees to monitor implementation and targeting of shock relief efforts and designates the Ministry of Women and Social Affairs to provide special support for vulnerable groups such as disabled people, the elderly, and women, during emergencies. It also mandates that at least 35% of resources must be allocated to vulnerable groups such as people with disabilities, older people, residents of female-headed households, and pregnant and lactating women.

The Policy is accompanied by a **legislative framework (the Ethiopian Proclamation on Disaster Risk Management)**. It is the first time that a national DRM Policy has been accompanied by a legal framework. The framework is important to ensure that EDRMC and its regional bureaus can legally enforce the provisions of the Policy, hold sectoral and regional institutions to account, and use sanctions if those institutions do not fulfil their legal obligations. The framework thus provides the EDRMC with greater powers and leverage than it previously had to lead and coordinate DRM. The framework includes thresholds to trigger a disaster response for various hazards at regional, zonal and woreda levels.

The revised Policy was approved by the Office of the Prime Minister in February 2024, **IO1 was thus fully achieved.**

²⁸ Outcome harvesting workshop with government officials, 17 October 2023.

Relocation of the EDRMC from the MoP back to the PMO, approved by the National Planning and Development Commission (NPDC) in 2021, strengthened EDRMC's mandate and authority to lead and coordinate DRM in accordance with the revised Policy, and since early 2023, EDRMC has undertaken preparations to fulfil its enhanced role, including significant organisational restructuring. The reinstatement of the EDRMC to the PMO was considered by BRE-TA staff to be a critical enabling factor for all of BRE-TA's work as it established the centrality of DRM in the government's agenda and provided BRE-TA with a credible and authoritative partner in government.

Work to **familiarise staff in five key ministries²⁹ and four regions³⁰ on their responsibilities under the revised Policy (IO2)** was significantly delayed and thus not yet **achieved**. The work was delayed due to the long wait, throughout 2023, for approval of the Policy, and EDRMC's reluctance to initiate familiarisation workshops until the Policy was approved. Some familiarisation nevertheless happened organically. Engagement of key ministries³¹ during earlier policy reform consultations helped to ensure buy-in and understanding of the new Policy and the new responsibilities within these sectors. And Disaster Risk Informed Planning (DRIP) training (see section D.3.2 under 'what has been achieved?') introduced federal EDRMC staff and regional officials from the DRM regional bureaus, Bureaus of Planning and Development (BoPD), Bureau of Water and Energy (BoWE), the Bureaus of Agriculture (BoA), in six regions to key elements of the Policy.

From late 2022, **the EDRMC began work to enhance the capacity of its leadership in preparation for policy implementation (IO3)**. Senior Commission officials were supported to take on new responsibilities through training and on the job mentoring and support: the BRE-TA Drought Response Liaison Officer (under TO#19) worked closely with the Commission's Planning Directorate to support development of stronger coordination capacity; the BRE-TA senior Early Warning System (EWS) Coordinator provided mentoring to the Commission's Early Warning (EW) Director; the BRE-TA DRM Coordinator supported decision-making with the Commission's Disaster Risk Reduction Director; and the senior DRM Advisor worked closely with a range of EDRMC senior officials.

BRE-TA staff were convinced that EDRMC leaders had started to take **a more prominent role in elevating and facilitating dialogue around the importance of managing disaster risk at a high-level across government**.³² In late 2023, for example, there was more open and transparent debate around the approaching risks associated with the predicted El Niño and positive Indian Ocean Dipole alignment in 2024-25. While there has been some progress, **the leadership capabilities required of senior EDRMC staff to lead the reformed DRM system across the Ethiopian government are significant and more needs to be done; IO3 has therefore not yet been achieved**. Senior-level capacity-strengthening efforts were constrained by various challenges, not least the demands on EDRMC of managing complex response efforts to multiple external shocks, which was further aggravated by the burden of a protracted relocation to a new office in the latter part of 2023.

Although not explicitly stated on the ToC, there was also important progress in **strengthening institutional arrangements and practices for coordinating DRM operations at regional level**. This is of critical importance given that many shocks are region-specific, and the response needs to be operationalised in the region. Government

²⁹ MoA, MoE, MoF, MoH/EPHI, and MoWE.

³⁰ Amhara, Oromia, SNNP, Somali.

³¹ MoA, MoF, MoH/EPHI, and MoWE

³² Outcome harvesting workshop with BRE-TA staff, 19-20 October 2023.

officials and BRE-TA's Regional Technical Advisors (RTAs) reported progress on establishing new, or strengthening existing, coordination platforms. This included the revitalisation of DRM TWGs, and the reactivation of regional Emergency Coordination Centres (ECCs)/Emergency Operations Centres (EOCs),³³ and in 2023, Somali was the first region to establish ECCs in two zones. There were also reports that coordination meetings were more regular and effective, and in some regions drought response plans improved. For instance, TWG and REOC members in Oromia region reported more informed discussions and better decision-making in 2023 in response to the drought, as well as improved information flows.³⁴

There is some evidence that **improvements in institutional arrangements helped to improve the response to the 2022-23 drought in the affected Southern states, particularly Somali Region.** EDRMC officials reported better understanding and coordination at regional level, and that regions were taking more responsibility for DRM and working cooperatively with EDRMC.³⁵ Officials in Somali region indicated that coordination of the response to the 2022-23 drought was stronger than in previous years due to BRE-TA support.³⁶ BRE-TA staff reported that the drought response by ECCs in BRE-TA supported regions (Oromia, Somali, and SNNP) was better and faster than previously. And the request by the Oromia DRM office for BRE-TA support to identify lessons learned during their drought response was seen as evidence of the increased sense of ownership in that region.³⁷

(c) How did BRE-TA contribute to the achievement?

The **policy reforms were recommended in several BRE-TA supported studies, and the DRM Synthesis Report.**³⁸ The studies provided a compelling evidence base that the 2013 Policy needed to be revised and aligned with CRGE policies and strategies, that a legislative framework was required, and that the EDRMC should be reinstated in the PMO. The Synthesis Report was widely circulated within Government, including to senior policymakers in the NPDC who were planning to restructure government architecture. All of the key recommendations in the Report were accepted and implemented by the government.

BRE-TA played a central role in creating an enabling environment for policy reform.

BRE-TA staff were co-opted onto EDRMC advisory groups on DRM policy reform, supported DRM learning workshops, and facilitated seven consultative workshops. The latter, designed to ensure inclusivity, buy-in and ownership, were attended by Members of Parliament and senior technical experts from sectoral ministries, regions, development partners, and civil society. BRE-TA also recruited DRM experts and lawyers to support drafting of the DRM Policy and the legal framework (and translation into English to help EDRMC engage donors in the reforms in 2023). BRE-TA worked closely with EDRMC and MoPD to ensure that the

³³ ECCs/EOCs (the names are used interchangeably) are responsible for coordinating emergency resources and information across government stakeholders (MoA, MoH, MoP, MoWE, and the Ethiopian Management Institute (EMI)), and regional governments during crises.

³⁴ BRE-TA, 2023. Update on the Regional Technical Advisors Deployed in Drought Affected Areas of Southern Ethiopia under Tasking Order #19, p4.

³⁵ Outcome harvesting workshop with government officials, 17 October 2023.

³⁶ BRE-TA, 2023. Field Monitoring on Regional TA Support, Somali and SNNP regions, p5-6. September 2023.

³⁷ Outcome harvesting workshop, 19-20 October 2023.

³⁸ The Report synthesised findings from four studies produced by BRE-TA at EDRMC's request: A Review of Good International DRM Practice; Development Partners' DRR Investment Support in Ethiopia's Rural Areas; A Review of DRM Mainstreaming Gains in Key Ministries in Ethiopia; Study to Assess the Effectiveness of the National Disaster Risk Management Commission's Coordination role in recent disasters in Ethiopia.

DRIP training helped to familiarise participants with the content of the DRM Policy and legal framework and to design and deliver the first formal familiarisation workshops in late 2023.

The DRM RTAs deployed by BRE-TA to eight regions³⁹ at different times in the life of the project played an important role in the reform processes. The RTAs facilitated regional engagement in the federal reform processes, and information on regional priorities and capacities provided by the RTAs helped to strengthen the federal reform processes.

As described in the section on achievements, **BRE-TA Advisors played key roles in on-the-job mentoring to enhance leadership capacity among senior EDRMC staff** and assist with organisational restructuring. This work continued despite the challenges presented by ongoing EDRMC restructuring and office relocation.

BRE-TA RTAs deployed to help strengthen the drought response in Oromia, Somali and SNNP played a pivotal role in strengthening coordination capacity in the regions. Following a request from the EDRMC Commissioner in January 2022, for BRE-TA assistance with the drought response, the RTAs worked closely with counterparts in the regional DRM Bureaus and TWGs to reinstate coordination platforms and improve their effectiveness through hands-on assistance with meeting organisation and facilitation, collection and reporting of regular up-to-date information, and assistance to develop emergency response plans.⁴⁰

(d) To what extent are the achievements likely to be sustained?

BRE-TA and EDRMC staff⁴¹ believe that the **achievements against IO1** – the revised DRM policy and legal framework, as well as the move to the PMO and the restructuring within EDRMC – **are likely to be sustained.** The creation of the legal framework was considered critical to sustaining the reforms, as it will ensure implementation of provisions in the DRM Policy can be enforced.

In terms of **IO2**, the plans to familiarise government officials with the Policy and framework have largely been on hold due to the significant delays in approval of the Policy and framework. This area was identified as needing further support going forward. Similarly, there was broad recognition among BRE-TA and EDRMC staff that more needs to be done to strengthen and sustain EDRMC leadership capacity so that it effectively coordinates DRM operations in line with the DRM Policy (**IO3**).

BRE-TA's support to the regions started significantly later than its federal level work. **While good progress has been made to strengthen coordination in BRE-TA supported regions, there has been less time to ensure the changes have been institutionalised,** and more support will be needed going forward, particularly for the regional and zonal ECCs.

The EDRMC will need to continue with measures to roll-out the DRM Policy, including: **internal capacity-building and organisational reforms; preparation of key instruments** (guidelines, manuals, frameworks) to ensure full operationalisation of the Policy (the World

³⁹ Afar, Beni-Shangul Gumuz, Dire Dawa, Gambella, Harar, Oromia, SNNP, and Somali regions.

⁴⁰ BRE-TA, 2023. Update on the Regional Technical Advisors Deployed in Drought Affected Areas of Southern Ethiopia under Tasking Order #19.

⁴¹ Outcome harvesting workshops with government officials and with BRE-TA staff, 17 October 2023 and 19-20 October 2023, respectively.

Bank has committed to provide assistance⁴²); and **adaptation of the federal legislation to regional needs** and sensitisation of the regions to understand their new legal responsibilities.

Movement towards the building block’s higher-level outcome

The higher-level outcome for this building block is “**Effective institutional and governance arrangements in place from national to local levels for coordinated DRM operations**”. It was not expected that the higher-level outcome would be fully accomplished by BRE-TA as it represents a long-term vision beyond BRE-TA’s lifespan and requires ongoing engagement of many actors.

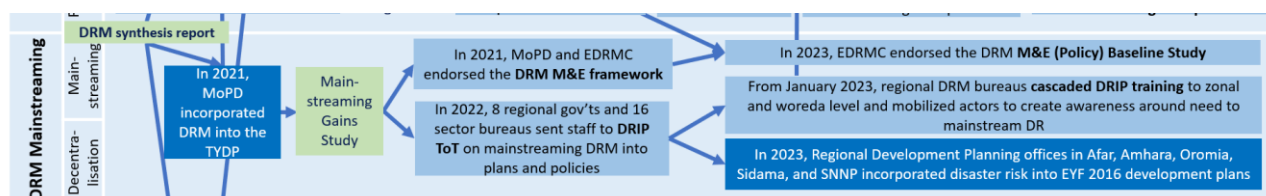
However, there are signs of movement towards the outcome in Ethiopia’s DRM policies and systems, as outlined below:

- **The DRM Policy and legal framework provide the basis for a reformed national DRM system and have set out more effective institutional and governance arrangements for DRM coordination than previously existed.** A clearer separation of roles across government, with operational functions moved from EDRMC to the regions, has freed up EDRMC to strengthen its oversight and coordination across the DRM system. And EDRMC is progressing work to ensure that it is fit-for-purpose – in terms of organisational structure and leadership capabilities – to fulfil its expended role.
- Work to strengthen coordination platforms across federal and regional levels is ongoing and gradually being cascaded downwards to zonal levels. The work has delivered **promising results in terms of better coordination of the response to the recent drought in key regions when compared with previous droughts.**

D.3.2 Building block ‘DRM Mainstreaming’: Mainstreaming of DRM in key regions paves the way for a decentralised DRM system and more adequate allocation of regional resources for shock preparedness and response

Progress towards IOs in this building block

Figure 5: Building Block 2: main achievements



(a) What was the problem?

In Ethiopia, **DRM coordination and operations have traditionally been seen as the domain of the federal government, and particularly the EDRMC.** Decentralisation of DRM to key sectors and all regions in the multi-agency, multi-hazard DRM system envisaged in the DRM Policy required that relevant line ministries and regional institutions

⁴² World Bank (2023) ‘Emergency Preparedness and DRM Consultancy for EP&R and Disaster-FCV Nexus Thematic Areas’, Advertisement Details, wbgeprocure-rfxnow.worldbank.org/rfxnow/public/advertisement/955/view.html [last accessed 9 January 2023].

take responsibility for identifying and managing potential risks, responding to disasters, and helping communities to recover after disasters. A critical part of this responsibility is to ensure that provision for disasters is made in regional development plans and budgets, so that resources can be quickly pivoted to where they are needed in the early phases of the disaster cycle. This has been demonstrated to be more cost-effective than diverting funds from capital budget after a disaster has occurred, which carries a high opportunity cost.

The government had started efforts to support ministries and regions to mainstream development and disaster risk reduction (DRR) and DRM into their planning and budgeting processes through the 2014 DRM-Strategic Policy Investment Framework (SPIF), intended to operationalise the 2013 DRM Policy. **However, the work had not gained sufficient traction** due to the sheer volume of disaster-related work from 2015-2020.⁴³

(b) What was achieved?

The first intermediate outcome in this building block (**IO4**) **was achieved in 2021**, when the **MoPD established Green Economy and Shock Resilience as an additional pillar in the Ten-Year Development Plan (TYDP)**. This was the first-time that the importance of shocks, and their effective management, had been recognised and mainstreamed in national planning processes in Ethiopia. Its inclusion was a critical signal from the government and provided an important entry point to other DRM work by BRE-TA (specifically under the DRF workstream, see [Annex F](#)).

From 2021, EDRMC started to develop an **M&E system to track implementation of DRM mainstreaming and decentralisation against the DRM Policy**. This involved creating an M&E Framework⁴⁴ with key performance indicators (KPIs) related to six pillars identified in the DRM Policy: risk knowledge, prevention, preparation, response, recovery, and enabling environment (institutions and governance). The framework indicates that data on KPIs should be disaggregated by sex and age where relevant in order to track who receives support during the recovery and rehabilitation phases of the disaster cycle. This was followed by a **DRM Policy Baseline study**,⁴⁵ identifying data sources, and establishing baseline data against the M&E framework. The study was validated by EDRMC and key ministry representatives in December 2023. The M&E Framework and the Baseline Study were informed by broad consultation with federal and regional institutions in an April 2023 workshop. The indicators in the M&E system allow Ethiopia to report into the international Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction.⁴⁶

Work to strengthen risk-informed planning in key ministries and regions (**IO6**) and to mainstream DRM into the development plans of four regions (**IO5**) was progressed in tandem. Starting in 2022, EDRMC and the MoPD, supported by BRE-TA, developed and rolled-out a **Disaster-Risk Informed Planning (DRIP) training programme**. The purpose of the regional level training was to help officers integrate DRM into their regional development planning processes, and to strengthen understanding of the importance of

⁴³ Notably, the 2015-2016 El Niño induced drought, the 2016-2017 Indian Ocean Dipole induced drought, inter-ethnic conflict, the 2019-2020 desert locust plague, and COVID-19.

⁴⁴ BRE-TA (2022) 'M&E Framework for the National Disaster Risk Management (DRM) Policy and Strategy', Oxford Policy Management, Oxford, United Kingdom.

⁴⁵ BRE-TA (2023) 'Establishing a Baseline for Tracking the Delivery of Ethiopia's DRM Policy', Oxford Policy Management, Oxford, United Kingdom.

⁴⁶ UNDRR (2015) 'Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030', www.undrr.org/publication/sendai-framework-disaster-risk-reduction-2015-2030 [last accessed 27 December 2023].

adequate budget allocation for disasters, by identifying and mapping regional hazards and vulnerabilities, and assessing capacities and coping mechanisms. The DRIP Training Manual⁴⁷ includes guidance on ensuring that women and the most vulnerable are included in community-level planning processes and integrating social impact and gender equity analysis into the DRIP project management cycle. The training also aimed to strengthen understanding of the importance of adequate budget allocation for disasters, so that resources are pivoted in the early phase of a disaster. In addition, the training helped familiarise government staff with the new Policy and legal framework.

DRIP training was delivered to 399 staff members from four sectors (DRM, BoWE, BoA and BoPD) in six regions, two more regions than originally planned.⁴⁸ The training spanned 48 zones and 88 woredas in those six regions. During 2023, regional DRM bureaus allocated resources to continue the DRIP training and cascaded it to zonal and woreda level using a ToT model. The plan to deliver training to staff of five sectoral ministries was not completed. A federal-level ToT programme was successfully completed in October 2022, and the next step was for the trainers to conduct training for the sectoral ministries, with BRE-TA support. However, with multiple competing priorities for its attention, EDRMC chose to prioritise cascading of the training to the regions. **IO6 was achieved.**

The DRIP training was instrumental in helping five regions – Afar, Amhara, Oromia, Sidama and SNNP - to mainstream DRM into sectoral development plans. During the training, each region reviewed their 2015 Ethiopian Fiscal Year (EFY) regional development plan against the new DRIP Training Manual (which replaces the EDRMC Mainstreaming Guidelines) and incorporated disaster risks into their EFY2016 development plans. BRE-TA staff reported that this was the first time that risk has been incorporated into regional development plans.⁴⁹ EDRMC staff reported that the EFY2016 plans were an improvement over previous years.⁵⁰ **IO5 was thus achieved (with five regions reached, rather than the four proposed in the ToC).**

(c) How did BRE-TA contribute to the achievement?

BRE-TA's support to EDRMC to commission an appraisal of DRM compliance in sectoral and regional development plans in 2021, and presentation of the findings at a TYDP workshop that included representatives from the MoPD, was key to the government's decision to mainstream DRM into the TYDP.

The need for an **M&E system** to monitor progress in DRM implementation in sectoral and regional development plans was highlighted in research by BRE-TA. BRE-TA hired consultants to develop the M&E Framework and the Baseline Study and organised the consultative workshop with key sectoral ministries and regional institutions in collaboration with EDRMC in April 2023.

BRE-TA's Mainstreaming Study,⁵¹ requested by the EDRMC, provided important evidence on the status of DRM mainstreaming against requirements in the 2013 DRM Policy in key line ministries, along with an assessment of gaps, and institutional and other obstacles to

⁴⁷ BRE-TA, 2022. Training Manual for Disaster Risk-Informed Planning for Integrating DRM into Development Plans of the Sectors in Ethiopia (DRIP Training Manual).

⁴⁸ Originally planned for Amhara, Oromia, SNNP, and Somali regions, but eventually also delivered in Afar and Sidama.

⁴⁹ Outcome harvesting workshop with government officials, 19-20 October 2023.

⁵⁰ Outcome harvesting workshop with BRE-TA staff, 17 October 2023.

⁵¹ BRE-TA, 2021. DRM Mainstreaming Gains in Key Ministries in Ethiopia.

mainstreaming. It indicated that progress on mainstreaming had been slow and needed to be accelerated to enable full implementation of the revised DRM Policy and legal framework.

BRE-TA supported the EDRMC to **develop, pilot, and deliver DRIP training** to the regions, to develop comprehensive training guidelines, and to implement Training of Trainer (ToT) programmes among its staff in order to cascade DRIP capacity out to the regions. In late 2023, in response to requests from the government, BRE-TA quickly pivoted to support the strengthening of DRM capacity in the four new regions created by the splintering of the former SNNP region, including the provision of DRIP training. BRE-TA also **facilitated the review of DRM in 2015 EFY regional plans** and supported incorporation of DRM into 2016 EFY plans.

(d) To what extent are the achievements likely to be sustained?

EDRMC officials⁵² believe that the achievements in relation to DRM mainstreaming in the BRE-TA supported regions – the enhanced capacity for disaster-risk informed planning (IO6), and the mainstreaming of DRM in the EFY2016 plans (IO5), **are highly likely to be sustained**. This is because the DRIP training has had extensive reach in terms of the number of officials trained, and because the inclusion of DRM in the TYDP (IO4) **institutionalises DRM in national planning processes**. It is promising that the regions supported by BRE-TA have cascaded DRIP training to zonal and woreda level and been raising awareness around the need to mainstream disaster risk.

BRE-TA staff⁵³ nonetheless identified the ‘DRM Mainstreaming’ building block as needing ongoing support to rollout the DRIP training across more regions and to priority line ministries. There is also a need to support more sectors and regions to prepare DRM-informed plans, and to monitor and report on the implementation of their plans to regional councils and federal agencies.

Movement toward the building block’s higher-level outcome

The higher-level outcome for this building block was “**DRM becomes an integral part of the country’s development agenda at federal, sectoral and regional levels**”. It was not expected that the higher-level outcome would be fully accomplished by BRE-TA as it represents a long-term vision beyond the project’s lifespan and requires the ongoing engagement of multiple actors.

Nonetheless, outlined below are signs of movement towards the outcome in Ethiopia’s DRM policies and systems:

- There is **significant evidence that DRM has become much more central to Ethiopia’s development agenda than in the past**. The inclusion of DRM as a central pillar in the TYDP has institutionalised DRM in national planning processes. DRM principles have been taken up at regional level with the mainstreaming of risk into regional development plans. Regional parliamentarians have demonstrated great interest in DRM training. Furthermore, in the latter half of 2023, there were an increased number of politically significant statements referencing the importance of managing disasters than in the past, and tentative signs that government finds it easier to talk about the impact of disasters, and the need to reduce risk and avert

⁵² Outcome harvesting workshop with government officials, 17 October 2023.

⁵³ Outcome harvesting workshop with BRE-TA staff, 19-20 October 2023.

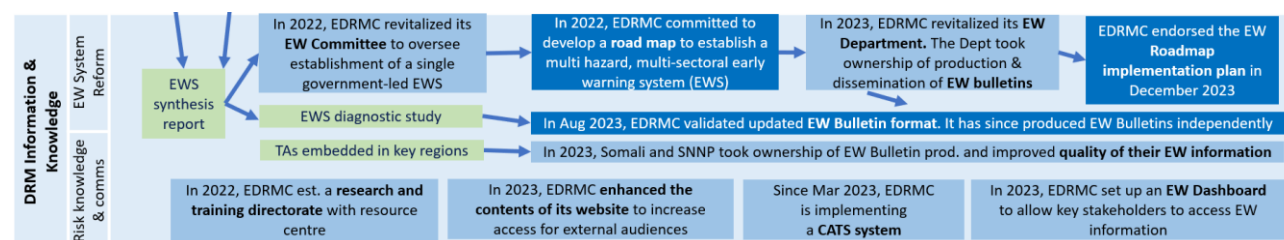
shocks, without it being seen as a reflection on them.⁵⁴ This has translated into more transparent dialogue with key stakeholders on the likelihood of future disasters – in this case the predicted 2024 El Niño. BRE-TA staff believed that the project played an important role in fostering the greater trust and cooperation needed for more open dialogue.⁵⁵

- While this progress is promising, there is **more to do to ensure that DRM-informed planning leads to more adequate resources for disasters at community, woreda, zonal and regional levels.**

D.3.3 Building block ‘DRM Information and Knowledge’: Agreed Early Warning System reform programme, and improvements in the quality and timeliness of early warning information, will unlock earlier response to shocks

Progress towards IOs in this building block

Figure 6: Building Block 3: main achievements



(a) What was the problem?

A properly functioning EWS is a critical component of an effective DRM system. A functional EWS includes: the collation of relevant information from multiple sources to monitor a variety of risks; threshold triggers to activate early mitigation actions; and regular and frequent dissemination of reliable information and alerts to decision-makers, affected communities, and humanitarian agencies. **Accurate and timely information on the likelihood, location and predicted severity of a shock is crucial to ensure an early response**; an early response allows resources to be moved quickly to where they are needed, thereby ameliorating the decline in welfare among vulnerable populations.

Ethiopia developed significant EWS capacity and resources in response to the severe famines of the 1970s and 1980s. However, in response to significant economic growth and the belief in some policymaking circles that famine belonged to the past, **Ethiopia failed to invest adequately in the maintenance and improvement of its EWS**. Little progress has been made, for example, to benefit from IT advances to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the system through automation. The lack of automation encouraged other

⁵⁴ For example: during the UN Food Systems Summit +2 in July 2023, the Prime Minister described initiatives in Ethiopia to enhance agricultural resilience, ensure food self-sufficiency, and combat climate change (<https://www.fanabc.com/english/pm-abiy-ahmed-stresses-need-to-new-robust-agricultural-global-financing-model-for-food-security/>, accessed 18 December 2023); opening a meeting of the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC) in November 2023, the Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister said the council will deliberate on a roadmap to build national capacity to respond to disaster risks in the country (<https://www.fanabc.com/english/national-disaster-risk-reduction-management-council-convenes-regular-session/>, accessed 18 December 2023); and the MoF allowed the DRF WS lead to present more publicly than previously on the DRFS at a JICA meeting on agricultural insurance and the Overseas Development Institute (ODI) 2023 Public Finance Conference in September 2023.

⁵⁵ Outcome harvesting workshop with BRE-TA staff, 19-20 October 2023.

service providers to try to fill gaps, resulting in the fragmentation of EWS analysis and communications. In addition, the system was not designed to provide accurate and timely information on ‘rapid-onset’ and complex emergencies experienced in Ethiopia more recently – floods, agricultural pests and diseases, pandemics, ethnic/regional conflicts – which require a multi-sectoral response. As a result, **information produced in the EWS tended to be of inconsistent quality and was not regularly released.**

(b) What was achieved?

From 2021, with BRE-TA’s support in navigating various vested interests, the EDRMC became much more confident in envisioning **a more robust, government-led Multi-Hazard Early Warning and Early Action System** (to enable faster decision making). Fortunately around this time, new leadership in the EDRMC’s Early Warning and Response Directorate (EWRD - a new Deputy Commissioner and a new Director) meant BRE-TA could help them engage key partners on how better EW information-sharing would benefit them all. This led, in mid-2022 to the EDRMC **re-establishing its EW Committee** to provide strategic and technical oversight for the establishment of a more robust, government-led EWS. This was an important step towards generating consensus among key stakeholders. **A member of EDRMC’s gender directorate sits on the EW committee** to ensure that the reformed EWS is gender- and equity-sensitive by, for instance, collecting and disseminating data on which vulnerable groups need to be prioritised during a shock, and monitoring if those groups receive support.

The lessons and recommendations from a synthesis of BRE-TA’s EWS studies,⁵⁶ commissioned by EDRMC, led to **a commitment, in October 2022, to formulate a Roadmap for EWS reform**. The reform plan was announced publicly in December 2022.⁵⁷ This was followed by agreement to put in place an **Implementation Plan for the EWS Reform Roadmap (IO7)**, which was validated by EDRMC and key ministries in December 2023. **IO7 was thus achieved.**

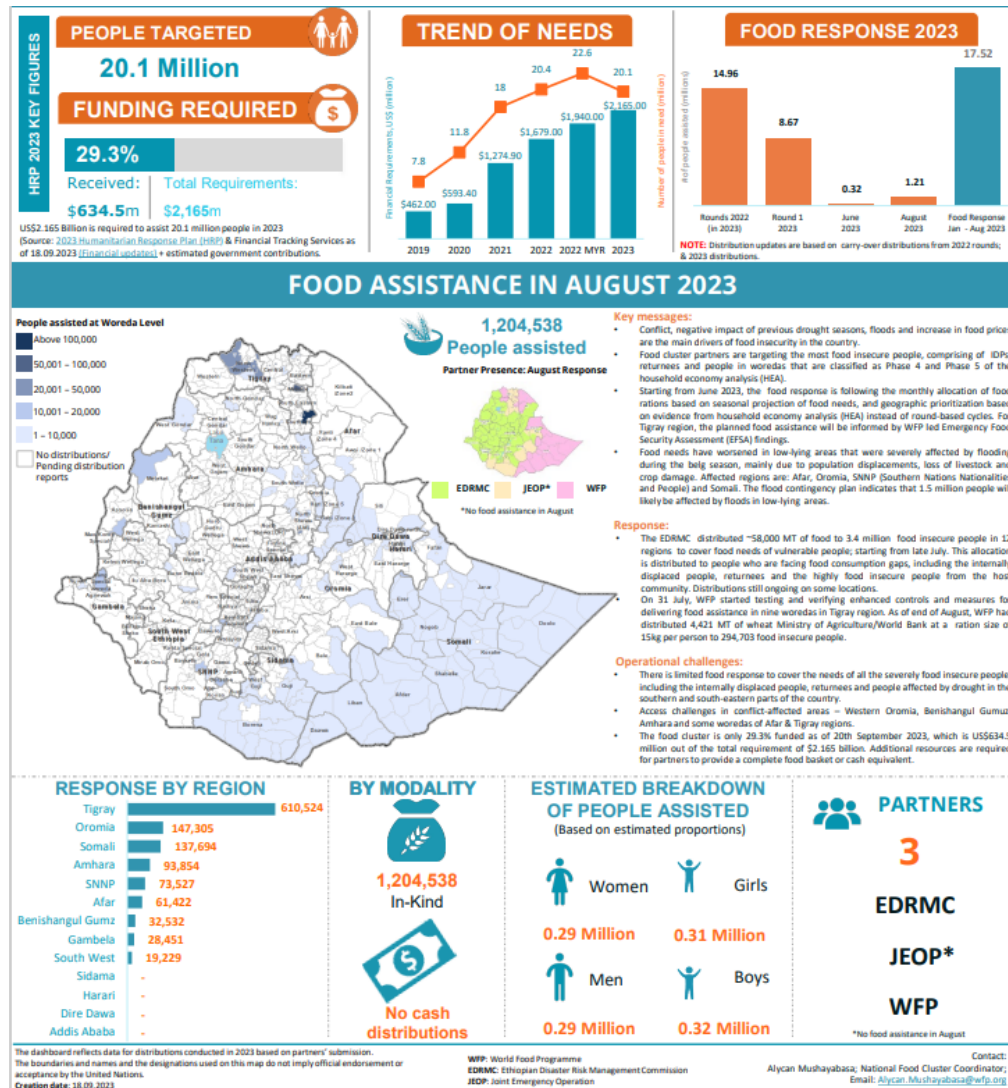
In the meantime, during 2023, EDRMC undertook **significant investments in its capacity to generate high quality EW information (IO8)**. With support from BRE-TA, it developed an EW Bulletins Enhancement Plan (BEP). The Plan included a more user-friendly layout and use of infographics (see figure above), use of new and alternative data sources from across sectoral ministries, and the identification of appropriate communication channels for EW information, for EDRMC’s monthly EW Bulletin. The BEP stipulated that bulletins include disaggregated data relating to need to target humanitarian response (including, for example, gender, IDPs, and the food insecure). Prior to the BEP, the bulletins only provided the number of people impacted and could not be used to target support or prioritise the needs of specific groups. The Plan was widely shared and endorsed by 11 government institutions. EDRMC revitalised its EW Department and committed more staff to Bulletin preparation to

⁵⁶ BRE-TA, 2022. Enhancing Ethiopia’s early warning system: a synthesis of recent reports. The reports reviewed were: a) Towards an Enhanced Ethiopia Early Warning System. Kimetrica-WB, 2019; b) Road Map for Improving the Availability, Access, and Use of Disaster Risk Information for Early Warning and Early Action, Including in the Context of Transboundary Risk Management. CIMA Research Foundation, 2019; c) Early warning and early action for increased resilience of livelihoods in the IGAD region. Feinstein International Center, Tufts University 2020; d) Early warning early action: Mechanisms for rapid decision making IFRC, with Save, Oxfam, FAO & WFP 2014.

⁵⁷ Ethiopian News Agency (2022) ‘Roadmap for Multi-hazard Impact-based Early Warning, Early Action System in Ethiopia Launched’, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, https://www.ena.et/web/eng/w/en_41564 [last accessed 15 January 2024].

ensure more timely production. EDRMC's Editorial Committee started to use the BEP to produce improved and more regular EW Bulletins from August 2023.

Figure 7: Excerpt from EDRMC's September 2023 EW Bulletin



Government officials and BRE-TA RTAs interviewed for the BRE-TA regional DRM learning note reported that EW capacity also improved in all regions supported by the RTAs.⁵⁸ In Somali region, regional officials reported improved preparation and dissemination of EW information due to BRE-TA RTA support. This included the production of weekly Drought Situation Updates and monthly EW Bulletins, which were previously not produced regularly, as well as the presentation of Regional Situation Updates at regional cluster meetings.⁵⁹ From mid-2023, the SNNP Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Commission (DPPC) office and the Afar DRM Commission produced EW Bulletins on a monthly basis, where previously they were only intermittent.⁶⁰ In Oromia, regional officials reported that,

⁵⁸ BRE-TA, 2023. Supporting sub-national disaster risk management: lessons from the BRE-TA project in Ethiopia. Interviews took place in Afar, Amhara, Oromia, Sidama, former SNNP and Somali regions in October-November 2023.

⁵⁹ BRE-TA, 2023. Field Monitoring on Regional TA Support, Somali and SNNP regions, p5-6.

⁶⁰ BRE-TA, 2023. Update on the Regional Technical Advisors Deployed in Drought Affected Areas of Southern Ethiopia under Tasking Order #19, p7; BRE-TA, 2023. Field monitoring notes from Afar region, October 27, 2023. Note that the SNNP Bulletin has been discontinued following the split of SNNP into two regions.

with BRE-TA support, errors in the collection and analysis of market data in two zones were corrected, providing a more accurate picture of the gravity of the effects of drought, thereby triggering the appropriate emergency response.⁶¹

EDRMC officials recognised that EW data collection, analysis and dissemination improved in the EWRD, although they and regional government officials interviewed for the regional DRM learning note acknowledged that further improvements were needed in the quality of the information coming from the regions. They also observed that in some cases, indigenous knowledge was being incorporated into the EW information.⁶² Although capacity can be further improved, particularly at regional level, there has been sufficient progress to establish that **IO8 has been achieved**.

EDRMC also made **other improvements to its risk information management and sharing**. In 2022, it established a research and training directorate and resource centre to improve evidence-based decision-making at EDRMC. In 2023, it made improvements to its website to increase access to external stakeholders, as well as setting up an EW Dashboard to improve access to EW information. The data on the Dashboard are disaggregated by gender and other relevant variables, and are expected to help, for example, with improved targeting of beneficiaries. It also started to implement a Commodity Allocation and Tracking System (CATS) to improve the management of resources (especially food) and delivery of services to affected populations in a crisis. The system had not been adequately used before due to a lack of staff training.

(c) How did BRE-TA contribute to the achievement?

Work on this building block started later than the first two DRM building blocks, due to the complexities in the EWS policy space, with multiple, sector-specific interests and requirements which earlier reform attempts had failed to reconcile. The Tasking Order related to the EWS (TO#16) was approved in September 2021, following months of behind the scenes lobbying and support to government, but BRE-TA engagement did not substantially get underway until 2022 as it remained a contentious issue. Consequently, the time to reach consensus on EWS reform was limited. Progress has been slower than initially hoped, yet significant given the challenges and lack of consensus which beset EW work in Ethiopia for many years, including a history of institutional tensions and competing vested interests. BRE-TA's ability to contribute significantly in the EWS space, as described below, was largely predicated on the trust and confidence built with government on the back of earlier successes in the other two DRM building blocks.

BRE-TA engagement with the DRM Deputy Commissioner early in 2022 contributed to the decision to re-establish the EW Committee, and **BRE-TA conducted the synthesis of recent EWS studies**⁶³ which led to agreement, at a stakeholder workshop organised by BRE-TA in October 2022, to develop the EWS reform roadmap launched in December 2022.

From mid-March 2023, at EDRMC's request, **BRE-TA supported planning around delivering the EWS reform roadmap**. This included preparing a 'Roadmap Implementation Plan', a proposed governance structure and re-launch of the EW-TWG. This work was informed by an **EW Diagnostic Study**⁶⁴ by BRE-TA with EDRMC to better understand EWS

⁶¹ BRE-TA, 2023. Supporting sub-national disaster risk management: lessons from the BRE-TA project in Ethiopia, p4.

⁶² Outcome harvesting workshop with BRE-TA staff, 17 October 2023.

⁶³ BRE-TA, 2022. Enhancing Ethiopia's early warning system: a synthesis of recent reports.

⁶⁴ BRE-EDRMC team, 2023. Diagnostic Study of Ethiopian Early Warning Systems.

challenges and opportunities, capacity gaps and technical support needs. BRE-TA submitted a Roadmap Implementation Plan **Inception Report** to EDRMC in September 2023. It recommended that the government involve non-state actors in the design of the EWS, including women-led community-based organisations, in order to design a gender-sensitive EWS. **BRE-TA also provided IT support** to improve the **EW Dashboard**, as described in the SRSN workstream annex.

BRE-TA also played an important role in EDRMC's investments in EW internal capacity. The project provided **training to federal and regional EDRMC staff to improve the quality of EW Bulletins** in line with the BEP (e.g., in communications and technical report writing skills, data processing and data visualization, and the use of GIS, and remote sensing). BRE-TA's three senior embedded EWS TAs also provided ongoing **needs-based technical support to the EWRD** from July 2022.

The **BRE-TA RTAs deployed to improve the drought response in Afar, Oromia, SNNP, and Somali similarly played an important role** in the increased frequency and improved quality of EW information (monthly EW Bulletins and alerts, and weekly situation updates when needed) in the regional offices. This was done through ongoing on-the-job skills transfer, provision of data collection guidance and checklists, and support for the collation of data sets and sectoral summaries.⁶⁵

(d) To what extent are the achievements likely to be sustained?

In terms of implementation of EWS reform in line with the Roadmap (IO7), **EDRMC officials believe⁶⁶ the likelihood of implementing and sustaining the planned changes is high**, as the Roadmap has the backing of all 17 ministries that have DRM responsibilities. **BRE-TA staff were more cautious⁶⁷**, believing that the reform process might be at risk and required ongoing support, as implementation of the lengthy 8-year plan has not yet begun. Some financial and technical support will be available via the UN's Early Warnings for All Initiative (EW4All).⁶⁸

BRE-TA and EDRMC staff agreed⁶⁹ that **the likelihood that the improvements to EDRMC capacity to generate and use EW information (IO8) will be sustained is relatively high**, given the renewed sense of ownership in the EW Department and the successful uptake of the new Bulletin format, and BRE-TA has secured further technical editing support from UNOCHA in order to sustain improvements to the EW Bulletins. **The likelihood that other improvements to risk knowledge management will be sustained was also considered to be relatively high**, although EDRMC staff questioned whether the research and training directorate established in 2022 will be able to play a meaningful role in evidence generation, as it currently lacks equipment and resources.

BRE-TA staff were uncertain⁷⁰ as to whether the **improvements in regional EW information** will be sustained since this work only started in mid-2022 and indicated that

⁶⁵ BRE-TA, 2023. Update on the Regional Technical Advisors Deployed in Drought Affected Areas of Southern Ethiopia under Tasking Order #19.

⁶⁶ Outcome harvesting workshop with government officials, 17 October 2023.

⁶⁷ Outcome harvesting workshop with BRE-TA staff, 19-20 October 2023.

⁶⁸ United Nations (2023) 'Fast-tracking global early warning systems', Africa Renewal Magazine, www.un.org/africarenewal/magazine/april-2023/fast-tracking-global-early-warnings-systems [last Accessed 26 December 2023].

⁶⁹ Outcome harvesting workshops with government officials and BRE-TA staff, 17 October 2023 and 19-20 October 2023, respectively.

⁷⁰ Outcome harvesting workshop with BRE-TA staff, 19-20 October 2023.

more support is needed. EDRMC staff also recognised⁷¹ that more work is required to improve the quality of the information coming from the regions.

Movement towards the building block's higher-level outcome

The higher-level outcome for this building block is **“A well-functioning, government-led Early Warning System leads to improved early action in a disaster”**. It was not expected that the higher-level outcome would be fully accomplished within BRE-TA's lifespan as it represents a longer term vision that also requires the ongoing engagement of multiple actors.

Nonetheless, signs of movement towards the outcome in can be perceived:

- The Government of Ethiopia has a consensual and comprehensive Roadmap Implementation Plan for the **establishment of a more robust, government-led EW system to replace the current outdated and fragmented system**. This is significant in the context of the challenges and stagnation of recent years. Editorial Committees in EDRMC and some regions are already producing more regular and higher quality EW Bulletins than was previously the case.
- **There is evidence that improved EW information has contributed to improved coordination and earlier action** in the drought response in regions supported by BRE-TA, as reported in section D.3.1 (under 'what has been achieved'). For instance, in 2022 the BRE-TA RTAs in Somali region reported that the coordination of resource mobilisation in response to the drought was better than in past droughts, in part due to the improved availability and sharing of monthly EW Bulletins. BRE-TA staff also believe that information on weather conditions provided in the EW bulletins has helped farmers to better time their harvests to prevent losses caused by decay from unexpected rainfall.

With this in mind, what has been the **combined and synergistic effect of the DRM workstream's efforts, across the building blocks, within government and for the people of Ethiopia?**

BRE-TA staff and embedded TAs said⁷² they had seen increased capabilities, confidence, and commitment **among government staff**, better problem identification and problem-solving, more sharing of information across government, and more evidence-based decision-making. They also observed a change in mindset among some, with a greater appreciation for the importance of risk management, recognition that it is possible to change systems rather than stick with the status quo, and an ambition to be more self-financed and reduce donor dependency (for example through the DRFS, which will allow EDRMC to prepare for disasters more proactively). **EDRMC staff similarly recognised⁷³ a “paradigm shift” in some areas of government from managing crisis to managing risk.** BRE-TA staff pointed to the need for more high-level political commitment to DRM to support these shifts within the machinery of government.

The DRM workstream helped to **leverage external funding to support the government with implementation of DRM reforms** through its dialogue with and influence over development partners. This includes significant funding from the World Bank to support policy and institutional improvements at EDRMC, and from the Dutch government to support

⁷¹ Outcome harvesting workshop with government officials, 17 October 2023.

⁷² Outcome harvesting workshop with BRE-TA staff, 19-20 October 2023.

⁷³ Outcome harvesting workshop with government officials, 17 October 2023.

implementation of the EW Roadmap. While this does not move the government towards the long-term ambition of being more self-financed, it does provide some reassurance that the achievements reached by the government with BRE-TA's support will not fall away due to the lack of immediate ongoing financing.

Overall, **EDRMC staff felt that the BRE-TA project achieved good outcomes, but there is much more to be done** before this impacts the way that government works in the DRM space. They pointed to the need, for example, to have operational guidelines and SoPs in place to ensure that policies and frameworks are properly implemented. The World Bank has committed support for this.

In terms of contributing to the **government's ability to meet its long-term vision to 'save lives and promote well-being** through better shock response' (per the BRE-TA ToC), EDRMC and BRE-TA staff concurred⁷⁴ that improvements at all levels of government in understanding and coordination of DRM and the quality and timeliness of EW information have led to **small improvements in the most recent drought response** in several BRE-TA supported regions, compared to other droughts.

However, in the words of one GoE official, "**...the situation on the ground is worse today than in previous droughts**", due to an extremely complex environment – multiple and compounding crises since 2019, the effects of which are further exacerbated by recently reported diversion of humanitarian food aid, and the subsequent suspension of donor financial support.⁷⁵ The implication of this for the Ethiopian people is clear, but what does this imply for FCDO and USAID support through BRE-TA? The BRE-TA team felt⁷⁶ that their work (across all workstreams) has helped mitigate the devastating effects of complex disasters, such that the situation would be worse still had the TA not been provided.

D.4 What mechanisms underpin the achievement of outcomes in this workstream?

During outcome harvesting workshops, BRE-TA staff and government officials identified the below mechanisms as key to the DRM workstream's achievements. All were highlighted by staff; those also identified by government officials are identified with an asterisk.

Elements of BRE-TA's project design were key to cultivating ownership for reform processes within government.

- The **demand-driven nature of the project** allowed the government to define its own needs and priorities and helped to cultivate ownership of, and commitment to, reform processes within government. **BRE-TA's flexibility to respond** to the government's priorities, within the boundaries of its mandate to provide technical assistance, was recognised by EDRMC officials. (*)
- EDRMC officials observed that the **holistic design of BRE-TA** – working on four fronts simultaneously (DRM reform, emergency health, social safety net and financing) – helped them to promote a more integrated approach to DRM across relevant line ministries than had previously existed. (*)

⁷⁴ Outcome harvesting workshops with government officials and BRE-TA staff, 17 October 2023 and 19-20 October 2023, respectively.

⁷⁵ <https://www.wfp.org/news/widespread-food-diversion-impacts-wfp-food-distributions-across-ethiopia>. Accessed 31 October 2023.

⁷⁶ Outcome harvesting workshop with BRE-TA staff, 19-20 October 2023.

- The **decentralised approach used in the regions** – working through embedded RTAs who understood the conditions and needs of their region – was key to developing local ownership and allowing each region to define their own pathway.

Hiring excellent committed people was critical to raising BRE-TA's credibility with government, as well as ensuring high quality outputs.

- **BRE-TA staff** included highly experienced specialists in DRM, some with prior experience working on DRM from within government and with access to senior political leaders. The fact that BRE-TA was led by national staff rather than non-Ethiopians lent additional credibility to the project.
- BRE-TA brought in highly respected and qualified **external experts** who also had intimate knowledge of DRM issues and the inner workings of government. These consultants were carefully selected for their competence, commitment and credibility with the government. (*)

Investing significant time to **build relationships, networks, and trust** allowed BRE-TA to step into the role of 'honest broker'.

- Work in several areas (for example, DRM governance, DRM mainstreaming and decentralisation, and EWS reform) had been stagnant despite the efforts of other programmes and partners. BRE-TA staff **investment in building trust with the government was key to unblocking these areas.**

Knowledge generation and sharing helped to build consensus around the way forward, sometimes in historically contested areas of policy.

- **Synthesising existing international and national evidence**, and deriving recommendations specific to Ethiopia, proved to be a key strategy for identifying and agreeing on a way forward. The DRM Synthesis Report and the EW Synthesis Report were key in this respect.
- **Needs assessments and diagnoses**, for example the Mainstreaming Gains Study and the EW Diagnostic Study, were key to pinpointing next steps.

Facilitating dialogue and creating a **shared vision and understanding** based on broad stakeholder participation helped to build government consensus for, and commitment to, action.

- **Workshops** were frequently used to bring stakeholders from within and beyond government together to discuss the evidence generated by BRE-TA and agree a way forward. In the case of EWS reform, a highly contested area for many years, seven workshops were held to discuss the findings and recommendations of the EW Synthesis Study, resulting in agreement to develop an EW Reform Roadmap. EDRMC acknowledged the important role of BRE-TA in financing and facilitating these workshops, recognising that the government would not have been able to fund these activities itself. (*)
- BRE-TA also initiated, or supported, **government-wide platforms** and facilitated regular meetings to maintain momentum. The DRM TWGs at federal and regional level, for example, were important fora for pushing through key reforms of the DRM and EW systems.

Embedding TAs in key federal-level departments and in the BRE-TA-supported regions ensured that assistance was tailored to the needs of government. (*)

- Embedded TAs allowed BRE-TA to better **understand the needs and political economies of a range of government departments and institutions**, to monitor progress and ongoing gaps, and to identify and respond rapidly to new opportunities.
- The embedded TAs were also crucial to **capacity-strengthening efforts**, providing on the job mentoring to help government officials to adapt to new systems and procedures and apply the learning from formal training. EDRMC officials noted that the TAs played an important role in knowledge and skills transfer. (*)

'Behind the scenes' influencing by senior BRE-TA team members helped to secure political buy-in and 'go-ahead' for critical reforms.

- This occurred through **BRE-TA's regular participation in multiple government-led committees**, and through careful **one-on-one dialogue with high-level officials and leaders**. This was especially important for the inclusion of DRM in the TYDP, achieving mainstreaming across ministries, and the EWS reform programme.

EDRMC officials also highlighted limitations, from their perspective, of BRE-TA's approach. The first was that **BRE-TA could not provide support for 'hardware'** such as the IT equipment needed to implement systems improvements (for example, the computers and servers needed to generate and disseminate EW information). They recognised that this reflected donor interests. The second was **BRE-TA's focus on systems reform at the cost of operational improvements**. They recognised that this was partly a timing issue – without approval of the new DRM Policy and legal framework (which were approved after BRE-TA's core implementation period), it was difficult to move on to operationalising the system. They also felt that it reflected the expertise of BRE-TA staff, strong in systems design, but weaker in operational issues.

D.5 Lessons and recommendations

D.5.1 Lessons

- **Building relationships and developing trust are time-consuming, but critical to later achievements.** For BRE-TA's DRM workstream, it was especially crucial to recruit a credible and trusted team, and invest time and energy to create trust with government officials before moving into contested spaces. The team had to work hard to create the space and patience to do this amidst pressure early in the project to create outputs and report results. Key to building trust was the time invested in building shared understanding of problems and consensus on the way forward, rather than imposing solutions. Building and maintaining trust was a continuous effort throughout the project, given the high staff turnover within government.
- **Development of a solid evidence base takes time but is key to making the case for reform.** Again, this required time and patience, even as some observers expressed frustration at the slow pace of work early in the project. In the case of DRM policy reform, for example, it took considerable time and effort to build the evidence base – involving the production of four separate reports looking at international and Ethiopian experiences, and the DRM Synthesis report. The work paid off by providing a solid foundation for the way forward, while also helping to deepen the relationship with EDRMC and a shared understanding of what was needed.

- **It is important to work organically, wait for the right moment, and capitalise on earlier successes.** For example, EDRMC was more open to work with BRE-TA on EWS reform – a much contested area fraught with setbacks over a number of years – given the progress on DRM policy reform and repositioning of EDRMC in the PMO, both achieved with BRE-TA support.
- **Working simultaneously at federal and regional level strengthens results at both levels.** For example, the federal DRM policy reform process was strengthened by input from the regions, while the DRM bureaus in some regions felt more engaged in the reform process and were informed early on of what was involved in the policy reform. Working at both levels also helped BRE-TA understand differences among regional administrations and their in-house DRM capacity as well as recognise the need for different policy and strategy processes at regional and federal levels.
- **Natural disasters can be used strategically to build the case for reforms, and to build trust, through active, timely support in affected regions.** For instance, BRE-TA's assistance to the government's drought response through TO#19, put in place quickly in response to a request for support from the government, provided the opportunity to demonstrate how stronger regional coordination structures and mechanisms, and improved EW data, could help to improve the government's response to the shock.

D.5.2 Recommendations

The main areas that require further support to ensure that the benefits undertaken by BRE-TA with the Ethiopian government are fully realised are outlined below. Development partners who may be able to pick up these areas of work are indicated in square parentheses.

DRM Coordination and Leadership

- Formal approval of the revised DRM Policy and new legal framework is only the first step towards a more robust and effective DRM system. The **Policy and related federal legislation need to be adapted to the needs and conditions of sectors, regions and woredas** with responsibilities under the Policy, and **provisions for their implementation** – operating manuals, procedures, regulations, etc. – need to be developed and rolled-out to the regions and relevant sectors. The World Bank has committed assistance for this.⁷⁷
- **Familiarisation of staff at all levels of government** with the provisions of the revised DRM Policy has only recently started. Further support is needed to assist EDRMC to ensure that ministries and regions understand their new legal responsibilities. [USAID]
- The EDRMC has made good headway on enhancing **capabilities at senior levels of leadership**. There is nevertheless more that can be done to ensure that senior staff are fully prepared for their enhanced roles. Further support for **organisational reforms at EDRMC** would also be helpful. [USAID]
- Much groundwork has been laid in terms of **strengthening regional coordination structures** in the BRE-TA supported regions, but there is more to be done in those regions, and similar work needs to be undertaken in regions not supported by BRE-

⁷⁷ World Bank (2023) 'Emergency Preparedness and DRM Consultancy for EP&R and Disaster-FCV Nexus Thematic Areas', Advertisement Details, wbgeprocure-rfxnow.worldbank.org/rfxnow/public/advertisement/955/view.html [last accessed 9 January 2023].

TA. The need for further improvements is pressing in some regions given the drought anticipated from El Nino 2024. [USAID]

DRM Mainstreaming

- While the reach of the DRIP training has been extensive in the regions covered to-date, EDRMC needs to ensure that **DRIP training is cascaded** across more regions and further down into zones and woredas, as well as being delivered to priority federal sectors, particularly MoWE, MoA, Ministry of Lowlands and Irrigation, MoE, MoPD. [USAID]
- Linked to the DRIP training, it will be important to ensure that sectors and more regions prepare **DRM-informed plans**, and that this, in turn, leads to the allocation of resources for shock preparedness and response in regional budgets. [USAID]
- An **M&E system for monitoring the implementation of the DRM Policy** across sectors and regions is in place, but EDRMC will need to ensure that the framework is used as planned to monitor and report on progress to regional councils and federal agencies. [USAID]

DRM Information and Knowledge

- Substantial further support is needed to ensure **implementation of the EWS reform roadmap**, including full automation of the system. Some support will be available through the UN's EW4All, but additional support is likely to be needed too. [World Bank or USAID].
- While there have been significant improvements in BRE-TA supported regions, further capacity-strengthening will be needed around **EW data collection, analysis, and reporting at regional and woreda levels**, to improve the quality and timeliness of the data used by EDRMC in its monthly bulletins. [World Bank]

Annex E: Workstream-specific progress: PHEM

E.1 What was the vision?

The PHEM workstream's vision was to **improve 'Public Health Emergency Management (PHEM) systems'**. To this end, BRE-TA's **main support went to** the Ethiopian Public Health Institute (EPHI), to the Ministry of Health (MoH), to Regional Health Bureaus (RHBs) and Regional Public Health Institutes (RPHIs), as well as woredas.

The support was structured around **three building blocks**⁷⁸, with the focus on the first two:

- **PHEM System Design;**
- **Region- and Woreda-Level PHEM Structures and Processes;** and
- **Financing PHEM.**

This structure is reflected in the PHEM Theory of Change (ToC) (see figure overleaf), which reads from bottom to top.

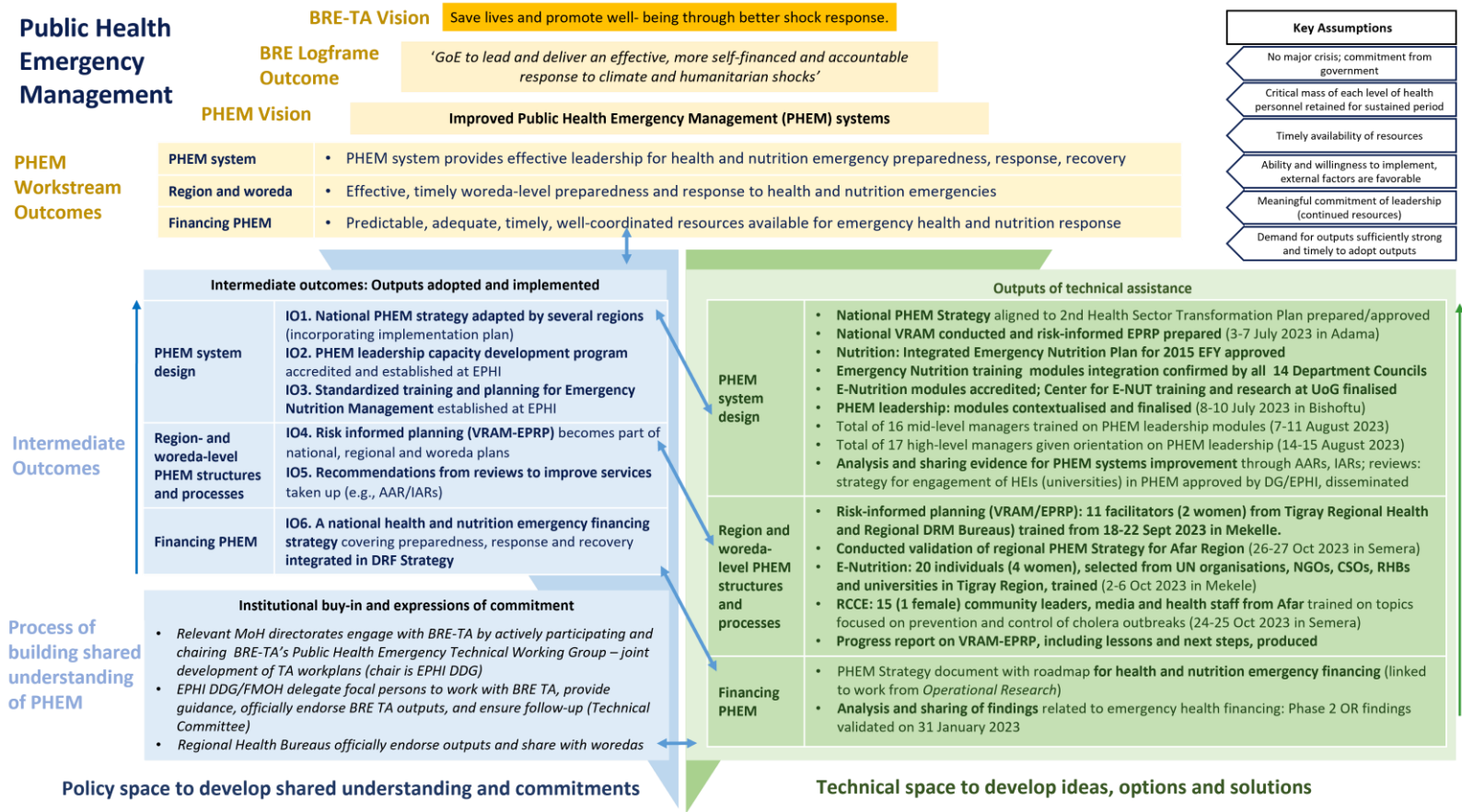
The PHEM ToC is based on the project level ToC (see section 2.6 in the main narrative of this report), following the same four steps. However, where the project ToC is generic, the ToC for PHEM provides workstream-specific information.

- The starting point in both cases is the same: **to build a common understanding with relevant stakeholders in government to work towards expressions of commitment.** In the PHEM workstream, such commitment was shown when, for example, the relevant MoH/EPHI directorate chaired BRE-TA's PHEM Technical Working Group, and/or when MoH/EPHI delegated focal persons to work with BRE-TA.
- The expressions of commitments provide the 'mandate' for **generating the desired outputs** in close collaboration with government.
- The **outputs only matter if they get adopted and implemented** (assuming demand, capacity, and other favourable factors). For example, BRE-TA developed the national PHEM strategic plan with government (an output) and worked towards getting it validated and adapted by several regions (an intermediate outcome). The strategic plans contribute to a better level of preparedness.
- The **workstream outcomes**, which fall beyond the life of the project, are shown to provide the 'direction of travel'. For example, the strategic plans mentioned above are a step towards an improved PHEM system, a long term workstream outcome.

Thus, each level of the ToC feeds into the next, all geared towards the workstream vision of an improved PHEM system. An improved PHEM system ultimately contributes to the more effective shock response reflected in the logframe outcome and BRE-TA vision.

⁷⁸ As noted in the description of BRE-TA's structure (see sub-section 2.5.2 in the main narrative of this report), the wide range of workstream outputs called for some kind of grouping to describe their common purpose. These groupings, which equated to broad areas of group, were called building blocks. Outputs, intermediate outcomes, and workstream outcomes were organised into these building blocks.

Figure 8: ToC for the PHEM workstream



E.2 What was the overall achievement?

The following sections aim to make the wide scope of results accessible in different ways, always with the focus on results at the intermediate outcome (IO)⁷⁹ level. To provide an overview of the results, this section starts with a **table of the intermediate outcomes** (see below). It shows to what extent the intermediate outcomes (IOs) have been achieved. The table is followed by a **one-page summary of the main achievements and their implications** (section E.2.2). In addition, a **visual summary** of the results is provided. An intermediate outcome **map shows the story of the workstream on one page, highlighting the main achievements** (Figure 9). A more detailed description of the IOs, as well as inroads into the longer term workstream outcomes starts in section E.3. The purpose of these different sections is to make the achievements, and their significance and context, accessible as easily as possible and in different ways.

E.2.1 Summary of achievements

The table below provides an overview **of the extent of the achievements in relation to each intermediate outcome (IO)**, per building block.

Table 8: Progress towards workstream intermediate outcomes, per the PHEM ToC

Intermediate outcome (IO)	Extent of achievement	Status as of 31 December 2023
IO1. National PHEM strategy adapted by several regions	Achieved	In November 2020, EPHI approved the ten-year National PHEM strategy and its implementation plan . By the end of December 2023, twelve (out of 13) ⁸⁰ administrative regions , including two city administrations, had adapted the strategic plan to their specific contexts.
IO2. PHEM leadership capacity development program accredited and established at EPHI	Achieved	Training modules were developed, validated, and approved, with rollout of training by EPHI started in August 2023 . From MoH, EPHI and RHBs, 16 facilitators and 17 health leaders trained. Additional, 24 trained for roll-out of leadership training under the new USAID Health Resilience Activity project. Training modules submitted to Jimma and Bahir Dar University for accreditation and integration to pre-service training curricula; training modules and toolkits, and roster of trained facilitators were shared with EPHI and Management Sciences for Health (MSH) for continuity of roll-out beyond BRE-TA project period.

⁷⁹ At the workstream level, over time, the IOs started to include both adoption of outputs *and* their implementation (see section 2.6 in the main narrative of this report). As such, the IOs are more ambitious than their name may suggest.

⁸⁰ As of August 2023, Ethiopia has 14 administrative regions, including 12 regions in the strict sense of the word and 2 city administrations (12 regions plus 2 cities). The PHEM strategy was adopted by SNNP region before it split into two regions (South Central and South Regions). Hence, the relevant number of regions here is 13.

Intermediate outcome (IO)	Extent of achievement	Status as of 31 December 2023
IO3. Standardized training and planning for Emergency Nutrition Management established at EPHI	Achieved (with additional achievements)	<p>The work on emergency nutrition was particularly successful:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competency-based modular training developed, accredited by University of Gondar (UoG), and integrated to curriculum of 15 Departments of Nutrition at public universities and to Training Unit of EPHI (developed with EPHI, EDRMC, MoH, ENCU & Universities). • With BRE-TA support, in October 2023; the UoG developed a strategy and established a Centre for Research and Training in Emergency Nutrition (CERTEN). In Dec 2023, it was officially launched and elected its first Director. • A scoping study on Emergency Nutrition Landscape in Ethiopia completed in May 2022 with key recommendations on improving coordination, joint planning and monitoring, integration of moderate acute malnutrition to severe malnutrition surveillance, and capacity building. • Various government agencies and partners jointly developed an Integrated Plan on Emergency Nutrition Interventions (EPHI, ENCU, MOH, WFP, UNICEF/ENCU) for 2015 Eth Fiscal Year. It is also implemented. By 2023 two rounds of monitoring had taken place. • Mapping of emergency nutrition landscape in Tigray region was completed; and findings informed preparation of an integrated workplan for 2016 EC. • Guideline approved for integration of moderate and severe acute malnutrition (MAM and SAM) surveillance in October 2022.
IO4. Risk-informed planning (VRAM-EPRP) becomes part of national, regional and woreda plans	Achieved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In October 2022, a simplified national guideline for conducting risk-informed planning (VRAM-EPRP) approved for use by trained facilitators. • By end of Nov 2023, a total of 97 facilitators trained; and Vulnerability and Risk Analysis and Mappings (VRAMs) conducted, and Emergency Preparedness and Response Plans (EPRPs) prepared for 279 vulnerable woredas from 14 regions incl. two city administrations. With this, each region and city administration have a minimum of three trained facilitators, a guideline on conducting VRAM/EPRP, and at least two woredas that completed VRAM/EPRP to serve as templates for roll-out in remaining woredas and update of those with completed risk-informed plans. • In August 2022, the Amhara PHI prepared emergency response and recovery plans for 28 conflicts affected woredas and for the region. Similarly, in November 2023; conflict and drought affected 15 woredas in Tigray region prepared risk-informed emergency preparedness, response and recovery plan in November 2023.

Intermediate outcome (IO)	Extent of achievement	Status as of 31 December 2023
IO5. Recommendations from reviews to improve services taken up (e.g., AAR/IARs)	Achieved (with additional achievements)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intra-Action Reviews (IARs) at national and six regions conducted, and national and 6 regional COVID-19 response plans updated. Coordination, and communication at different levels improved. • Improved risk communication and community engagement through support to development of ToRs, guidelines, training manuals and training of media and public health personnel and community leaders. • Assessment of uptake of IAR recommendations and study on “Role of Engagement of Higher Education institutions (HEIs) in COVID-19 Response” conducted. Based on these, “Strategic Framework for engagement of HEIs in PHEM” developed with EPHI, universities, MOH and MOE and approved in August 2023. The framework was launched with signing of MoU between the 10 universities in Amhara region, the eight universities in southwest Ethiopia (Benishangul-Gumuz, Gambella, South-West Ethiopia and Oromia regions), and respective regional health bureaus where the HEIs are based, all in December 2023.
IO6. A national health and nutrition emergency financing strategy integrated in DRFS	Achieved	Achieved with finalisation of the Disaster Risk Financing Strategy (DRFS) which has references to health and nutrition emergencies.

E.2.2 One page summary of achievements and their implications

Strategic and risk informed planning provides basis for improved funding

- A **national PHEM strategic plan was endorsed by the government** (EPHI and MoH) and **adapted by 12 regions** and city administrations, out of a total of 13 at the time. As an example of follow-on implementation, Sidama region translated the plan into local language and **used it to request local funding**. While it received less funding than requested, it started the long process from planning to implementation.
- **Localised emergency preparedness and response plans (EPRPs) were prepared for 279 extremely vulnerable woredas** in 14 regions (which include two city administrations). They were based on detailed Vulnerability and Risk Analysis and Mappings (VRAMs). As a result, **these EPRPs can be drawn upon when funding becomes available in emergencies**, improving the allocation of funding. In addition, the EPRPs are used to request funding.
- For **sustainability**, a national **guideline for conducting risk informed planning** was developed. Ninety-six facilitators from national and regions were trained, and 590 woreda officials participated in the development of woreda VRRAM/EPRPs and acquired the necessary skills in the process.

Coordination of emergency nutrition improved

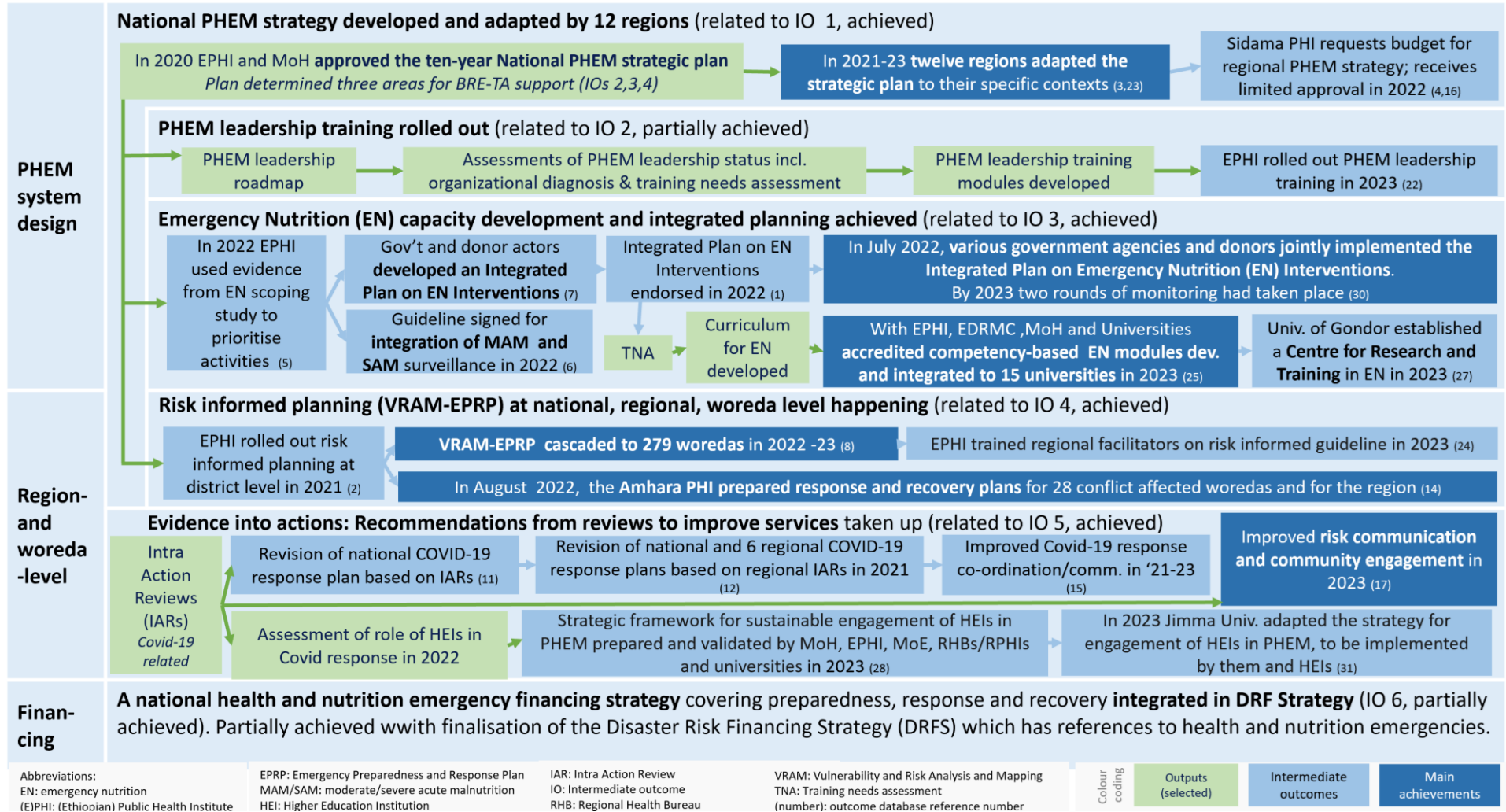
- **The main government and donor actors** (EPHI, ENCU, WFP, UNICEF/ENCU) **agreed on an integrated plan for emergency nutrition for the first time**, reducing the risk of duplication and gaps. **The plan is now being implemented and monitored.**
- In addition, a guideline to integrate moderate acute malnutrition (MAM) into the severe acute malnutrition (SAM) surveillance system was produced and is in use.
- **A modular curriculum was developed and integrated to curricula of 15 Departments of Nutrition at all public universities that offer training** in Human Nutrition and Food Sciences (thus **harmonising pre-service training**). This process happened in close collaboration with EPHI, MoH, EDRMC, and the respective universities. An adapted version is used for in-service training at the EPHI (**harmonising in service and pre-service training**). This holds the promise of improving common understanding and effectiveness in the future.

COVID-19 sparked improvements in communication and engagement

- **Innovative Intra-Action Reviews (IARs)** using a WHO tool improved national and regional COVID-19 response plans. **Coordination, and communication at different levels improved** as was shown by weekly epi-situation reports prepared and disseminated; and monthly activity report of information and communication officer.
- An in-depth study on the role of higher education institutions (HEIs) in COVID-19 response led to a **strategic framework for sustainable engagement**. It was **adapted by Amhara Region and Jimma University for launching**.
- Support to the design of guidelines and tools and training for media, health personnel, community, faith leaders, and volunteers contributed **to improved risk and community engagement**. This was evident from an **improved communication on the cholera outbreak in six regions**.

The following figure provides a visual overview or ‘map’ that also shows how the achievements build on each other progressively.

Figure 9: PHEM intermediate outcome map



The achievements are described in greater detail below.

E.3 Building block ‘PHEM system design’: progress toward intermediate and workstream outcomes

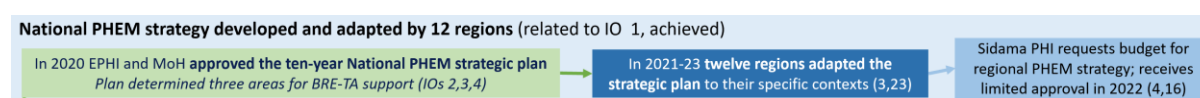
E.3.1 National PHEM strategic plan adapted by several regions, laying the foundations for subsequent work (intermediate outcome 1)

(a) What was the problem?

A comprehensive risk management and a hazard approach was missing. There was also limited capacity to detect, prevent, respond to, and recover from public health emergencies and disasters.

(b) What was achieved?

Figure 10: PHEM intermediate outcome 1: main achievements



In 2020, the Ethiopian Public Health Institute (EPHI) **developed the 10-year national PHEM Strategic Plan**. It guides system strengthening in preparation for and response to disease outbreaks, nutrition emergencies, and mass casualties and displacements. The inclusion of emergency nutrition, mass casualties and internal displacement is particularly noteworthy as, despite its importance, it is less common for such a plan. Furthermore, the PHEM strategy traditionally focused on disease outbreaks, which, though pertinent in a country suffering from climate and humanitarian shocks, accorded little attention to other types of shocks. The shift to all hazards and risks was a significant milestone. Furthermore, the strategic plan specifically addresses vulnerability and social inclusion.⁸¹

Regional adaptation

Almost all regions (including two city administrations) **adapted and validated, or are in the process of adapting and validating, the PHEM Strategic Plan**.⁸² As might be expected, regions with well-established regional public health institutes, including Amhara, SNNP, and Sidama, were pioneers in adaptation and validation of their strategic plans. The fact that regional plans have been adapted and validated in so many regions is a sign of the strength of the national strategic plan and the level of technical and political buy-in by government counterparts. This is especially so given that the achievement was made amidst a protracted conflict and related displacement and COVID-19 pandemic.

⁸¹ See Ethiopian Public Health Institute and Ministry of Health: '*Strategic Plan for Public Health Emergency Management (PHEM) in Ethiopia; 2013-2022 EFY (2020/21-2030/31)*', Nov. 2020, p.26 and p.38. It states that '[a]ll actors involved in the execution of this strategic plan will strive to expand services to underserved areas, the poor and vulnerable population'. It also envisions to '[e]ngage civil society and local communities in the provision of services [...] [to] meet the basic needs of populations with high levels of vulnerability'.

⁸² The regions (including city administrations) that have **adapted and validated** the strategic plan are Amhara, SNNPR (subsequently split into two regions in August 2023), Somali, Sidama, Gambella, Oromia, Addis Ababa (city administration), South-West Ethiopia, Benishangul-Gumuz, Afar and Tigray. Harari has drafted the plan and validation is planned. Dire Dawa still needs to finalise adaptation of the strategy. The term 'regions' here refers to Regional Health Bureau and Regional Public Health Institute, and the equivalent for Addis Ababa and Dire Dawa (the City Administration Health Bureau).

Use of the PHEM Strategic Plan – the Sidama example

The widespread adaptation and validation of the PHEM strategy begs the question: ‘How have the localised plans been used in practice?’ The step following validation of the regional plans is to request and obtain funding for them, and the experience of the Sidama Public Health Institute (PHI) may serve as an illuminating example.

In August 2021, the Sidama PHI presented the regional PHEM strategy to the Regional Government Council.⁸³ The strategy was submitted together with its operational plan and the Vulnerability Risk Assessment Mapping (VRAM) / Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan (EPRPs) of five woredas. The Sidama PHI requested a budgetary allocation for implementing the operational plan. 13% of this budget request was approved by the Sidama Regional Government Council in 2022.⁸⁴ While the amount received is low, the example shows how a region has taken ownership of its plan. This is a crucial step in the long process of moving from plan to implementation.

Similarly, with BRE-TA support, the Amhara Region developed a post-conflict emergency preparedness, response, and recovery plan which was presented at a regional workshop and officially shared to all partners with request for mobilising technical, logistics and financial resources. It received a positive response from several partners including the UN, bilateral agencies, and NGOs in mobilising support.

In addition, there was a notable focus in 2023 on supporting regions step-up their response to cholera. Using the PHEM strategy and risk-informed plans at an early phase when the index cases were reported in Bali (Oromia region), most regions scaled their preparation, including stockpiling of Oral Rehydration Salt (ORS), training of media and communities on risk communication, and training on community engagement.⁸⁵

Figure 11: Regional adaptation process for the PHEM Strategy



⁸³ The desire to present was expressed by the Sidama PHI at a National PHEM Forum in March 2022. ‘*The plan [for Sidama] is going to be presented in the regional council meeting.*’ Source: Building Resilience in Ethiopia (BRE) PHEM Workstream Team, ‘*Summary Report of the National PHEM Forum; Hosted by Harari Regional Health Bureau, 24 March 2022 to 26 March 2022*’, p.11, Oxford Policy Management (OPM), Oxford, United Kingdom.

⁸⁴ The regional operational plan amounted to about ETB 3m (~US\$ 56k), of which ETB 400,000 (~US\$7.5k) per year for emergency drugs and supplies were approved. Subsequently, the Sidama PHI was trying to raise the additional funds from the federal EPHI and MoH.

⁸⁵ This was evidenced from media briefs, notably reported for Afar region. With respect to Somali region, the following links may serve as examples: ‘Somali Local Media Report on role of Communities during Cholera Campaign and SRHB [Somali Regional Health Bureau] Webpage coverage on BRE Workshop’ provided in December 2023 by the Somali Region Public Health Emergency Advisor, Building Resilience in Ethiopia (BRE); Shakaal TV (local media) during cholera campaign.mp4 - Google Drive; SRTV media RHB Webpage coverage on BRE Workshops.PNG - Google Drive; SRTV media role on Cholera Campaign.mp4 - Google Drive.

(c) How did BRE-TA contribute to the achievement?

BRE-TA provided technical support for drafting and reviewing the national PHEM strategy across 12 regions (including city administrations) out of a total of 13. The broad adoption of the national strategy attests to the project's effective engagement and rollout processes with the regions.

This was done despite challenges, including that GoE officials faced heightened time demands due to conflict and drought, compounded by the absence of a dedicated budget for adaptation workshops. To navigate these challenges, BRE-TA actively participated in the National PHEM Fora, quarterly events chaired by the State Minister of Health and DG of EPHI. These fora provided a strategic platform to share the national strategy, mitigating conflicts in officials' schedules. BRE-TA organized and contributed to the Fora, presenting experiences and case examples, and subsequently assisted in the regional adaptation process, addressing the lack of dedicated budgets for workshops. Despite financial constraints, government counterparts contributed in-kind resources as needed, such as experts, local transport, venues, and workspace, showcasing collaborative efforts.

(d) To what extent are the achievements likely to be sustained?

The strategic plans have been incorporated into the set of existing plans. As a result, both BRE-TA staff and government officials **consider the sustainability of the achievement to be high**⁸⁶, although regions may benefit from help to prepare budget requests to implement the strategic plans. However, the bigger challenge will be obtaining the funding, as the Sidama example demonstrates. This challenge reinforces the need for a PHEM financing strategy. Such a strategy is currently developed as part of a wider Disaster Risk Financing Strategy and is discussed further in section E.5.1.

The **PHEM Strategic Plan sets out nine areas of particular importance**. A prioritisation process with government counterparts (from EPHI, EDRMC, and MoH) identified three areas for BRE-TA support in terms of capacity development: (1) PHEM leadership; (2) emergency nutrition; and (3) risk-informed planning. In these three areas, the government did not have many supporting partners; neither did it have the resources or the technical expertise. These three areas align with IO2, IO3, and IO4, and they are covered in the next three sections, starting with the leadership capacity development.

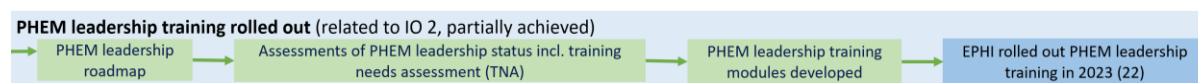
E.3.2 PHEM leadership capacity development program established and accredited (intermediate outcome 2)

(a) What was the problem?

According to the PHEM leadership roadmap “there was a need for leadership capacity development to ensure that the directorates and teams function optimally.”⁸⁷

⁸⁶ Outcome harvesting workshop with BRE-TA staff, 19-20 October 2023.

⁸⁷ Federal Ministry of Health and Ethiopian Public Health Institute, ‘Assessment of Needs and Roadmap for Public Health Emergency Leadership Capacity Building in Ethiopia (2020/21 – 2024/25)’, October 2020, p.4

(b) What was achieved?**Figure 12: PHEM intermediate outcome 2: main achievements**

EPHI rolled out a tailor-made PHEM leadership capacity building for all levels of leadership in the second half of 2023, including topics related to gender, equality, and social inclusion. The trainings were provided for high- and mid-level PHEM leaders. Accreditation is in progress at Bahir Dar University. In 2023, EPHI developed a general ‘health leadership’ training program into which a PHEM-specific leadership component will be integrated. The training will also be integrated to the two-year Field Epidemiology Training Program (FETP) managed by EPHI. The coordinators from EPHI/MoH participated in the contextualization and validation of the modules. While the effect of the training is not yet known, it is noteworthy that the leadership recognised the need for its own capacity development. This was evidenced by the signing of a MoU for collaboration on strengthening leadership with Asia Disaster Preparedness Centre, as well as active leadership and engagement throughout, ranging from the training needs assessment to the design and approval of the modules. On request of both USAID and Management Sciences for Health (MSH), BRE-TA shared the training materials and a list of trained facilitators.⁸⁸

(c) How did BRE-TA contribute to the achievement?

BRE-TA undertook a series of exercises in collaboration with EPHI. These started at inception phase, and covered prioritization, planning, implementation, and monitoring of progress in the area. These exercises included: (1) a leadership roadmap developed in October 2020; (2) an organizational diagnosis of the PHEM centre/EPHI conducted in May 2021; (3) a baseline assessment on the challenges and current practices of leadership in October 2022; (4) training need assessment carried out in December 2022, all approved by the EPHI; (5) learning tour and signing of an MoU with ADPC in February 2023; and (6) concept for design of competency-based modular leadership training in March 2023.

(d) To what extent are the achievements likely to be sustained? (*)

BRE-TA staff ranked the **likelihood high** that the leadership capacity development can be maintained.⁸⁹ However, **further donor support** in the form of TA and that goes beyond accreditation and support roll-out **would be useful**.⁹⁰

E.3.3 Steps towards improved coordination in emergency nutrition promise greater effectiveness (intermediate outcome 3)**(a) What was the problem?**

Climate and humanitarian shocks can worsen malnutrition. The many efforts by different organisations directed to improve the situation are not always as coordinated as they could be, leading to duplication, inefficiency, or gaps in critical intervention areas necessary to effectively address emergency nutrition.

⁸⁸ MSH is awarded an USAID funded health resilience project and has a leadership component at woreda level

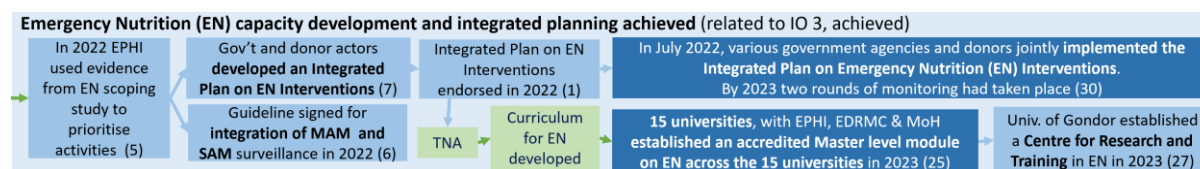
⁸⁹ Outcome harvesting workshop with BRE-TA staff, 19-20 October 2023.

⁹⁰ Outcome harvesting workshop with BRE-TA staff, 19-20 October 2023. This was also articulated in a separate report on sustainability: BRE-TA, Sustainability Strategy, 16 June 2023.

(b) What was achieved?

The achievements with respect to emergency nutrition are remarkable. Three areas stand out.

Figure 13: PHEM intermediate outcome 3: main achievements



1. An integrated emergency nutrition plan was endorsed by the main actors and implemented

In 2022, different GoE MDAs and donors developed and endorsed an **integrated plan on emergency nutrition interventions** for 2015 Ethiopian Fiscal Year (2022/23 per the Gregorian Calendar (GC)). The actors included the MoH, EPHI, Emergency Nutrition Coordination Unit (ENCUC/EDRMC), as well as UNICEF and WFP⁹¹, and it was the first intra-governmental and donor collaboration to align implementation plans for various nutrition interventions.

The plan contains a breakdown of roles and responsibilities as well as budget structure and allocation and activities. It is targeted at vulnerable groups, such as women, children, disabled people, and IDPs.

Thematic/intervention pillars were mapped, and each actor incorporated specific activities of focus which were then harmonized, costed, and presented to the multi-agency nutrition working group chaired by H.E. Commissioner of EDRMC. **The plan was implemented during the 2015 EFY (2022/23 GC)**. Under the coordination of EPHI, two rounds of monitoring have taken place, leading to insights as to which areas have worked well and which need improvement. Hence, this plan can be seen as a **breakthrough in coordination of emergency nutrition**.

2. A guideline for integration of MAM and SAM surveillance signed and distributed that promises a more coordinated approach

In October 2022, the Ethiopian Public Health Institute (EPHI) endorsed and signed a guideline for the integration of moderate acute malnutrition (MAM) surveillance and severe acute malnutrition (SAM) surveillance in Ethiopia.⁹² Reporting on MAM cases is expected to improve early warning information on emerging malnutrition cases. It was the first time that a guideline that integrates SAM and MAM surveillance was adopted. According to government officials, the guidelines are now in use.⁹³ The guideline includes, among many other items, a reporting format with an indicator on gender and other vulnerability status (such as IDP or disability). The guideline is

⁹¹ In September 2022, the Deputy Director General of the Ethiopian Public Health Institute (EPHI) endorsed and signed-off on the shared implementation plan and set-up a mechanism to track joint progress. The integrated plan was presented at the Multi-Agency Nutrition Task Force (MANTF) chaired by the Commissioner of EDRMC. The Commissioner noted that it was an example of integrated approach for emergency nutrition planning and response and underscored the need for follow-up on its implementation.

⁹² See EPHI, EDRMC (then NDRMC) and MoH, 'Guideline for the integration of Moderate Acute Malnutrition (MAM) with Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM) in the surveillance system in Ethiopia', October 2022

⁹³ Outcome harvesting workshop with government counterparts, 17 October 2023.

incorporated to emergency nutrition training modules and disseminated to regions. It is also used to train staff in conducting surveys and surveillance.

3. Fifteen Departments of Nutrition from public universities integrated emergency nutrition modules into their curricula, thereby paving the way for future graduates joining the health service to work more effectively together. EPHI integrated the modules to current in-service training.

A harmonised curriculum has been developed and accredited by 15 Departments of Nutrition at all public universities that offer graduate training in Human Nutrition and Food Sciences. This process happened in close collaboration with EPHI, MoH and EDRMC. The curriculum considers gender disaggregation and vulnerable groups as a key element in assessment and management of emergency nutrition. In addition, the **modularized competency-based Emergency Nutrition is integrated to the training unit at EPHI**. Roll-out of in-service training using the newly developed modules started with 20 nutrition personnel from Tigray region trained in October 2023.

To ensure ongoing relevance and quality, the modules were validated by a team of experts and technically reviewed and officially approved by all Departmental Councils of the respective universities following official accreditation by the Education Quality Assurance and Audit Directorate of the University of Gondar. All the modules have a pre/post-test assessment and only those scoring higher than 70% in all the modules were certified as qualified trainers.

Both **‘pre-service’ trainees** of public universities and **‘in-service’ employees** of the MoH, Regional Health Bureaus and Regional Public Health Institutes (RHBs/RPHIs), Regional Disaster Risk Management bureaus, and nutrition program implementing partners (UN and NGOs) under the leadership of EPHI, will benefit from the roll-out of the standardized training in managing nutrition during emergencies. New graduates coming into the health sector service are expected to speak the ‘same language’ with those already in the workforce, paving the way for increased effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of in-service training.

Moreover, the University of Gondar established a **‘Centre for Collaborative Research and Training in Emergency Nutrition’** to sustain a focus on emergency nutrition.

c) How did BRE-TA contribute to the achievement?

Broadly speaking, BRE-TA built credibility with different actors and then brought them together. BRE-TA, in collaboration with MoH, EPHI conducted a **“Scoping study on Emergency Nutrition”** to better understand the landscape and identify existing practices and gaps, and key partners. Based on this, TA support was prioritized, and key documents were jointly developed with the relevant actors. Examples of this process are provided below.

- 1. Integrated plan on emergency nutrition interventions:** BRE-TA took the initiative to bring different emergency nutrition actors together around the scoping study findings, which were validated in the presence of key partners. The findings recommended improved coordination in the interests of all. BRE-TA provided technical assistance in the development of the plan, funding of the retreats and validation workshops, presenting it to the multi-agency nutrition task force chaired by

EDRMC. Put differently, BRE-TA facilitated the process of ensuing political buy-in to get the plan endorsed and signed.

2. **SAM/MAM surveillance:** BRE-TA initiated the development of the MAM/SAM surveillance guideline, including the writing, technical review, and editing. BRE-TA was subsequently able to get it validated by key partners and signed.
3. **Universities integrated emergency nutrition modules:** BRE-TA engaged with the relevant universities, EPHI, EDRMC and MoH. BRE-TA developed integrated modular training curricula that were reviewed by service providers and by academics. BRE-TA worked together with the University of Gondar for accreditation of emergency nutrition course. BRE-TA was also instrumental in the development of a strategic plan for the '**Centre for Collaborative Research and Training**' that was **officially approved by the Vice President of the University of Gondar**. BRE-TA also supported the training of 74 trainers (certified). The main enablers of these achievements were inclusiveness, recognition of challenges and on-the-ground realities, and building mutual trust and credibility through dialogue and consensus building.

d) To what extent are the achievements likely to be sustained?

The various achievements are institutionalised, and the institutionalisation increases the likelihood that performance is maintained and improved. The integrated emergency nutrition plan was also jointly prepared with and implemented by the various actors, indicating that there is broad buy-in. The SAM/MAM guideline is in use, according to government officials.⁹⁴ The harmonised curriculum on emergency nutrition has been accredited and integrated to public universities. EPHI is rolling out training for the related in-service training.

In the assessment of the BRE-TA team, the three achievements are highly sustainable and do not require additional funding by donors to continue (except for in-service training managed by EPHI).⁹⁵ The report on sustainability suggests that further TA for training support will be useful, such as for supporting the roll-out or updating training modules and roll-out of in-service training by EPHI.⁹⁶

E.3.4 Strengthened PHEM systems bode well for achieving future improvements

This section considers, for the building block 'PHEM Systems', how the achievements described above contribute towards the workstream outcome '*PHEM system provides effective leadership for health and nutrition emergency preparedness, response, recovery*'. As with all the workstream outcomes, this outcome falls beyond BRE-TA's lifespan. Furthermore, its achievement involves many actors working together on an ongoing basis. Yet, contribution towards achieving it have been made by BRE-TA. Progress is evidenced by the fact that the achievements go beyond design and into implementation, which is a long process. In some cases, preparatory steps are well under way, such as funding requests, in other cases, actual implementation has begun.

Examples of preparatory steps towards implementation are as follows: (1) The national PHEM strategy has been adapted by 12 regions leading to regional emergency preparedness, response, and recovery plans. As the example of Sidama showed, this has led to a **budget request to regional government**, i.e., taking the next step towards

⁹⁴ Outcome harvesting workshop with government counterparts, 17 October 2023.

⁹⁵ Outcome harvesting workshop with BRE-TA staff, 19-20 October 2023.

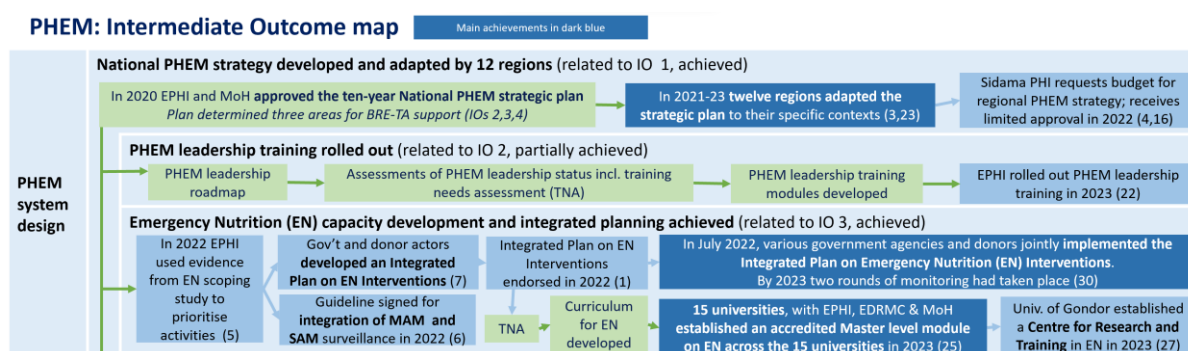
⁹⁶ BRE-TA, Sustainability Strategy, 16 June 2023.

implementation and showing ownership. (2) Moreover, in 2023 there was a notable focus to support regions **to step-up their response to cholera**. This last example has already moved into implementation.⁹⁷ (3) A further example of moving towards implementation is that EPHI and MoH launched the PHEM leadership training and Emergency Nutrition Management programs. This provided a solid institutional grounding and credibility in government and academia.

Examples of implementation are as follows: (4) An **integrated emergency nutrition plan has been endorsed** by relevant government and donor actors **and implemented**. Two rounds of monitoring have been conducted and lessons drawn. (5) A guideline on integrated SAM and MAM surveillance is in place and, according to government officials, is also used. (6) A total of 15 Departments of Nutrition from universities have integrated the accredited emergency nutrition modules and harmonised them to their training curriculum.

All this contributes to a PHEM system that ‘provides effective leadership for health and nutrition emergency preparedness, response, recovery’, the long-term workstream outcome in the PHEM ToC. As a result, the wide scope of achievements hold promise for the future.

Figure 14: PHEM achievements bode well for the future



E.4 Building block ‘Region- and woreda-level PHEM structures and processes’: progress toward intermediate and workstream outcomes

E.4.1 Risk-informed health planning in Ethiopian woredas promises to reduce the impact and costs of crises on affected communities (intermediate outcome 4)

(a) What was the problem?

According to government officials, prior to 2019 funding tended to become available when emergencies happen, rather than for preparedness. Only once funding was in place did planning start, a situation that weakened response to crises. Moreover, Emergency Preparedness and Response Plans (EPRPs) in the health sector were considered weak.

⁹⁷ ‘Prior to the RCCE training, there were 1,039 reported cholera cases with 10 deaths at healthcare facilities and an additional 8 deaths within the community. As of November 2023, there were only 13 admitted cholera cases, and no deaths had been reported either at healthcare facilities or within the community. This signifies a substantial reduction in the number of cases.’ This reduction is attributed in the report to ‘collective action of different stakeholder[s]’ including the BRE-OPM timely and need based interventions’. Source: ‘Outcome of RCCE Training for Health and Media Professionals, Religious Leaders, and Volunteers in Afar Region: Case of Cholera’, Prepared by Afar Public Health Institute with support from Building Resilience in Ethiopia (BRE-OPM), Nov 2023, p.4.

They existed only at the national and regional level (not lower levels), and they had traditionally been designed around imminent single hazards, without assessment of local public health risks. Hence, strengthening the plans that are used to allocate funding in emergencies was thought to be useful.

(b) What was achieved?

Figure 15: PHEM intermediate outcome 4: main achievements



In 2021, the Ethiopian Public Health Institute (EPHI) started rolling out a risk-informed planning process⁹⁸ to the most vulnerable woredas (**Vulnerability Risk Assessment Mapping – Emergency Preparedness and Response Plans (VRAM-EPRP)**). A total of 590 regional, zonal, woreda health and disaster risk management experts and officers were trained in VRAM-EPRP by EPHI and BRE-TA. BRE-TA also helped EPHI prepare a **national risk informed plan** (in July 2023) and informed the provision of an overarching national framework for the **regional and woreda levels VRAM-EPRPs**. In total, **279 vulnerable woredas** are better prepared for shocks, as are 12 regions, including two city administrations, who have adapted PHEM strategy (with EPRP as one pillar) and one region that has prepared a post-conflict preparedness, response and recovery plan.

As a result, many vulnerable woredas now have localised plans that help to set out what to do in case of emergencies. This is a substantial step towards better preparedness. In addition, these plans are used for funding requests (see also e.g., Sidama PHI in section E.3.1). Moreover, as stated above, when funding previously became available in an emergency, then only would a plan be drawn up. Now plans exist, and they draw on the solid basis of VRAMs. Hence, **when funding suddenly becomes available in an emergency, the localised plans, i.e., the EPRPs, are useful for guiding the response.** As such, this step contributes towards the workstream outcome ‘effective, timely woreda-level preparedness and response to health and nutrition emergencies’.

There were several additional achievements: In 2022, the Amhara Public Health Institute assessed the impact of conflict on public health. It used the findings to **prepare a public health response and recovery plan for 28 conflict-affected woredas and the region**. Moreover, in 2022, a mentoring project was put in place for the regional facilitators to address sustainability risks.⁹⁹

There are also signs of an improved response. For example, as part of the VRAM-EPRP process, **surge teams were created to** conduct rapid assessments, prepare response

⁹⁸ Risk-informed planning is a relatively new concept which considers the specific vulnerabilities, potential multiple hazards, and existing capacity to cope with health crises in each locality. Risk informed planning promotes the allocation of resources to the prevention of identified risks. It uses a community-centred ‘whole of society’ approach to ensure that plans are locally appropriate and engage all relevant stakeholders. The relatively low cost of the approach, and potential to promote significant savings by averting crises, promises to make it a high return investment.

⁹⁹ Ninety-six facilitators from 10 regions and two city administrations were trained. In the second half of 2022, the Regional Health Bureaus (RHBs) prepared VRAM-EPRPs for woredas on their own. It started with the Amhara Region. The establishment of Public Health Institutes in Afar, Amhara, Oromia, Sidama, SNNP was an enabler.

plans, and **provide clinical and public health services** in emergency situations. For example, these surge teams were deployed **in conflict areas** in Amhara.¹⁰⁰

(c) How did BRE-TA contribute to the achievement?

BRE-TA developed the VRAM-EPRP materials with EPHI, including a National **VRAM-EPRP Guideline** and provided training in a new technical skill (based on the WHO STAR Tool of 2020). The VRAM-EPRP Guideline ensures that vulnerability assessment includes consideration of gender and conflict; the training includes a session on GESI and conflict-sensitivity.¹⁰¹ It was distributed to regions for use in the rollout of risk-informed planning in the remaining woredas.

Ethiopia was the first country in Africa to initiate sub-national risk-informed planning.

BRE-TA played an important role in securing political buy-in for the approach, and the project team ensured that the approach was incorporated into the government's annual planning, implementation, and monitoring.¹⁰² BRE-TA also regularly provided updates on risk-informed planning at National PHEM Fora held across the country.

(d) To what extent are the achievements likely to be sustained?

According to the BRE-TA PHEM team, the cascading of VRAM/EPRPs is sustainable but will require donor funding to continue.¹⁰³ This matches statements from government officials.¹⁰⁴ They noted that there are woredas to which the VRAM-EPRP process still needs to be cascaded, as well as follow-on work. It will also be important to maintain political and technical support for it through regular updates at National PHEM Fora. Ongoing finance will be essential to sustain the new risk-informed planning processes.

E.4.2 Recommendations from reviews taken up improving services (intermediate outcome 5)

(a) What was the problem?

At the beginning of COVID-19, knowledge of how to respond was (understandably) limited and needed to be improved.

¹⁰⁰ They were sent by the Amhara Regional Public Health Institute and Regional Health Bureau to provide services in conflict affected woredas and internally displaced population camps. Similarly, Afar region mobilized surge team; and so did Sidama and Oromia in response to cholera outbreaks.

¹⁰¹ The guideline for conducting VRAM & EPRP for public health emergencies (Oct 2022) states the following (p.10): 'Gender and conflict sensibility: consideration in the risk assessments and planning exercise to ensure that public health interventions are contextualized to specific vulnerabilities' within a community'. Also (p.18) on data need from non-health sector: population movement and mapping; IDP population reports; and vulnerable populations; (p.20) Gender and social vulnerability: consider how these risks may affect gender, socioeconomic status, disability, or vulnerable populations; and (p. 23) monitoring plan includes classifying hazards by level of risk (where this is disaggregated by residence, age, gender, etc.).

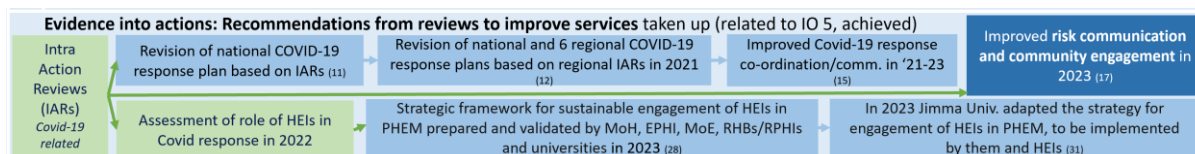
¹⁰² In terms of challenges and how they were addressed: There have been challenges with the quality of the data drawn from health information management systems used for risk assessment. This was addressed by asking zonal PHEM officers to check the data before using it for the risk assessment exercise. Some challenges persist, for example, securing the participation of key officials amidst ongoing health crises. This was addressed as far as possible by agreeing on workshop schedules and venues with participants. Security was also an issue, so workshop venues were carefully selected to minimise that risk.

¹⁰³ Outcome harvesting workshop with BRE-TA staff, 19-20 October 2023.

¹⁰⁴ Outcome harvesting workshop with GoE officials, 17 October 2023.

(b) What was achieved?

Figure 16: PHEM intermediate outcome 5: main achievements



Updated/revised COVID-19 response plans: Due to COVID-19 a national IAR was conducted. This was followed by IARs in six regions. In 2021, the Ethiopian Public Health Institute (EPHI) with the Ministry of Health (MoH) **revised the national COVID-19 response plan based on the findings from the IARs** with BRE-TA support. Using the adapted tools and experience from the six regions, EPHI supported the other regions to conduct their own COVID-19 IARs. A BRE-TA supported follow-up assessment on the progress of implementing the recommendations noted that a **large part of the IAR recommendations had been implemented both at the national and regional levels**. There was also an **improved communication to the wider public** with respect to COVID-19 messaging, using simple and clearer messages. For example, updates on COVID-19 were provided daily on social media in September 2022.¹⁰⁵

There were two more achievements sparked off by the IARs: (1) improved communication between centre and regions in COVID-19 response platforms managed by the Emergency Operations Management Centre; and a (2) strategic framework for improved engagement with higher education institutions (HEIs). This is informed by study on the role of HEIs in COVID-19 response.

Improved communication between centre and regions

In 2023, EPHI cascaded a Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE) training manual, implementation guideline and tools. They were developed with BRE-TA support, including deployment of full-time Socio-Behavioural Communication (SBC) adviser, technical and logistics inputs. The result was an improved communication between the centre and the regions on emergency events, risk communication and response actions. **This was evident from an improved communication on the cholera outbreak in Afar, Amhara, Oromia, Somali, SNNP and South-West Ethiopia Regions, and from measles and dengue in Somali region.**

A case example is the report from Afar region on the role of RCCE and media engagement in cholera control including in vaccination campaigns. It stated that the “dissemination of recorded activities during the OCV [oral cholera vaccine] vaccination campaign through various media channels has significantly contributed to [...] a remarkable surge in the uptake of the Oral Cholera Vaccine (OCV), with an impressive rate exceeding 99.2% (457,000 doses) out of the 460,415 doses provided by the Ministry of Health (MOH) and Ethiopian

¹⁰⁵ BRE-TA (2022) ‘Monthly Consultant’s Performance Report, 1-30 September 2022’, drafted by the ‘BRE-TA Information and Communication Officer – Supporting Ethiopia’s COVID-19 response’, Oxford Policy Management, Oxford, United Kingdom. In the report it states, for example, the following: “Daily social media COVID-19 situation updates provided to regional and central response teams and the community at large including the number of vaccinated citizens” (p.6).

Public Health Institute (EPHI).¹⁰⁶ Moreover, “there has been a notable increase in the community's adoption of cholera prevention and control practices.”¹⁰⁷ “Community awareness on cholera [...] led to better reporting of cases early and thereby reducing deaths.”¹⁰⁸

Engagement with higher education institutions (HEIs)

Another outcome of the IARs was a subsequent case study on the **role of higher education institutions (HEIs) in COVID-19 response** (in December 2022). It identified untapped potential for improving the PHEM system in two ways: (1) through improved safeguarding of campus communities and their catchment areas; and (2) improving quality of their health training programs.

To guide related efforts, a **strategic framework for sustainable engagement of HEIs in PHEM** was prepared. It was validated by senior leaders from MoH, EPHI, MoE, RHBs, and RPHIs and universities in August 2023. In October 2023, Jimma University adapted a strategy for engagement of HEIs in PHEM and in December 2023, using the framework, a network with eight public universities located in four regions (Oromia, Gambella, Benishangul-Gumuz, South-West Ethiopia) was established with signing of MoU between the universities and respective regional health bureaus. Likewise, in December 2023, 10 public universities in the Amhara region and the regional health and education bureaus, and the regional public health institute signed an MoU to implement the framework. This represents a **significant step** from ad-hoc to **systematic engagement between the health and education sectors**. It is worth noting that universities engaging in PHEM consider GESI in their roadmaps.

(c) How did BRE-TA contribute to the achievement?

BRE-TA initiated, conducted, and supported a range of assessments, and worked towards these being validated by the relevant stakeholders. For example:

- BRE-TA supported the national COVID-19 Task Force and Public Health Emergency Operation Centre, as well as six Regional Health Bureaus (RHBs) to revise the regional COVID-19 Response Plans.
- BRE-TA with EPHI designed the tools and engaged consultants to conduct the IARs. The IARs were based on a new WHO Guideline on how to conduct IAR. BRE-TA supported the review and validation, which were then approved by EPHI. It was **a global first** to have an IAR rather than an AAR (After Action Review).
- Moreover, BRE-TA provided technical support for review and documentation of current practices and lessons in **emergency RCCE**. BRE-TA provided technical assistance and funding/logistics to draft and validate the materials, and to roll-out training for mass media and health personnel (252), community leaders and volunteers (192), and health officials from MoH and EPHI (58) on assessment of the outcome of RCCE messages. BRE-TA deployed PHEM advisers (embedded in Afar, Amhara, and Somali) who played a key role in coordination of response to cholera outbreaks. It should be added that the “Do No Harm’ Framework” (DNHF) was integrated in the manual, and the BRE-TA GESI team and women participants were actively engaged.

¹⁰⁶ BRE-TA (2023) ‘Medias Report of BRE-OPM Afar on Cholera Outbreak Response Activities, December 2023; Afar Region, Ethiopia; Organized by Afar Public Health Institute with TAs of Building Resilience in Ethiopia (BRE-OPM)’, Oxford Policy Management, Oxford, United Kingdom, p.3 and p.4.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid, p.4.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid, p.5.

(d) To what extent are the achievements likely to be sustained?

According to the sustainability strategy, there is a "[m]oderate risk [that] these recommendations are not all taken up as the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Health may need support [...] of getting Higher Educational Institutes to provide a more substantive role in PHEM."¹⁰⁹ This statement aligns with the assessment of the BRE-TA team at a workshop.¹¹⁰

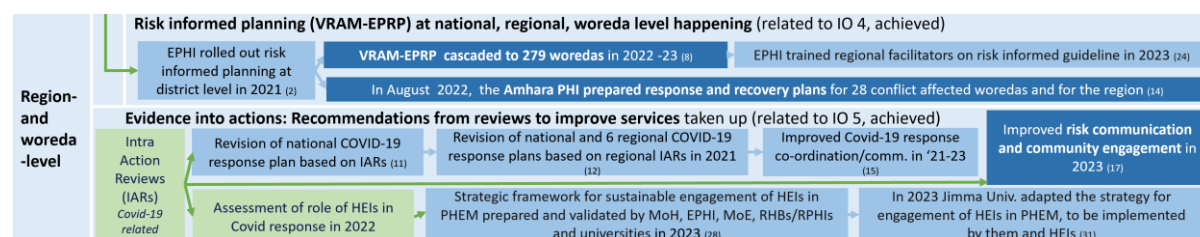
The improvements in COVID-19 response are thought to be highly sustainable with no or minimal further funding required as the lessons and experiences have led to development of standard guidelines and tools and established a RCCE/SBCC Technical Working Group with clear guidelines on the roles and responsibilities of stakeholders.

In contrast, low sustainability is expected for the improvements in RCCE. This largely is due to underlying factors related to cultural practices, access to essential services (notably water and sanitation), and the fact that behavioural change lags behind acquired knowledge. However, with other partners, EPHI and MoH should be able to mobilize the resources (expertise and funding) for consolidating gains from the progress made thus far.

E.4.3 Improvements in risk informed planning and COVID-19 response hold promise for the future (building block 2).

The long term workstream outcome for this building block in the PHEM ToC is 'effective, timely woreda-level preparedness and response to health and nutrition emergencies'. In particular, the RTAs and VRAM-EPRP facilitators helped regions and vulnerable woredas prepare for health emergencies through VRAM-EPRPs (to date, 279) and by building capacity to respond to a range of challenges. The major concern in 2023 was cholera. An overview is shown in the figure below.

Figure 17: PHEM's region- and woreda-level building block: achievements hold promise for the future



Achievements such as the development of VRAM/EPRPs in many vulnerable woredas, as well as improved risk communication and community engagement contribute to improvements with respect to woreda level preparedness to emergencies.

¹⁰⁹ Oxford Policy Management (2023) 'BRE-TA Sustainability Strategy', Oxford, United Kingdom, p.39.

¹¹⁰ Outcome harvesting workshop with BRE-TA staff, 19-20 October 2023.

E.5 Building block ‘Financing PHEM’: progress toward intermediate and workstream outcomes

E.5.1 A national health and nutrition emergency financing strategy is an important step towards future funding (intermediate outcome 6)

(a) What was the problem?

Any PHEM system requires financing. In October 2019, BRE-TA conducted an assessment on financing of health emergencies, undertaken in response to a request from EPHI. The findings indicated that there was no pre-allocated/dedicated emergency preparedness budget. However, resources are mobilized in response to a crisis through various channels. Thus, it recommended an in-depth analysis and consideration of a preparedness budget.

Accordingly, EPHI underscored a need for a strategy for financing health and nutrition emergencies encompassing preparedness, response, and recovery. FCDO recommended an Operational Research (OR) study to generate additional evidence to complement the findings from the assessment. One of the objectives of the OR was to inform the financing strategy. In the meantime, in conjunction with the work of the DRF workstream, the MoF decided to develop a Disaster Risk Finance Strategy (DRFS) encompassing all hazards and emergencies. Health and nutrition emergency financing is included in the DRFS with findings from the OR feeding into it.

(b) What was achieved?

This IO is achieved with finalisation of the DRFS which refers to health and nutrition emergencies. In drawing the OR to a close, a Policy Brief for government was finalised in 2023.

The findings and recommendations from the BRE-TA supported OR on financing of health and nutrition emergencies are openly accepted and validated by GoE. A follow-up Policy Brief was prepared. The main analytical studies were shared with counterparts in MoF and MoH and helped inform preparation of the DRFS (and the Steering Committee led by MoF included members from MoH, EPHI, MoA, EDRMC and MoF).

Overall, while there is progress in developing a comprehensive DRFS, progress is slow while health emergencies, including disease outbreaks and malnutrition, persist, often affecting increasing geographic areas and numbers of people (mainly due to lack of preparedness). In view of this, and the urgency for not only resources for response, but also for recovery and preparedness, there is a need to ensure that the DRFS addresses the specific needs of health and nutrition emergency preparedness, response, and recovery financing.

(c) How did BRE-TA contribute to the achievement?

BRE-TA mainly contributed through the OR. For example, by the end of Q1 2023, BRE-TA’s OR team was working directly with the DRFS technical team to incorporate the findings from the PHEM financing study in the draft DRFS. By the end of June 2023, the OR team finalised the Policy Brief, which was shared with government at the end of July.

The role of the BRE-TA PHEM team was limited with respect to the DRFS process. The MOF asked the BRE-TA PHEM team who should be members of the DRFS writing team and BRE-TA suggested MoH and EPHI, who are now members of the Task Team.

(d) To what extent are the achievements likely to be sustained?

According to the sustainability strategy, there is a “[h]igh sustainability risk as there is still a need to ensure the uptake of recommendations on financing PHEM and nutrition emergencies in 2023. The preparation of an overarching national PHEM financing strategy is going to be pursued as a component of the broader disaster risk financing strategy (DRFS) under the DRF workstream.”¹¹¹

E.5.2 Preparing a financing strategy provides the foundation for sufficient funding: progress toward the building block’s workstream outcome

In relation to how these activities contribute towards the PHEM workstream’s higher-level outcome for the third building block financing PHEM – ‘Predictable, adequate, timely, well-coordinated resources available for emergency health and nutrition response’ – the importance of this ambition following COVID-19 and destruction of health facilities during the conflict in the north is likely greater now than it was at the beginning of BRE-TA. The case for being better prepared financially is also stronger.

E.6 What mechanisms underpin the achievement of outcomes under this workstream?

The theory of change outlines key mechanisms that underpin the achievement of outcomes, but not all are highlighted. Staff quality, unmentioned in the theory, is crucial. Recruiting individuals with (i) credibility among GoE officials, (ii) high technical expertise, and (iii) intrinsic motivation was paramount. Credibility secures government access, technical expertise is pivotal for government actors, and intrinsic motivation sustains effort in challenging conditions – a factor frequently emphasized.¹¹²

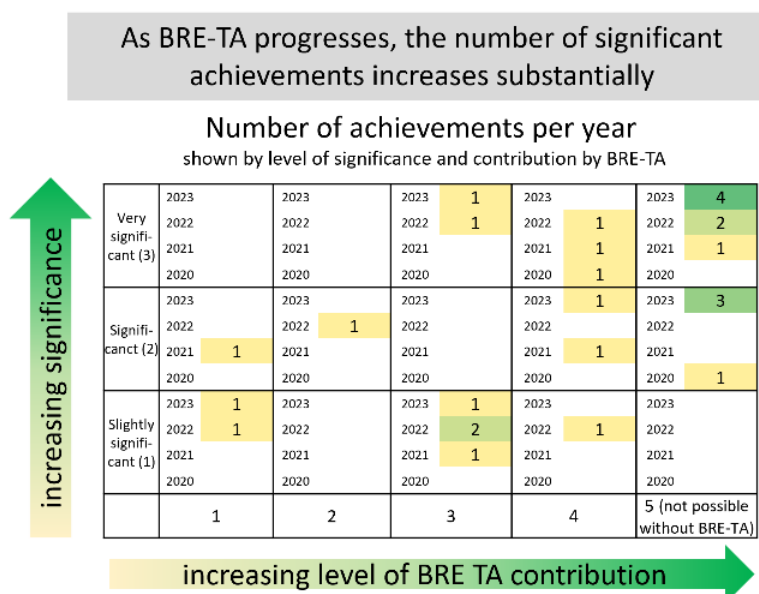
Beyond the quality of staff, process-related aspects are crucial, per the ToC. Inclusivity, emphasized in the ToC’s common understanding building, is vital during the design stage for relevance and utilization. The program must align with government priorities. Relationships, knowledge, and practical experience grow over time, as shown in the expanding triangles in the ToC. Initial knowledge and experience inform early designs, but true effectiveness emerges over time, leading to scalable and cost-efficient processes. For example, cascading EPRPs to the 200th woreda will be different from cascading them to the first ten woredas.

¹¹¹ Oxford Policy Management (2023) ‘BRE-TA Sustainability Strategy’, Oxford, United Kingdom, p.39.

¹¹² The importance of intrinsic motivation is frequently emphasized by practitioners in the international development field. However, the point applies beyond the field of development, and the literature also reflects this. For example, a simple online search brings up titles such as ‘The power of intrinsic motivation’, S. Falk, Harvard Business Review, March 2023 (<https://hbr.org/2023/03/understand-the-power-of-intrinsic-motivation>, accessed 19 December 2023) or ScienceDirect’s ‘Intrinsic Motivation’ page (<https://www.sciencedirect.com/topics/social-sciences/intrinsic-motivation>, accessed 19 December 2023).

Figure 18: Number of PHEM achievements per year, by significance and contribution

Project efficiency and effectiveness increase over time, evident in 2023's results surpassing those of 2020-2022 in terms of significance and greater BRE-TA contributions (see figure alongside). The program's trajectory suggests heightened efficiency, scalability, and cost-effectiveness over time, meeting growing demand as GoE officials sought more TA, specifically from BRE-TA. Hence, the longer the project runs, the more results it can achieve at a lower cost.



Simultaneous activities, building momentum, creating synergies are essential. Success in one intervention bolsters others, enhancing credibility and overall impact. The interplay of activities establishes the program's significant role in achieving desired results.

E.7 Lessons and recommendations

The key lesson from the PHEM workstream is that facilitating collaboration and addressing diverse needs takes time, often conflicting with the pressure for swift delivery. Insistence on outputs (as opposed to markers of progress) compromises the crucial process of establishing a common understanding, risking the production of irrelevant and disregarded outputs. Notably, on separate occasions, Jeffrey Sachs and a BRE-TA team member highlighted the typical two-year timeframe required for meaningful discussions with stakeholders.¹¹³ This aligns with the internal donor approval process, which took a year at the project's outset.

Recommendations for future programmes include:

- **Acknowledge that it is essential to take the time to build shared understanding and commitment.** This process, with its own objectives and milestones, can involve commitments like Memoranda of Understanding, inter-agency letters, or leading a technical working group. Emphasizing that this process is indispensable ensures relevant and impactful outputs.
- Additionally, **future programmes should align closely with government priorities**, enhancing the likelihood of adoption and implementation.

¹¹³ Jeffrey Sachs made this statement at a panel discussion at a university in London some years back in the context of talking about why his programme with the Millenium Villages was set up for ten years (based on OPM staffer's recall, direct source not found). A similar statement was made by a BRE-TA team member in an internal OPM webinar on BRE-TA, also stating that the set-up had taken two years.

Annex F: Workstream-specific progress: SRSN

F.1 What was the vision?

The vision for the Shock Responsive Safety Net (SRSN) workstream is **‘a single, government-led shock responsive safety net’**.

To this end, BRE-TA provided an array of technical support to the Food Security and Coordination Office (FSCO) in the Government of Ethiopia’s (GoE’s) Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) to establish the SRSN component of the Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP) at federal, regional, and sub-regional levels. The efforts were divided across three broad areas or ‘building blocks’:

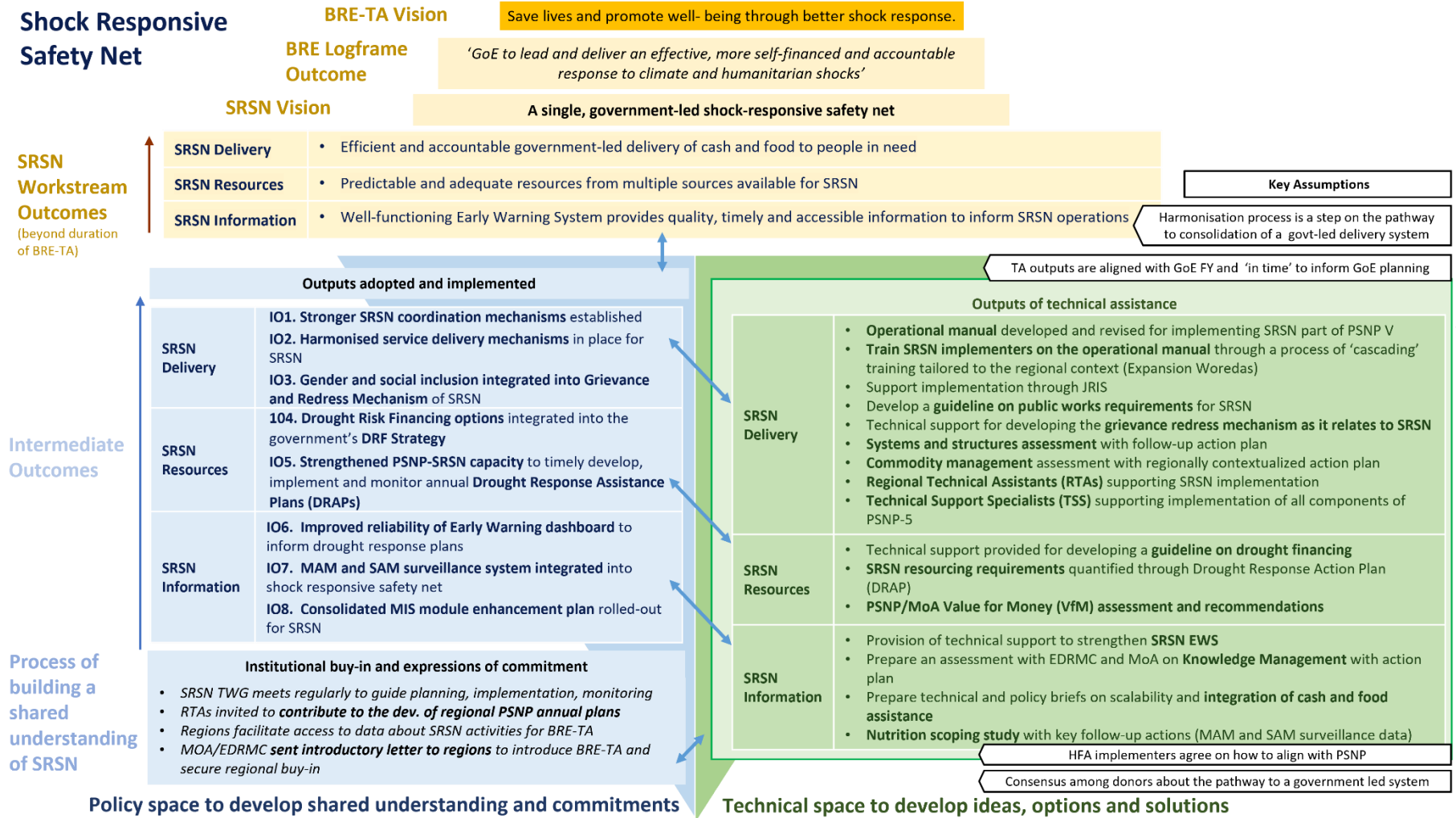
- **Strengthening SRSN delivery** systems and procedures;
- Ensuring predictable and adequate **resources for SRSN**; and
- Strengthening information systems such that **timely information informs SRSN operations**.

These building blocks are reflected in the SRSN ToC (shown in the figure that follows), which is based on the project level ToC (see section 2.6 in the main narrative of this report). It follows the same four steps, but where the project ToC is generic, the ToC for SRSN provides workstream-specific information.

- The starting point in both cases is the same: **to build a common understanding with relevant stakeholders in government to work towards expressions of commitment**. In the SRSN workstream, such commitment was shown with, for example, SRSN Regional Technical Advisors (RTAs) being invited to contribute to the development of regional PSNP plans.
- The expressions of commitments provide the ‘mandate’ for **generating the desired outputs** in close collaboration with government.
- The **outputs only matter if they get adopted and implemented** (assuming demand, capacity, and other favourable factors). For example, the SRSN workstream supported GoE with the development of an operational manual for the SRSN part of PSNP 5 (an output), which, if implemented, forms part of stronger SRSN coordination mechanisms (an intermediate outcome).
- The **workstream outcomes**, which fall beyond the life of the project, are shown to provide the ‘direction of travel’. For example, the implementation of the operating manual mentioned above is a critical step towards an efficient and accountable government-led delivery of food and cash to people in need, a longer term workstream outcome.

Thus, each level of the ToC feeds into the next, all geared towards the workstream vision of a single, ‘whole of government’ SRSN, which ultimately contributes to the more effective shock response reflected in the logframe outcome and BRE-TA’s project-level vision.

Figure 19: ToC for the SRSN workstream



To achieve its objectives, **the SRSN workstream worked closely with the other BRE-TA workstreams on specific activities**. These included:

1. working with the DRM workstream to:
 - a. support regional governments to strengthen their DRM planning capacity at woreda-level by providing Disaster Risk-Informed Planning training in Amhara, Oromia, SNNP and Somali regions; and
 - b. liaise with the EDRMC to generate the data for the annual and quarterly Drought Response Assistance Plans (DRAP).

2. working with the DRF workstream on:
 - a. the Disaster Risk Financing Strategy (DRFS) and its alignment with the new DRM Policy and Legal Framework; and
 - b. conducting a Value for Money (VfM) Assessment of the Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP).

3. working with the PHEM workstream on a Nutrition Scoping study (led by PHEM with SRSN support) and a Nutrition and Social Protection Assessment (led by the SRSN workstream with PHEM and DRM support), which provided recommendations on enhancing the PSNP's contribution to managing malnutrition in the country.

F.2 What was the overall achievement?

F.2.1 Summary of achievements

The table that follows provides a summary of the **extent of achievement towards each intermediate outcome (IO)** per workstream building block. It covers the period from the project's inception in March 2019 to the end of activities in December 2023. The columns of the table serve as a summary of the IO-level stories recounted in the sub-sections to follow.

Table 9: Progress towards workstream intermediate outcomes, per the SRSN ToC

Intermediate outcome (IO)	Extent of achievement	Status as of 31 December 2023
IO1. Stronger SRSN coordination mechanisms established	Achieved	<p>FSCO and EDRMC established SRSN sub-technical committees (STCs) at federal (January 2021) and regional (May 2023) levels¹ that meet monthly to coordinate SRSN planning and delivery. SRSN STC members have been trained on SRSN operational guidelines and roles and responsibilities of involved organisations.</p> <p>SRSN service delivery capacity enhanced through the provision of training on SRSN design, operating principles and implementation procedures to government food security and DRM experts at federal, regional, zonal and woreda levels, in all 485 PSNP woredas including 77 PSNP expansion woredas.</p> <p>SRSN operational guidelines and job aids produced in four regional languages (Amharic, Oromifa, Somali and Tigrigna, in addition to English) and distributed to implementing staff and agencies at all levels. SRSN PWs Guidelines agreed by federal-level stakeholders and guidelines produced.</p>
IO2. Harmonised service delivery mechanisms in place for SRSN	Achieved	<p>As of January 2023, a single operator principle has been agreed by all SRSN actors (FSCO, EDRMC, the Joint Emergency Operation Program (JEOP), WFP) to be implemented in both PSNP and non-PSNP areas. SRSN implementing staff and agencies now use consistent implementation model (described in the SRSN guidelines; see IO1 above) and single resource allocation instrument (i.e., the DRAP; see IO5 below), including single SRSN GRM (see IO3 below).</p>
IO3. Gender and social inclusion integrated into Grievance and Redress Mechanism of SRSN	Achieved	<p>A Gender and Social Development (GSD) assessment of the PSNP GRM has been conducted to inform the design of the SRSN GRM and ensure gender and social inclusion issues are integrated.</p>
IO4. Drought Risk Financing options integrated into the government's DRF Strategy	Achieved	<p>A DRF Strategy (DRFS) with more and diversified disaster risk financing instruments is now in place (owned by MoF). Discussions are ongoing within the SRSN STC to agree whether there is any need for a PSNP drought-specific financing strategy, given that drought is one of the major disasters captured by the DRFS.</p>
IO5. Strengthened capacity to develop, implement and monitor annual Drought Response Assistance	Achieved	<p>The DRAP is a comprehensive resource allocation tool that is used by the Prioritisation Committee to coordinate SRSN delivery in PSNP woredas across both PSNP and HFA actors. It is generated annually then updated on a quarterly basis to provide advanced estimates of the food insecure population at woreda-level each quarter. It has been instantiated since October 2022.</p>

Intermediate outcome (IO)	Extent of achievement	Status as of 31 December 2023
Plans (DRAPs) in timely manner		
IO6. Improved reliability of Early Warning dashboard to inform drought response plans	Achieved	The EDRMC, in collaboration with FSCO and WFP, completed the enhancement of the SRSN dashboard in July 2023 by incorporating new requirements from government and development partners.
IO7. MAM and SAM surveillance system integrated into shock responsive safety net	Achieved	In September 2022 EPHI integrated the recommendations from the SRSN Nutrition Assessment study into the national nutrition action plan.
IO8. Consolidated MIS module enhancement plan rolled-out for SRSN	Achieved	BRE-TA has supported the development of the PSNP MIS SRSN module which is now in its final approval stage.

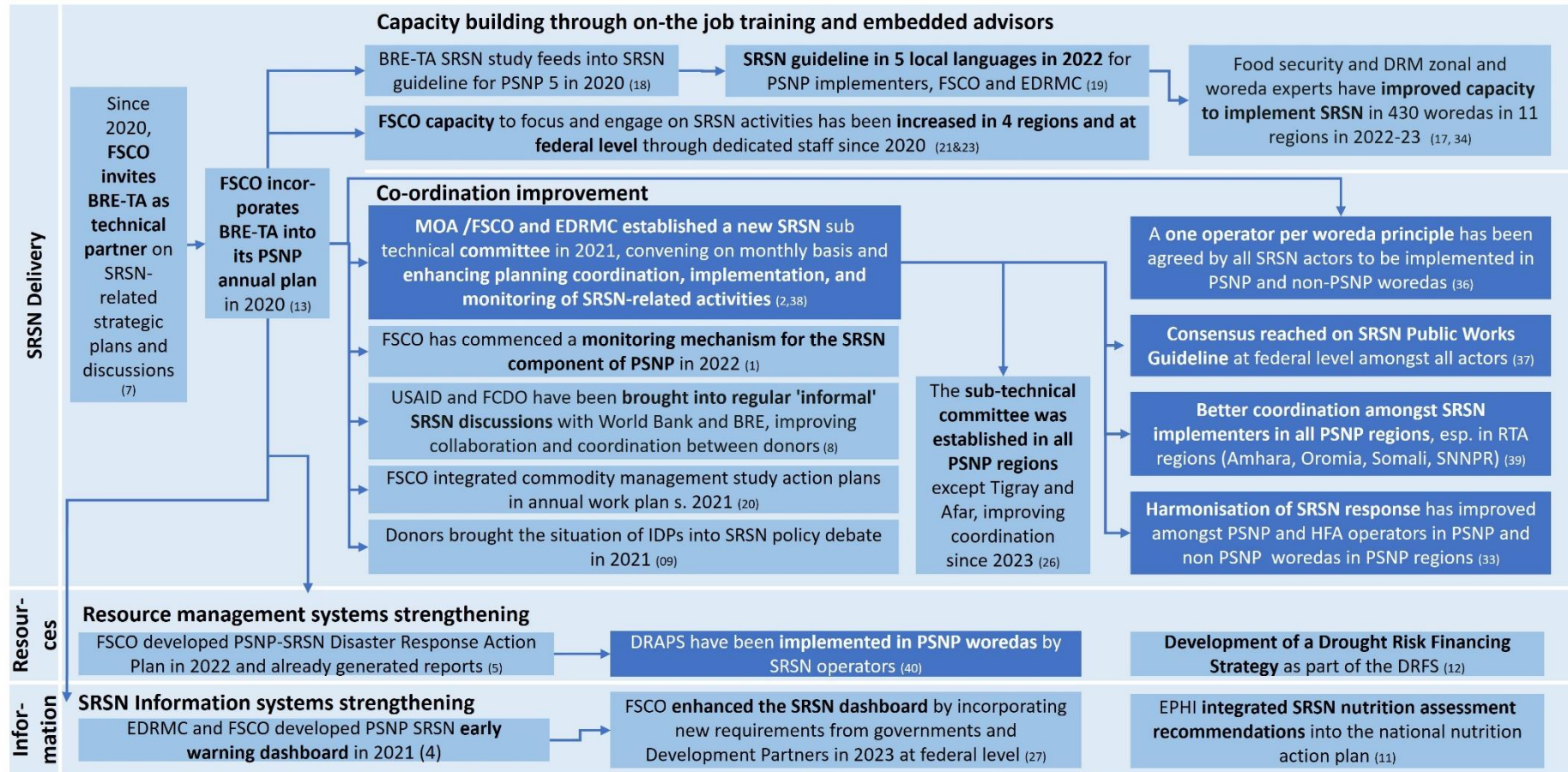
The progress highlighted above was informed by the October 2023 outcome harvesting workshop with BRE-TA staff held in Ethiopia (see progression of outcome map in the sections to follow). The findings were further confirmed through and/or supported by the outcome harvesting workshop held with GoE officials (also in October 2023), key informant interviews (KIIs) with donors, government officials, and BRE-TA staff, and/or supported by other evidence.

F.2.2 Building an outcome map for SRSN

To present the results, it is helpful to have a **visual overview or ‘map’ that shows how they build on each other progressively**. The figure overleaf provides such a map.

In contrast to the ToC, which is *theoretical* and *prospective* in nature, these outcome maps are based on what *actually* happened. As such, they are *retrospective*, showing a more or less sequential chain of events with key outputs and outcomes. They are presented in alignment with the workstream ToC.

Figure 20: SRSN intermediate outcome map



Abbreviations:
 DRAP: Drought Response Assistance Plans
 DRFS: Disaster Risk Financing Strategy
 DRM: Disaster Risk Management

EDRMC: Ethiopian Disaster Risk Management Commission
 FSCO: Food Security Coordination Office
 HFA: Humanitarian Food Assistance
 IDP: Internally Displaced Person

PSNP: Productive Safety Net Programme
 RTA: Regional Technical Assistant
 SRSN: Shock Responsive Safety Net
 Numbers in brackets: outcome database identifiers

Colour coding: Intermediate outcomes (light blue), Main achievements (dark blue)

The starting point for all intermediate outcomes was the acceptance of BRE-TA as a trusted partner by FSCO. Building this trust took some time (see section F.4 below). However, once the FSCO had comprehended the aid modality being offered by the BRE-TA project and after they started to perceive the BRE-TA SRSN team as a one that owned both technical competence and professional integrity and that was not peddling an external agenda, they began to consult the SRSN team earnestly and request technical support on SRSN-related activities.

This relationship was formally cemented in January 2020 when the FSCO incorporated BRE-TA's SRSN activities into its annual plan. From this point forward, the BRE-TA SRSN workstream was formally mandated by the FSCO to support its SRSN agenda around several different activity areas, viz:

1. capacity building and support to SRSN implementing agents at all levels;
2. support to the policy coordination process;
3. resource management systems strengthening; and
4. information management systems strengthening.

In relation to the SRSN ToC, the first two of these activity areas address the SRSN Delivery building block, while the last two address the SRSN Resources and SRSN Information building blocks, respectively. The SRSN outcome map presents the intermediate outcomes achieved under these activity areas in alignment with the ToC building blocks.

The next crucial development instigated by the BRE-TA SRSN team was the establishment of a SRSN Technical Working Group (TWG) in July 2020. The SRSN TWG was hosted by FSCO and created a critical forum wherein all key government SRSN actors could discuss and agree plans and activities. The SRSN TWG thus became the key platform for enhancing coordinated planning, implementation, and monitoring of SRSN activities by government, and was the site at which all subsequent forms of BRE-TA support were sanctioned, including via a joint plan with the World Bank and Donor Coordination Team (DCT) to serve as a framework for implementation and coordination. The SRSN TWG convened quarterly, and its members comprised FSCO, EDRMC and Commodity Management Coordination Office (CMCO).

The following sections describe in greater detail the key intermediate outcomes per building block and explain the inputs BRE-TA provided to facilitate their achievement.

F.3 SRSN delivery: progress toward intermediate and workstream outcomes

F.3.1 Progress toward intermediate outcomes

Unlike the other three BRE-TA workstreams, **the main challenge the BRE-TA SRSN workstream was designed to help mitigate was not primarily a policy gap, but an operational one.** The policy to harmonise and consolidate the PSNP and Humanitarian Food Aid (HFA) systems into a single, government-led SRSN was clearly spelled out in the PSNP 5 design document and Project Appraisal Document (PAD). The challenge was to operationalise this vision, starting from scratch and in a context of fractured stakeholder relations and significant resource and capacity constraints – constraints, as it turned out, that would be severely exacerbated by a string of powerful negative external events: COVID-19; the conflict with Tigray; a global cost-of-living crisis; and, in the latter part of the BRE-TA project, a massive aid diversion scandal.

At the start of the BRE-TA project, relationships between key SRSN stakeholders were complicated by both prevailing and historical institutional tensions between two of the key government agencies involved – the FSCO, which leads on PSNP, and the EDRMC, which leads on EWS and coordinating HFA. Moreover, **there was no substantial prior history of coordination between government, development partners and humanitarian actors**, although both HFA and PSNP had been in operation for decades. This meant the situation into which BRE-TA intervened was characterised by two separate but long-established cultures, each with their own institutional territories, operational processes and ways of working, and, moreover, each underpinned by a set of policy objectives and principles that, while in some senses complimentary and overlapping, are in no sense identical – PSNP is essentially a social assistance programme, providing routine social assistance under a development agenda to support to poor and food-insecure households; while HFA is an humanitarian intervention, providing ostensibly life-saving aid to prevent famine. However, the protracted nature of food insecurity in Ethiopia, coupled with high levels of sustained poverty and vulnerability, mean that the lines dividing humanitarian from development policy objectives are often blurred in practice, hence the need for a more coherent and shock-responsive safety-net or social assistance mechanism.

In this context, the task to build a harmonised and consolidated SRSN system required the generation and establishment of both formal coordination mechanisms at multiple levels, as well as a large capacity-building endeavour to raise technical competencies among agents at all levels involved in implementing the SRSN. To do that, the first task was to build a shared understanding of the nature of the task ahead and the key challenges and gaps to be tackled. To this end, BRE-TA responded by aiding government to articulate its demand via the commissioning of a series of research activities to understand various key dimensions of the SRSN context and landscape. These research activities included:

- an assessment of the existing systems and structures of PSNP and HFA;
- an assessment of current practices and constraints of PSNP and HFA targeting;
- an assessment of the current practices and constraints of the federal contingency budget for humanitarian response;
- a study to identify constraints and challenges in commodity management;
- a study on strengthening social protection through knowledge management; and
- a study to understand and improve the relationship between nutrition and scalable safety nets in the country.

The findings of some of these early assessments were brought together in a short policy brief¹¹⁴ for high-level decision makers, while at the same time a lengthy consultation process was undertaken involving all key stakeholders on both government and non-government sides to build understanding about the nature and design of the proposed SRSN to be established in Ethiopia. This work culminated in a SRSN workshop (and accompanying report¹¹⁵) held at the federal level in August 2021. The purpose of the workshop was to familiarize key stakeholders with the concepts and principles of the SRSN and gain agreement and buy-in vis-à-vis the key tasks and challenges associated with building an SRSN in Ethiopia. **After this workshop, the degree to which all actors were aligned and**

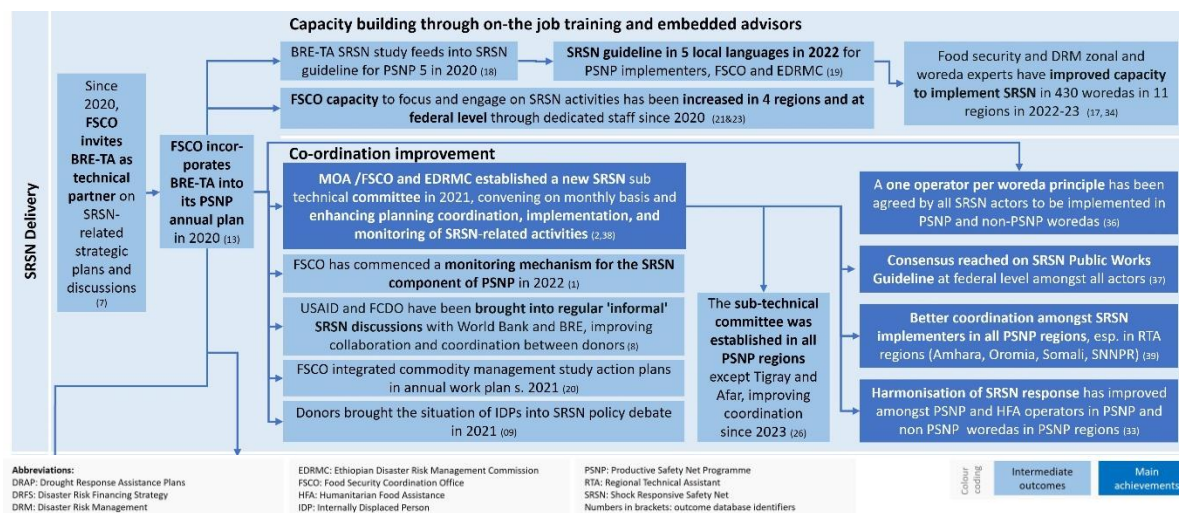
¹¹⁴ BRE-TA (2021) 'Policy brief on systems and structures, contingency budget, and targeting of PSNP and HFA under the shock responsive safety net system in Ethiopia', Oxford Policy Management, Oxford, United Kingdom.

¹¹⁵ BRE-TA (2021) 'Shock Responsive Safety Net (SRNS): Stakeholder Consultation Paper', Oxford Policy Management, Oxford, United Kingdom.

coordinated around shared goals and agendas was significantly heightened, and ultimately led to the generation of the SRSN Guideline.

Following the SRSN workshop, BRE-TA SRSN workstream activities turned in earnest to the operational tasks of improving coordination, building capacity of implementing agents, and supporting government to strengthen its systems relating to SRSN resource management and information management.¹¹⁶

Figure 21: SRSN building block ‘SRSN Delivery’: main achievements



F.3.1.1 Stronger coordination mechanisms (SRSN IO1)

The first formal coordination mechanism established was the SRSN TWG described above in section F.2. This forum was where government commenced the process of instituting coordinated planning, implementation, and monitoring of SRSN activities in receipt of either direct or indirect BRE-TA support. However, the next requirement was to institute a sustainable formal coordination mechanism that brought together both key government agencies alongside humanitarian and development partner organisations. **BRE-TA SRSN workstream thus supported the establishment of the SRSN Sub-Technical Committee (STC) which now has the mandate to coordinate SRSN implementation.** The SRSN STC comprised MoA, FSCO, EDRMC, MoF and the DCT as its members.¹¹⁷ **The SRSN STC has met monthly since its establishment in January 2021 and is the primary mechanism by which SRSN implementation is coordinated. The federal-level technical**

¹¹⁶ Subsequently, a number of additional research activities were commissioned by GoE through BRE-TA SRSN workstream, but these were in service of particular service delivery areas (such as GRM) or wider dimensions relevant to the establishment of an SRSN (such as Disaster Risk Financing; see sections F.3.1.3 and F.3.1.4 below).

¹¹⁷ According to the SRSN STC ToR, members shall be drawn from relevant government ministries and institutions (including MoA - Food Security Coordination Directorate; National Disaster Risk Management Commission - Early Warning Response Directorate; National Disaster Risk Management Commission - IT Directorate; Disaster Risk Reduction Directorate; Ethiopia Space Science and Technology Institute; National Meteorological Agency; Central Statistical Agency; Commodity Management Coordination Office; Ministry of Finance - Channel 1 Directorate and Fiscal Policy Directorate), development and humanitarian partners (including donors drawn from the PSNP Donor Working Group, UN OCHA, and (I)NGO representatives).

advisor, supplied by BRE-TA SRSN workstream and embedded in FSCO, was instrumental in the setting up and regular operation of the SRSN STC.¹¹⁸

In a second stage, SRSN STCs were required to be established in all regions to coordinate SRSN delivery at regional and sub-regional levels. Membership at the regional level comprises Bureau of Agriculture (BoA), Bureau of Finance (BoF), Disaster Risk Management Bureau (DRMB), CMCO, JEOPs and WFP and, as at the federal level, the regional SRSN STCs meet monthly. Again, regional technical advisors (supported by the federal technical advisor) supplied by BRE-TA SRSN workstream were instrumental in the process of setting up and running the regional SRSN STCs. **The first regional SRSN STC was established in January 2022, and since May 2023 they had been running in all regions** except Tigray and Afar where conflict conditions prevented their establishment.

The result of establishing SRSN STCs at federal and regional levels is **stronger and better coordination and planning in all PSNP regions**, especially those benefitting from embedded regional technical advisors who can help facilitate the running of the SRSN STCs.¹¹⁹ This improved coordination supports more effective and efficient delivery of the SRSN, together with the enhanced implementation capacity resulting from the increased harmonisation of processes and capacity development supported by BRE-TA under IO2 (see section F.3.1.2 below).

The SRSN STCs are sustainable in as far as they are now established formal mechanisms where all key government and non-government SRSN actors and stakeholders convene to coordinate planning and implementation of the SRSN. Nevertheless, they would benefit substantially from a period of continued embedded technical assistance support given they are still new and the government agencies comprising their membership often lack capacity in terms of both manpower and technical expertise. Continuing embedded support at both federal and regional levels until the end of PSNP 5, including expanding the regional advisors to all regions, would aid these new institutions establish themselves and tackle ongoing system upgrades in key areas (see IOs 2, 3, 6 and 8 below).

A host of other important outcomes stem from the establishment of these formal coordination mechanisms, especially the SRSN TWG, from which several crucial initiatives have been launched and brought to various stages of fruition with BRE-TA support. These include:

- FSCO committed to develop a SRSN Public Works (PW) guideline, upon which consensus has now been reached among all actors at federal level, including government and donors/development partners. The guidelines have been prepared and finalised, so what remains to be done beyond the end of BRE-TA is to roll-out the guidelines to regional and sub-regional levels. The SRSN PW guidelines are crucial because they establish a framework in which PSNP and HFA SRSN beneficiaries are treated equitably.¹²⁰

¹¹⁸ With support from the BRE-TA SRSN workstream lead and Social Protection advisors, the FTA coordinated the establishment of the SRSN STC, developed its ToRs, provided training for its members, and organised and chaired SRSN STC sessions.

¹¹⁹ Amhara, Oromia, Somali, and SNNPR regions.

¹²⁰ Previously, PSNP SRSN beneficiaries were subject to conditionalities requiring them to contribute their labour to receive SRSN benefits, whereas HFA beneficiaries were not. The SRSN PWs guideline was developed to standardize the implementation of PWs during shocks across regions, as well as to clearly indicate the conditions for applying a waiver.

- The FSCO commenced a monitoring mechanism for the SRSN component of PSNP in April 2022 with the purpose of identifying and addressing service delivery challenges as they occur.
- FSCO integrated the recommendations and action plans from the study to identify constraints and challenges in commodity management (see above) into its annual plan.
- The situation of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and how these will be treated by PSNP and the SRSN was brought into the policy debate.
- The World Bank and other donors and development partners recognised the need to change their approach to the SRSN consolidation agenda. Subsequently, the GoE agreed to implement a two-stage approach to this agenda, with phase one focussing on harmonisation of systems and processes and stage two to be focussed on relevant institutional and organisational consolidation.¹²¹
- A 'single operator' principle was agreed between government and non-government SRSN implementing agencies within the Prioritisation Committee, by which one operator per woreda will be implemented in all PSNP and non-PSNP woredas from November 2022. This principle is crucial to avoid duplication and gaps in the coverage of the SRSN.

The BRE-TA SRSN workstream was essential in many of these developments and played a central role in helping to facilitate all of them. By providing a multitude of different forms of support, including research, embedded TA, trainings, and dialogue facilitation services, BRE-TA was able to support government to articulate and answer its demands in a flexible and responsive way. In turn, this enabled all actors to respond to evolving opportunities and constraints in a coherent and coordinated manner.¹²²

To play this role and identify and help articulate all the different government demands related to constructing and implementing the SRSN, BRE-TA, via the embedded federal TA and SRSN workstream lead, regularly participated in a number of different formal coordination forums. These included:

- the prioritisation committee (which allocates SRSN resources);
- the Linkage to Available Social Services (LASS) Technical Committee;
- the Public Works (PWs) Technical Committee;
- the Program Monitoring and Learning Technical Committee;
- the Communications and Visibility Sub-Technical Committee;
- the Climate Smart Mainstreaming-PSNP Steering Committee;
- the Transfers Technical Committee;
- the Capacity Development and Human Resource Management Sub-Technical Committee;
- the Joint Review and Implementation Support (JRIS); and
- other ad hoc technical committees, STCs, and TWGs.

Testimony from the Head of FSCO confirms that **the key achievements and outcomes in terms of strengthening SRSN coordination mechanisms are sustainable** as the SRSN

¹²¹ MoF letter written 16 October 2020, ref. no. I.F.R.E 4/2/277, signed by the Minister and addressed to the World Bank who manages the programme.

¹²² Outcome harvesting workshops with government counterparts and BRE-TA staff held on 17 October 2023 and 19-20 October 2023, respectively.

STCs at federal and regional levels constitute a permanent formal mechanism that now forms a crucial cog in the machinery of how the GoE approaches the delivery of the SRSN. Moreover, while the SRN TWG may dissolve on completion of the BRE-TA project (this is not certain but is possible given the SRSN TWG was originally set up to coordinate BRE-TA with government actors), that forum is ultimately just an intermediate step in changing the government's conception of the SRSN and how to develop and implement it. **Today**, according to the head of the FSCO, **the government's stance is characterised by a much more holistic and cross-sectoral approach compared to when BRE-TA commenced in 2019**. There is a strong recognition within government of the need to collaborate across ministries, departments, and agencies (MDAs) in the delivery of the SRSN¹²³, and the formal mechanisms are now in place to do that.

F.3.1.2 Harmonised SRSN service delivery mechanisms (SRSN IO2)

To support the harmonisation of SRSN service delivery, **BRE-TA SRSN workstream played a significant role in providing capacity building support to SRSN implementing actors at all levels from federal to sub-regional**. Here, BRE-TA support took the form of trainings and materials development – e.g., operational manuals and implementation guides – as well as research that has fed into the revision and development of such materials. In addition, BRE-TA provided further technical capacity at both federal and regional levels in the form of embedded technical advisors and, for a select period, paying to sustain the presence of thirteen previously existing Technical Support Specialists (TSS). This support has directly increased government's capacity at federal and regional levels to focus on and deliver SRSN (and PSNP) services.

The major activities in the capacity-building endeavour took two forms: (1) development of SRSN implementation manuals and guidelines; and (2) training of SRSN implementing staff at federal, regional and sub-regional levels. SRSN implementation manuals and guides developed include the:

- SRSN Operational manual;
- SRSN implementation Job-Aid (in four local languages¹²⁴ plus English); and
- SRSN PWs guidelines.

These materials were produced and disseminated to relevant staff at all levels, and then formed the basis of a comprehensive set of trainings on the concepts, principles and operational processes involved in the SRSN, including all parts of the service delivery chain such as targeting, payments, case management and monitoring. The trainings comprised of:

- training of trainers for senior food security and DRM experts at federal and regional levels;
- cascading training to food security and DRM staff at regional, zonal and woreda levels in eight regions; and
- training to regional SRSN STC members.

¹²³ Discussion with key informants from FSCO and regional government teams from Amhara, Oromia, SNNPR and Somali Region at the outcome harvesting workshop with government held on 17 October 2023.

¹²⁴ Amharic, Oromifa, Somali, and Tigrigna.

As a result of these trainings and materials, implementing staff at all levels gained the knowledge and understanding necessary to improve delivery of the SRSN and ensure consistent, harmonised service delivery across regions and woredas.

This capacity is sustainable to the extent that staff turnover is managed within relevant government agencies and the SRSN design remains unchanged. Periodic booster trainings and operational manual updates will be required after the PSNP mid-term review is finalised and if SRSN design or implementation processes change, but budget for such capacity maintenance is normally provided as part of the PSNP development support supplied to the PSNP by the World Bank.¹²⁵

F.3.1.3 Gender and social inclusion integrated into SRSN GRM (SRSN IO3)

A functioning grievance redress mechanism (GRM) is vital for the inclusive operation of the PSNP and the SRSN. To resolve issues and grievances stemming from targeting or any other aspect of programme delivery, beneficiaries and the general population require a system to register complaints or queries and seek resolution. The PSNP has a GRM, but this was not adapted for the SRSN and whether it was adequate to cope with gender and social inclusion issues was a question that needed to be answered. **BRE-TA thus conducted a rapid Gender and Social Development (GSD) assessment of the PSNP GRM to inform the design of an updated SRSN GRM.** As of the end of 2023, the GSD GRM assessment was being discussed by stakeholders.

Once the GSD GRM assessment is finalised and ratified, the SRSN GRM will need to be revised. Once this has been achieved, there will be a need to update the SRSN operations manual and develop specific guidance on implementing the SRSN GRM for relevant staff at all levels. Training for these staff will then need to be provided. **BRE-TA saw the GSD GRM assessment through to conclusion, but the project will not be around to support the revision of the SRSN GRM or updating of manuals and training.** Embedded advisors at federal and regional levels could support these processes, if support could be continued.

Figure 22: SRSN building block ‘SRSN Resources’: main achievements



F.3.1.4 Drought Risk Financing options integrated into the government’s DRF Strategy (SRSN IO4)

One of the key outcomes of the BRE-TA DRF workstream is the development of a Disaster Risk Financing Strategy (DRFS). As the SRSN is one of the major disaster response mechanisms in the country, in particular relating to response to drought, **the BRE-TA SRSN workstream has been heavily involved at all stages**, including commissioning a study focussed on Quantifying Annual GoE Commitments for Shock-Responsive Safety Nets to inform the stakeholder wide consultations as part of the preparation of the DRFS. The BRE-TA SRSN workstream federal advisor, SRSN workstream lead, and Social

¹²⁵ The capacity building budget was severely diminished under PSNP 5 as resources had to be reprioritized due to the financing gap. In future phases of the programme, one would assume it will be reinstated and used for its designated purpose.

Protection advisor were heavily involved in the production of the study and the stakeholder consultation process. This culminated in a knowledge exchange workshop in September 2021, facilitated by BRE-TA DRM Workstream and hosted by the Centre for Disaster Protection conjointly with the World Bank. The primary audience were the MoF and EDRMC, and the workshop ended with **MoF deciding to develop the first DRFS for the country.**

BRE-TA SRSN workstream sits in the Drought Risk Financing TWG and SRSN STC, wherein it has led and been part of discussions as to whether a specific Drought Risk Financing Strategy is required, in addition to the DRFS. Discussions are ongoing within these fora to agree on whether there is a need for a PSNP drought-specific financing strategy, given that drought is one of the major disasters captured by the DRFS. This discussion is expected to be resolved and a decision from government made once the DRFS is formally approved. The MoF has indicated that there is no need for a specific Drought Risk Financing Strategy.

A second important input informing the incorporation of drought risk financing options into the DRFS was a value for money (VfM) study of the PSNP between 2016-2020 requested jointly by the MoF and MoA and commissioned by BRE-TA. The purpose was to evaluate the equity, efficiency, and effectiveness of the project with a view to identifying ways the PSNP can be made more effective. **It was first time the MoF and MoA collaborated on such a study. BRE-TA SRSN workstream supported this study by facilitating the involvement of the FSCO**, who as lead of the PSNP within MoA was the key stakeholder. The VfM study was finalised in April 2023 and has **brought to the policy debate some important questions about the framing of social assistance objectives in the country.**¹²⁶ It is expected to inform the design for the next phase of the PSNP.

F.3.1.5 Strengthened PSNP-SRSN capacity to develop, implement and monitor DRAPs (SRSN IO5)

The DRAP is a comprehensive resource allocation tool that is used by the Prioritisation Committee to coordinate SRSN delivery in PSNP woredas across both PSNP and HFA actors. It is generated annually then updated on a quarterly basis to provide advanced estimates of the food insecure population at woreda-level each quarter. It has been used since October 2022.

The DRAP is one of the key tools or instruments ensuring improved coordination and implementation of the SRSN, and BRE-TA was essential in its development and implementation. The BRE-TA SRSN workstream embedded federal advisor is responsible for producing the DRAP each year and quarter. The DRAP is used by the Prioritisation Committee to allocate SRSN resources across regions and woredas in PSNP areas.¹²⁷

¹²⁶ One of the important questions the study raises relates to the notion of graduation. A perennial question from key parts of government is how the PSNP can ensure 'graduation' out of poverty for its beneficiaries. However, this represents a fundamental misunderstanding of the objectives and capacity of a programme like the PSNP, which is targeted at the ultra-poor and expressly supports especially vulnerable groups who lack labour capacity. In the absence of significant concerted investment in a host of other policy domains – such as health, education, labour market policies, agricultural and industrial policies, infrastructure... – social assistance is unlikely to play anything other than an essential "protective" role (i.e. protecting households from deprivation and relieving them of the worst impacts of poverty). However, in the presence of such coordinated investments, social assistance can play a fully "transformative" role, by enabling beneficiaries to develop human capital and tap into livelihood enhancing policies and programmes. For an explanation of the scale of "protective" to "transformative" social protection, see Devereux and Sabates-Wheeler (2013).

¹²⁷ Although the DRAP only covers PSNP areas currently, non-PSNP areas use the same Food Insecure Population estimates that populate the DRAP, as provided by the EWS.

As mentioned, the DRAP was produced by BRE-TA SRSN workstream federal level TA. While the FSCO will need to train someone from within the organisation to take on this role now that BRE-TA has drawn to a close, but **it would be beneficial to maintain the federal TA long enough to support this process and provide sufficient handover.**

Figure 23: SRSN building block ‘SRSN Information’: main achievements



F.3.1.6 Improved reliability of Early Warning dashboard (SRSN IO6)

The EDRMC completed the enhancement of the SRSN dashboard in July 2023 by incorporating new requirements from government and development partners. BRE-TA SRSN workstream has been closely involved in this process by reviewing the dashboard throughout its development and engaging with stakeholders at all points such as the World Bank, EDRMC and FSCO. BRE-TA SRSN workstream initiated the EWS dashboard enhancement process and played the technical role of identifying the enhancement requirements. It then established and led the EWS dashboard TWG tasked with overseeing this task. BRE-TA also paid for the dashboard enhancement. Several studies commissioned and/or undertaken by the BRE-TA SRSN workstream informed this process, including the studies on strengthening social protection through knowledge management, and understanding and improving the relationship between nutrition and scalable safety nets.

This outcome is sustainable in as far as the dashboard has now been enhanced.

However, the SRSN dashboard is underpinned by the EWS, which is currently in the process of being upgraded as per the BRE-TA DRM workstream supported roadmap for strengthening the EWS. As part of the EW Bulletins Enhancement Plan (BEP), **the models that underpin the food insecure population estimates may require revising, which should involve technical expertise relating to both social assistance and welfare analysis.** While the BEP is being completed, **continued embedded SRSN TA at the federal level would be beneficial to support the implementation of the enhancement on the SRSN side and coordinate inclusion of social protection expertise.**

F.3.1.7 MAM and SAM surveillance system integrated into SRSN (SRSN IO7)

In September 2022, **EPHI integrated the recommendations from the BRE-TA-supported SRSN Nutrition Assessment study** into the national nutrition action plan. The study included numerous recommendations relating to the PSNP and SRSN design. These are **expected to inform the design of the next phase of the PSNP.**

F.3.1.8 Consolidated MIS SRSN module (SRSN IO8)

BRE-TA has supported **the development of the PSNP management information system (MIS) SRSN module** through to its final stage. This module is **integral to the delivery of the SRSN** because it incorporates crucial SRSN management information into a digital MIS for the first time.

This outcome is sustainable as the module is now developed and the MIS is managed by the FSCO via an embedded advisor. FSCO plan to incorporate this role directly into their

staffing structure. However, **the completed PSNP MIS SRSN module still needs to be rolled out to all levels and staff trained on it. This process would benefit from continued support by embedded TA at the federal and regional levels.**

F.3.2 Progress toward the workstream outcomes

The aim of establishing a single, government-led SRSN is to ensure cash and food support is supplied to people in need in an effective, efficient and accountable manner. For this to happen, such support **needs to be financed by predictable and adequate resources and to be underpinned by accurate and timely information regarding the level of need.** These objectives constitute the longer term workstream outcomes for the three BRE-TA SRSN building blocks of delivery, resources, and information respectively.

What is the status of these workstream outcomes given the achievement of all the intermediate outcomes described above?

The establishment and ongoing functioning of formal coordination mechanisms incorporating both government and non-government actors at all levels of SRSN operations means that **the SRSN is now much better coordinated in terms of planning, implementation, and monitoring.** The key coordination mechanisms in this regard are the SRSN STCs at federal and regional levels, the Prioritisation Committee, and the SRSN TWG. These forums are now a de rigour part of government operation of the SRSN.

At the same time, **the capacity of implementing staff at all levels has been markedly raised.** Staff are now familiar with the concept and objectives of the SRSN, as well as its design and operating procedures, and have the tools to aid them to maintain and deliver on that knowledge in the form of an SRSN operations manual, an accessible 'Job Aid' in their local language, an SRSN PWs guideline, and SRSN monitoring checklists. A new SRSN GRM is in development. These upgrades to capacity have resulted in **stronger harmonisation between PSNP and HFA SRSN delivery and improved quality and consistency of treatment of beneficiaries in line with programme objectives across woredas.**

A robust resource allocation tool, in the form of the DRAP, now exists and is routinely utilised to allocate SRSN support throughout the country in a transparent manner. A resource mobilisation strategy, in the form of the DRFS, is now in place within the MoF, which has the potential to improve both the level and predictability of financing for the SRSN. And an enhanced EWS now provides better quality and more transparent information to estimate the level of need; with plans in place to further strengthen this information base. In addition, the PSNP MIS now has a new module to incorporate SRSN data.

What these developments and achievements add up to is a more effective, efficient, and accountable delivery of the SRSN. There is less duplication of effort across ministries and agencies, as well as less duplication and gaps in coverage at the ground level across woredas. Moreover, **the timelines of the SRSN response have improved,** with beneficiaries receiving support at or much closer to the time of highest need compared to the situation before BRE-TA commenced.¹²⁸ Importantly, equality of treatment of SRSN beneficiaries has also improved thanks to this harmonisation and systems strengthening.

¹²⁸ Based on BRE-TA team intelligence. A member of the BRE-TA team estimates that response times during PSNP5 and BRE were more like 2-4 months whereas previously they were closer to 6-9 months or even longer.

What this should translate to for the people of Ethiopia is that needy populations are better supported in times of shock through provision of cash and food support at, or closer to, the times of greatest need. In line with the SRSN intervention logic, this should help smooth their consumption and assist them to avoid negative coping strategies which would otherwise undermine their resilience. This means they should be better protected in terms of health and wellbeing, better protected in terms of livelihood, and better protected in terms of community displacement.

Clearly there is a long way to go before the SRSN in Ethiopia is functioning optimally. The level of need far outstrips resources and liquidity constraints and public finance management challenges continue to affect timeliness of disbursements. Underpinning information systems also require strengthening in numerous ways.¹²⁹ In addition, questions of what institutional consolidation is necessary and possible, and how to achieve that organisational reform in as least disruptive a way as possible, remain to be answered. Nevertheless, **great strides have been made by government and its development partners to strengthen harmonisation of systems and processes across PSNP and HFA, as well as establish strong formal coordination structures at federal and regional levels, such that crucial parts of the machinery for a more unified, consistent, and coherent SRSN are now in place.** The BRE-TA SRSN workstream played an integral role in facilitating and enabling this.

F.4 What mechanisms underpin the achievement of outcomes under this workstream?

As mentioned above (section F.2), **crucial for BRE-TA SRSN workstream to achieve its outcomes was the establishment of trust and credibility** in the eyes of FSCO as its key government counterpart and as the requestor and recipient of its services. This is because public sector reforms in Ethiopia (as elsewhere) are issues of national sovereignty; the BRE-TA project's success was predicated on government ownership of each initiative. This condition was a key assumption of the project theory of change.

Building this trust and credibility took time. Initially, this was because the first hurdle to be overcome was government understanding the unusual modality of support offered by the BRE-TA project. Rather than come with a fixed offer and workplan, BRE-TA provided a flexible and responsive package of support that was not defined in advance. At both federal and regional levels, the benefits of this non-traditional form of assistance, and the process of accessing those benefits, were not immediately clear to government; as such, much discussion with, and handholding of, government by the BRE-TA team was required in this regard. This can be seen in the timeframe between award of the BRE-TA contract in March 2019, to submission of the inception report in July 2019, to the following January 2020 when BRE-TA SRSN workstream was fully established as a trusted partner and the FSCO started consulting BRE-TA in earnest on technical matters and inviting the project team to provide support on SRSN-related strategic plans and discussions.

The establishment of trust and credibility in the eyes of FSCO was predicated on several crucial factors:

- Firstly, BRE-TA SRSN workstream staff had to demonstrate high levels of technical competence and professional integrity such that they were perceived as adding value

¹²⁹ For example, beyond the EWS, there has not been a population census in the country since 2007 and national identity and civil registrations are far from comprehensive and robust.

technically and not presenting a risk politically. This condition was secured based on the quality of staff BRE-TA SRSN workstream supplied in support of government through the workstream lead, embedded federal TA, regional TAs, Social Protection advisors, and other international expertise brought in for specific purposes, not to mention the supporting staff who managed project administration and logistics.

- Second, BRE-TA did not come peddling any agenda other than to support GoE in its own task of improving the efficiency and effectiveness of disaster response. Only once faith in this position was established could BRE-TA become a trusted partner to that agenda.
- Third, BRE-TA's unique aid offer was crucial in its ability to respond flexibly to government demand – demand that, necessarily, changes, ebbs, and flows with currents influenced by national and international events, be those political, economic, or environmental in nature.

BRE-TA was flexible both in form and content – i.e., both in the form that support is provided and in the content of the work being supported (see Figure 24 below). It is this flexibility that enabled the BRE-TA SRSN workstream to respond to government demand with the right kind of support at the right time, which thereby enabled the BRE-TA team to maintain its position as a credible and trusted partner during a long and complex reform process fraught with risks and setbacks of many kinds.

Figure 24: Content of change supported by SRSN workstream activity and form of support provided

Panel A: Content of change being supported



Panel B: Form of support provided



Source: BRE-TA Outcome Harvesting database

Lastly, the fact that **the key positions in the SRSN workstream** (Workstream Lead and embedded TAs at the federal and regional levels) **comprised of Ethiopian nationals** who shared contiguity of cultural capital and experience with their government counterparts was a significant element in establishing trust and maintaining a productive relationship overtime, especially during times of crisis or heightened stress, as was experienced by the country during COVID-19, the conflict with Tigray, the cost-of-living crisis, and the aid diversion scandal.

The efficacy of the BRE-TA aid modality and SRSN workstream composition and characteristics, in terms of expertise and experience, can be seen in the significant number of outcomes collectively achieved by SRSN stakeholders and BRE-TA. At the beginning, policy ideas and statements has to be operationalised from scratch in highly complex conditions and amidst severe resource and capacity constraints, including significant institutional tensions, the result is that **not only have major concrete achievements been reached in terms of changes to institutional architecture and organisational capacities, but there is a recognised shift in the government’s conceptualisation of its own agenda and its approach to delivering that and addressing the numerous challenges it faces.** As testified by the head of FSCO¹³⁰, the GoE now understands the SRSN as requiring holistic thinking and coordinated actions across sectors, which was not the case before. It is this recognition that has underpinned the government’s willingness and ability to drive through the system reforms achieved to date in the establishment and ongoing construction of a single, government-led SRSN.

F.5 Lessons and recommendations

F.5.1 Lessons learned

The experience of implementing the BRE-TA SRSN workstream has given rise to numerous learnings, which are detailed below under six summary headings indicating the nature of the lesson learned.

Government needed time to understand the BRE-TA aid modality

It took some time and much explanation by BRE-TA staff before the government properly understood the form of support on offer from the BRE-TA project and how they could best make use of this support. The form of support provided by the BRE-TA project is not typical of aid and development assistance in as far as BRE-TA did not come with a fixed offer and workplan, but rather extended a flexible and responsive package of support that is not defined in advance. At both federal and regional levels, the benefits of this non-traditional form of assistance, and the process of accessing those benefits, were not immediately clear to government so it took much discussion and explanation by the BRE-TA team to aid government in this regard.¹³¹ This is manifest in the time taken between award of the BRE-TA contract in March 2019 and January 2020 when BRE-TA SRSN workstream was fully established as a trusted partner, with the FSCO consulting BRE-TA in earnest on

¹³⁰ Discussion at the outcome harvesting workshop with government held on 17 October 2023.

¹³¹ For example, initially there was high expectation from government that BRE-TA would include material support in the form of physical equipment. When government learned that the focus was purely on technical support there was disappointment and questions raised as to what value this would provide. Crucial in overcoming this hurdle was the rapport built by the BRE-TA advisors with their counterparts and the professional and technical competence they demonstrated to start persuading government of the merits of a purely technical assistance package.

technical matters and inviting the team to provide support on SRSN-related strategic plans and discussions.

Establishment of trust and credibility

Crucial for BRE-TA SRSN workstream to achieve its outcomes was the establishment of trust and credibility in the eyes of FSCO as its key government counterpart and recipient of its services. This is because public sector reforms are issues of national sovereignty, so the success of BRE-TA is predicated on government ownership of each initiative.

Building this trust and credibility took time (not least due to government's need to first understand the aid package on offer), with the following three factors proving crucial:

- First, BRE-TA SRSN workstream staff had to demonstrate high levels of technical competence and professional integrity such that they were perceived as adding value technically and not presenting a risk politically. This condition was secured on the basis of the quality of staff BRE-TA SRSN workstream supplied through the Workstream Lead, embedded federal and regional TAs, Social Protection advisors, and other national and international expertise brought in for specific purposes.
- A second crucial factor was that BRE-TA was not perceived as peddling an external agenda. The only agenda BRE-TA came with was to support the government in its own task of improving the efficiency and effectiveness of disaster response, and only once faith in this position was established could the SRSN workstream become a trusted partner to that agenda.
- Third, the fact that the key positions in the BRE-TA SRSN workstream (Workstream Lead, federal and regional embedded TAs) comprised Ethiopian nationals who shared contiguity of cultural capital and experience with their government counterparts was a significant element in establishing trust and maintaining a productive relationship over time, especially during times of crisis or heightened stress, as was experienced by the country during COVID, the conflict with Tigray, the cost of living crisis, and the aid diversion scandal.

Importance of flexibility and responsiveness of support

BRE-TA's unique aid offer was crucial in its **ability to respond flexibly to government demand**, which necessarily changes, ebbs, and flows with national and international events. BRE-TA was flexible both in form and content – i.e. both in the form that support was provided and in the content of the work supported – and it was this flexibility that enabled the BRE-TA SRSN workstream to respond to government demand with the right kind of support at the right time, and thereby maintain its position as credible and trusted partner during a long and complex reform process fraught with risks and setbacks of many kinds.

Value of working at both federal and regional levels

Differing regional structures and capacity levels pose a challenge to rolling out and harmonising a new project in a consistent way. **By establishing support in the form of embedded advisors at both federal and regional levels, BRE-TA SRSN workstream was able to ensure that, as far as possible, policies and procedures developed and agreed at federal level were consistently implemented at regional and sub-regional levels in line with their intended objectives.** For instance, the SRSN workstream's regional embedded advisors high technical understanding of the SRSN requirements and processes at the regional and sub-regional levels helped facilitate broader understanding

among local government counterparts as well as engaging on their behalf up to the federal counterparts. Its multi-tier structure of support thus enabled BRE-TA to coordinate actors, activities, and responses across levels, thereby ensuring consistency and inclusivity among stakeholders at what can sometimes be antagonistic levels of government.

Political economy of collaboration and coordination

The objective of the BRE-TA SRSN workstream required the **establishment of formal coordination mechanisms at federal and regional levels**. These ultimately took the form of SRSN Sub-Technical Committees, but prior to their establishment there was a need to **coordinate BRE-TA itself within and between government departments**. For the SRSN workstream, this meant setting up a SRSN Technical Working Group (established in July 2020). The SRSN TWG gave the FSCO as host a critical forum wherein all key government SRSN actors could discuss and agree plans and activities and sanction proposed BRE-TA support. The SRSN TWG convened quarterly, with its members comprising FSCO, EDRMC, CMCO, and BRE-TA. The SRSN TWG ensured that BRE-TA activities were incorporated into the FSCO annual workplan and, in a relatively crowded implementation context, helped ensure BRE-supported activities were aligned with other technical support projects and a joint workplan was developed.

Alongside the SRSN TWG, **the BRE-TA SRSN workstream established an informal weekly meeting with its key counterparts among donors and development partners** (chiefly FCDO, the World Bank, and USAID). This was because the SRSN is implemented in an often fragile and sensitive context for government, rendering coordination and collaboration inherently sensitive and creating a strong need for extensive consultation. The weekly informal meeting brought together the major non-government stakeholders in the SRSN to create a forum where political and technical challenges, as well as institutional tensions or complementarities, could be freely debated and discussed helping to reach consensus. This played a critical role in ensuring there was at least a minimal level of coherence and agreement among development partners before debate and negotiation moved to the formal coordination structures to make and ratify decisions.

Alignment with government plans and schedules

Crucial to BRE-TA SRSN workstream's successes was **the regular participation of embedded advisors in government technical working groups and committees**. By adding capacity and supporting government across myriad SRSN policy areas, they were able to ensure BRE-TA activities were aligned with government plans as well as maintain that crucial element of trust and credibility. This practice helped ensure that SRSN workstream activities were formally incorporated into government and development partner joint workplans, thus ensuring a formal mandate for all BRE activities and outputs.

An additional element to this was BRE-TA's alignment with the GoE fiscal year, which helped with integration into the MoA's annual work plan and ensured that BRE-TA's activities remained visible.

F.5.2 Recommendations

Institutional and organisational reform is a long and complex process. BRE-TA SRSN workstream supported the FSCO and other parts of government, alongside key donors, development partners and humanitarian actors as stakeholders to the SRSN, to make great strides in establishing a single, government-led SRSN in the country. However, much work remains to be done to continue to strengthen systems and processes, secure further

coordinated institutional and organisational reform, and see through already initiated capacity building exercises.

To these ends, it would be advantageous to maintain some of the forms of assistance provided by BRE-TA into the future for a defined period. Specifically:

- **Maintaining the embedded federal TA until the end of PSNP 5** in order that they can:
 - train an FSCO staff and handover production of the DRAP;
 - support the functioning of key coordination mechanisms such as the SRSN TWG, federal SRSN STC to help them become further established;
 - support the establishment of SRSN STCs in Tigray and Afar regions as soon as operationally feasible;
 - support the resumption of PSNP in Tigray, including completion of training for SRSN STC and implementing staff at all sub-regional levels;
 - facilitate completion of capacity building exercises including training on the revised SRSN guidelines, GRM and SRSN PWs guidelines;
 - support ongoing SRSN Dashboard and EWS enhancement; and
 - support the roll-out of the SRSN MIS module.

- **Maintaining embedded regional TAs and expanding those to cover all regions until the end of PSNP 5** in order that they can:
 - support the functioning of the regional SRSN STCs to help them become further established;
 - support the establishment of SRSN STCs in Tigray and Afar regions as soon as operationally feasible;
 - support the resumption of PSNP in Tigray, including completion of training for SRSN STC and implementing staff at the regional and sub-regional levels;
 - facilitate completion of capacity building exercises including training on the revised SRSN GRM and SRSN PWs guidelines at the regional and sub-regional levels; and
 - support the roll-out of the SRSN MIS module at the regional and sub-regional levels.

If resource constraints prohibit expansion of RTAs to all regions, those regions which suffer the most frequent or heaviest impact shocks could be prioritised.

Annex G: Workstream-specific progress: DRF

G.1 What was the vision?

A 2023 review of 191 countries' vulnerability to disasters worldwide, ranks Ethiopia as the 12th most at risk.¹³² The country is routinely affected by severe droughts, floods, epidemics, insect infestations, landslides, wildfires, volcanoes, and earthquakes. Moreover, Ethiopia is vulnerable to the effects of climate change, and it has also recently experienced civil conflict. Despite this longstanding vulnerability, when BRE-TA began operating there was no pre-arranged strategy or framework in place to guide how the country would meet disaster related costs.¹³³ This was partly because disasters were not seen as a central issue on the public finance agenda, or part of the core business of the Ministry of Finance (MoF) in the Government of Ethiopia (GoE). Moreover, while targets for domestic and external climate finance had been set¹³⁴, there remained a significant funding gap.

Responding to this state of play, the DRF workstream's vision was to ensure **“Ethiopia’s public finances are better prepared for climate and humanitarian shocks”**. To this end, the workstream's main counterpart was MoF, although given the cross-cutting nature of budgeting, the workstream has also engaged with other BRE-TA focal institutions and beyond over the course of implementation.

The support was structured around **four building blocks** that together tell a sequential story of how the vision was to be achieved¹³⁵:

- **Understanding Costs:** A first, important, step was concerned with generating a more robust and evidence-based understanding within MoF on the potential costs of disasters and climate change. This step was critical for building buy-in and gaining greater clarity on what the government is ‘on the hook’ for, should a risk materialise.
- **Limit Costs:** With clarity concerning the likely costs of disasters and climate change impact, GoE would have a greater incentive to reduce those costs. The ‘Limit Costs’ building block worked to support the government proactively limit costs through investment in disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation.
- **Money In:** Not all costs can be avoided, and so resources need to be found to meet the needs of disaster response and recovery, as well as climate change adaptation and mitigation. This building block concerned itself with the design or refinement of financial instruments to meet these costs and risk transfer instruments (such as sovereign insurance, and external climate finance), combining these in a cost-effective manner.
- **Money Out:** A well-considered portfolio of DRF instruments is of limited value if the funds do not reach the intended beneficiaries at the right time. For this reason, the fourth building block constituted a complementary focus on what is termed ‘money

¹³² Inter-Agency Standing Committee Reference Group on Risk, Early Warning and Preparedness and the European Commission, 2023. ‘INFORM Index 2023.’ Belgium. <https://drmhc.jrc.ec.europa.eu/inform-index> [accessed 09.11.2023]. The INFORM risk index is made up of three dimensions – hazards and exposure, vulnerability, and coping capacity.

¹³³ Ministry of Finance, 2023. ‘Disaster Risk Financing Strategy 2023–2030’. Addis Ababa.

¹³⁴ Government of Ethiopia, 2021. ‘Updated Nationally Determined Contribution.’ Addis Ababa.

¹³⁵ In practice, implementation of these building blocks was more iterative and non-linear, as described under the later sections of this annex.

out' systems (or disbursement channels). BRE-TA's work in this area includes a focus on supporting shock-responsive social protection systems, and climate finance projects.

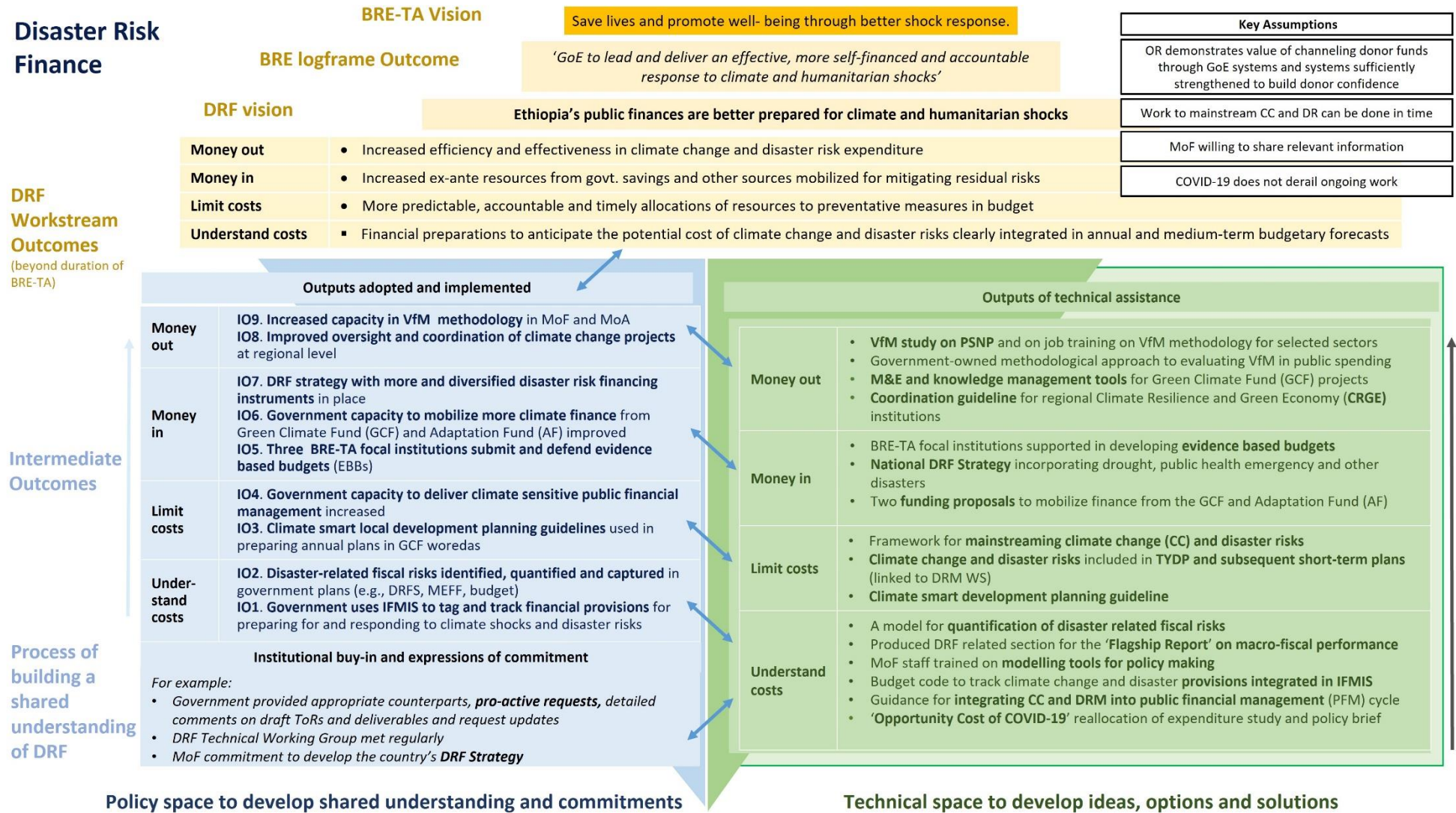
These building blocks are reflected in the DRF Theory of Change (ToC) (shown in the figure overleaf).

The DRF ToC is based on the project level ToC (see section 2.6 in the main narrative of this report). It follows the same four steps, but where the project ToC is generic, the ToC for DRF provides workstream-specific information.

- The starting point in both cases is the same: **to build a common understanding with relevant stakeholders in government to work towards expressions of commitment**. In the DRF workstream, such commitment was shown with, for example, government providing appropriate counterparts to interface and collaborate with the BRE-TA project team.
- The expressions of commitments provide the 'mandate' for **generating the desired outputs** in close collaboration with government.
- The **outputs only matter if they get adopted and implemented** (assuming demand, capacity, and other favourable factors). For example, the DRF workstream supported GoE with the development of a framework for mainstreaming climate change and disaster risks (an output), which when operationalised increases government's capacity to deliver climate-sensitive public financial management (an intermediate outcome).
- The **workstream outcomes**, which fall beyond the life of the project, are shown to provide the 'direction of travel'. For example, the operational framework for mainstreaming climate change and disaster risks mentioned above is a critical component of increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of climate change and disaster expenditure, a longer term workstream outcome.

Thus, each level of the ToC feeds into the next, all geared towards the workstream vision of Ethiopia's public finances being better prepared for climate and humanitarian shocks, which ultimately contributes to the more effective shock response reflected in the logframe outcome and the BRE-TA project's vision.

Figure 25: ToC for the DRF workstream



G.2 What was the overall achievement?

G.2.1 Summary of achievements

The table below provides a **summary of the extent of achievement towards each intermediate outcome**, per building block, across the workstream from the project's inception in March 2019 up to the end of activities in December 2023.

Table 10: Progress towards workstream intermediate outcomes, per the DRF ToC

Intermediate outcome (IO)	Extent of achievement	Status as of 31 December 2023
IO1. Government uses Integrated Financial Management Information System (IFMIS) to tag and track financial provisions for preparing for and responding to climate shocks and disaster risks	Achieved	Guidelines for budget tagging have been prepared and rolled out across seven sectors. ¹³⁶ The tagging system identifies climate and disaster related allocations and spending and is integrated into IFMIS; and will be fully deployed in the FY2024/25 budget preparation process which commences in January 2024.
IO2. Disaster-related fiscal risks identified, quantified and captured in government plans (e.g., the Disaster Risk Finance Strategy (DRFS), the Macroeconomic and Fiscal Framework (MEFF), the budget)	Achieved	MoF operates a fiscal risk model that quantifies fiscal risks from drought, flood, locusts, and epidemics, which informs the preparation of MEFF forecasts, and was also a key input into the preparation of the DRF strategy. ¹³⁷ Outputs of the model were published in MoF's Flagship Reports. ¹³⁸
IO3. Climate smart local development planning guidelines used in preparing annual plans in Green Climate Fund (GCF) woredas	Achieved	Following on from finalisation of the guidelines on climate smart local development planning, and the extensive capacity building efforts around them, 16 woredas have prepared their climate smart woreda plans using the guidelines. All of the plans were reviewed by BRE-TA to improve their quality. In addition, the Guidelines were translated into Amharic, to facilitate wider rollout across the country.

¹³⁶ See BRE, 2023. 'Woreda Climate-Smart Development Plan: Guidelines. Volume 1: Concepts, Principles and Policies.' Addis Ababa; and BRE 2023. 'Guidelines for Woreda Climate-Smart Development Planning in Ethiopia Volume 2: Coordinating and planning tools.' Addis Ababa

¹³⁷ See Ministry of Finance, 2023. 'Disaster Risk Financing Strategy 2023–2030'. Addis Ababa. Particularly section 2.3.

¹³⁸ See Ministry of Finance, 2021. 'Macro-fiscal Performance in Ethiopia and recent fiscal policy developments'. Addis Ababa. A further flagship report is due for publication in early 2024.

Intermediate outcome (IO)	Extent of achievement	Status as of 31 December 2023
IO4. Government capacity to deliver climate sensitive public financial management increased	Achieved	BRE-TA supported Ethiopia to become the first African nation to complete the Climate PEFA Assessment ¹³⁹ (by initiating the process, being part of the assessment team, and facilitating MoF endorsement of the report). This led to the issuance of MoF memo, communicating the results as a baseline of climate sensitive public financial management (PFM), and priority areas for action, which were then included in the revised PFM strategy. ¹⁴⁰
IO5. Three BRE-TA focal institutions submit and defend Evidence Based Budgets (EBB)	Achieved	Support was provided to MoA, EDRMC, and EPHI to prepare and submit more evidence-based and convincing budget proposals for the FY2022/23 and FY 2023/24 budget processes. The relative strength of their budget requests and robust budget defence led to above average increases for EDRMC in 2022/23 and MoA and EPHI in 2023/24. ¹⁴¹ This is against a backdrop of binding fiscal constraints and general expenditure cuts. ¹⁴² In the submissions of all BRE-TA focal institutions they clearly pointed out important evidence regarding resource requirements in a ‘SMART’ manner which helped them to defend their budget proposal and convince MoF to increase the allocation.
IO6. Government capacity to mobilize more climate finance from GCF and Adaptation Fund (AF) improved	Achieved	With BRE-TA support, GoE developed and submitted a \$25m concept note to the Green Climate Fund-Simplified Approval Process (GCF-SAP), as well as a proposal to the Adaptation Fund (AF) worth \$10m (to be submitted in early 2024). The GCF provided positive feedback on the SAP Concept Note, based on which preparation of the funding proposal has begun. At FCDO’s request, a learning note on challenges experienced in accessing climate finance was drafted.
IO7. Disaster Risk Finance Strategy (DRFS) with more and diversified disaster risk financing instruments in place	Achieved	BRE-TA helped GoE formulate the country’s first DRFS, which was formally approved by a ministerial Steering Committee in December 2023. This strategy set out a bespoke risk layering financing framework, combining existing (reformed) instruments – like the budget, and humanitarian aid; as well as new ones – including the disaster reserve fund, sovereign insurance, and contingent credit. ¹⁴³

¹³⁹ See PEFA, 2022. ‘PEFA Assessment of Climate Responsive PFM: Ethiopia’. Washington DC.

¹⁴⁰ See Ministry of Finance, 2023. ‘Public Financial Reform Strategy (2023-2028)’. Addis Ababa.

¹⁴¹ With the end of the Tigray conflict, and the shift in focus to post-conflict reconstruction, some of this budgetary increase for EDRMC was reversed in 2022/23.

¹⁴² 30.6% of total revenues is going to debt servicing in 2023/24 fiscal year, driving a 4% nominal reduction in allocations to pro poor sectors overall (see MOF Budget proclamations 2022/23; 2023/24).

¹⁴³ See Ministry of Finance, 2023. ‘Disaster Risk Financing Strategy 2023–2030’. Addis Ababa. Particularly section 4.7.

Intermediate outcome (IO)	Extent of achievement	Status as of 31 December 2023
IO8. Improved oversight and coordination of climate change projects at regional level	Achieved	<p>A suite of decision support tools and technical assistance have been provided by BRE-TA, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) CRGE Regional Coordination Guidelines – in response to the need to operationalise the federal CRGE Operational Manual, as well as develop manuals and guidelines to support local level coordination. ii) Digital reporting tool for woreda and regional staff to support the Climate Resilient Green Economy (CRGE) Facility’s monitoring and evaluation needs for the GCF project. iii) A knowledge management strategy to provide a roadmap to the CRGE Facility to create a digital repository of climate change related information (scientific reports, project updates from various initiatives in the country, standard data sources etc.) iv) A manual to support woreda planners integrate climate information services (CIS) into their plans. v) A finance training module to woreda and regional staff on financial management and reporting for externally funded climate programmes
IO9. Increased capacity in VfM methodology in MoF and the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA)	Achieved	BRE-TA collaborated with MoA’s Food Security and Coordination office (FSCO), alongside the MoF, to complete a value for money (VfM) assessment of the Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP). The VfM assessment identified ways to improve programme graduation and transfer timeliness. In addition, the through a learning-by-doing approach the exercise strengthened the analytical skills of the FSCO and MoF staff in VfM analysis. ¹⁴⁴

¹⁴⁴ OPM, BRE-TA, 2022. ‘Value for Money (VfM) assessment of Ethiopia’s Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP)’.

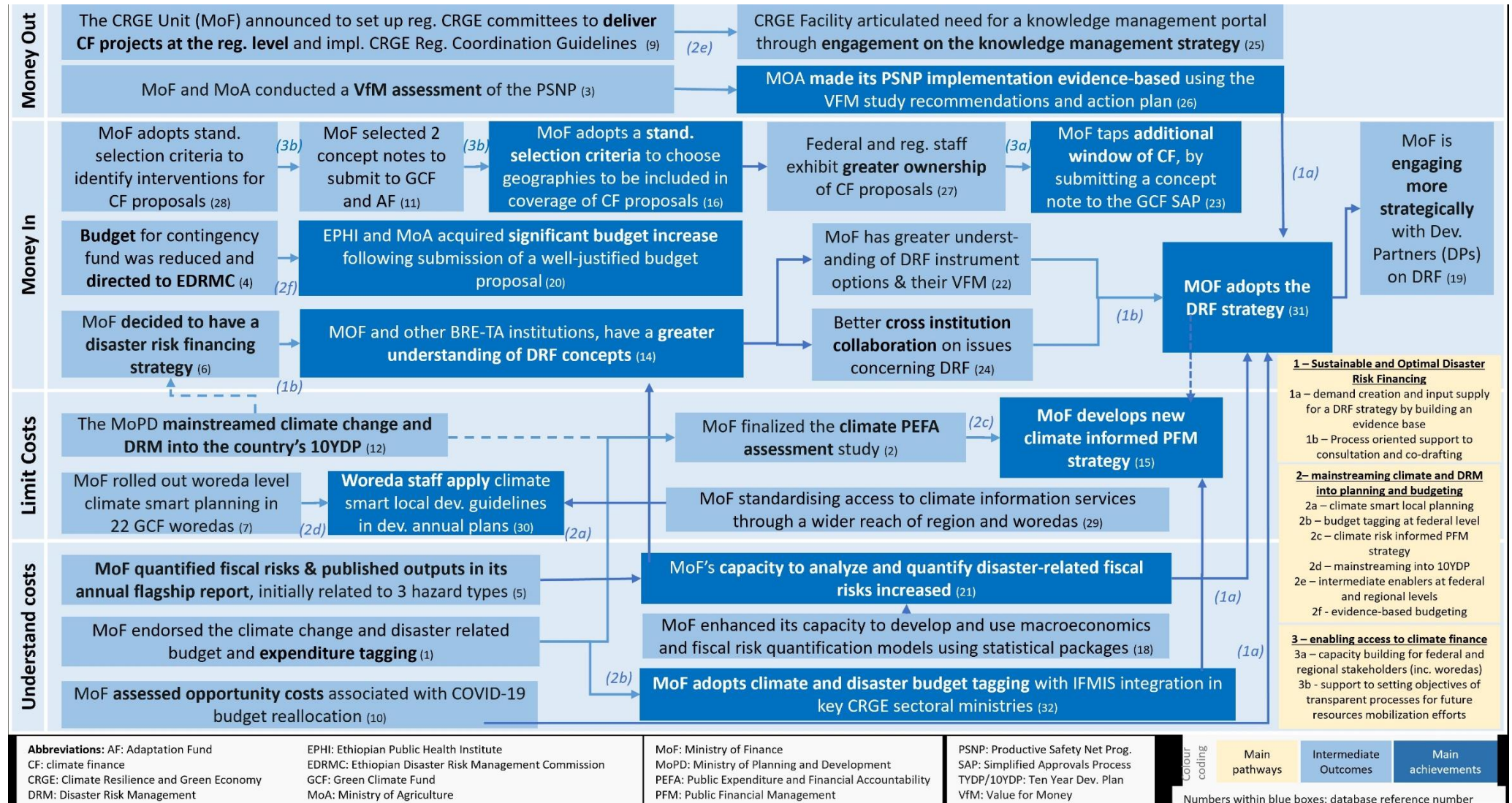
The progress highlighted above was informed by the October 2023 outcome harvesting workshop held in Ethiopia (see progression of outcome map in the sections to follow) and further confirmed through key informant interviews (KIIs) with donors, GoE officials, and BRE-TA staff and/or supported by other evidence.

A.2.2 Building a map of intermediary outcomes for DRF

The following sections provide more details of the results under each intermediate outcome. Given the multitude of results, to understand the narrative of how they came to build on each other, it is helpful to have a **visual overview or ‘map’**. The figure overleaf provides the completed map, and the component pathways will gradually be explained in the following sections.

In contrast to the ToC, which is *theoretical* and *prospective* in nature, these intermediary outcome maps are based on what *actually* happened. As such, they are *retrospective*, showing a more or less sequential chain of events with key outputs and outcomes. They are largely aligned with the ToC. The following sections describe the main achievements of the DRF workstream, grouped under three pathways. They all start off with describing the problem, the achievements, BRE-TA’s contribution, and include a discussion of challenges, and aspects with respect to sustainability.

Figure 26: DRF intermediate outcome map

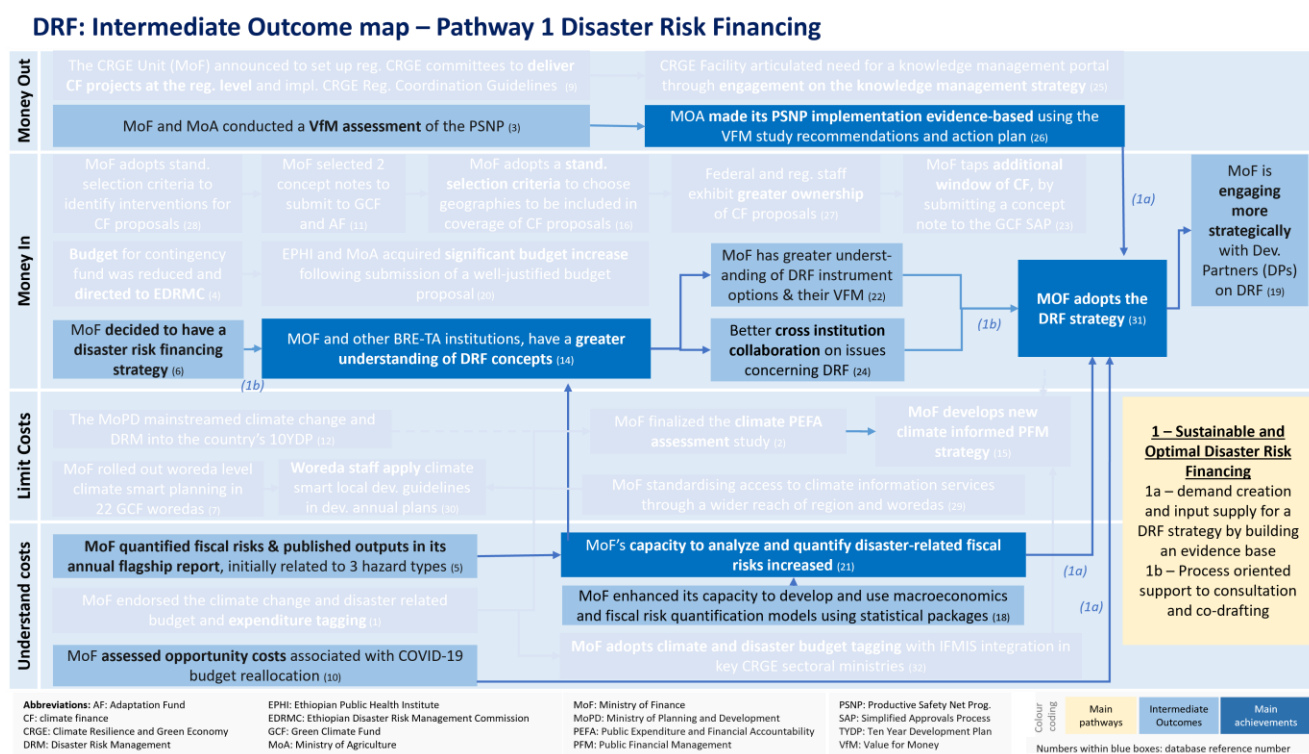


G.3 Pathway 1: Delivering sustainable and optimal Disaster Risk Finance (progress toward intermediate and workstream level outcomes)

G.3.1 Progress toward intermediate outcomes

The figure below presents the first pathway which connects several of the workstream's main achievements, grouped under the umbrella of "delivering sustainable and optimal DRF". Of note are the outcomes in bright blue; the other outcomes associated with other pathways are faded out as they do not directly relate to this discussion.

Figure 27: DRF Pathway 1 (Sustainable and Optimal Disaster Risk Finance): main achievements



(a) What was the problem?

Effective disaster risk financing (DRF) requires pre-arranging a portfolio of financing instruments that can ensure access to reliable, sufficient, and timely resources in the event of a disaster. In addition, identifying effective delivery mechanisms is crucial to ensure resources reach affected parties in a timely, transparent, and cost-effective way. However, in 2019, when BRE-TA began its operations, Ethiopia had **no formally agreed approach or strategy for how it would meet the costs of disasters**, including what GoE would cover and what development partners would cover, despite the substantial impacts of disasters being an annual fiscal reality. A previous effort by the World Bank to introduce a more structured way of financial planning for disasters in 2016 had ultimately failed, reportedly because of a lack of understanding and buy-in from within GoE.

Without a clear strategy in place, financing to meet disaster costs tended to materialise in an **ad-hoc manner**, focused on response and primarily sources from a combination of **budget appropriations and reallocations, and significant volumes of humanitarian aid**

(exceeding \$1 billion for the first time in 2021/22).¹⁴⁵ Risk transfer instruments, such as sovereign insurance had not yet been taken out by GoE¹⁴⁶, and historically high levels of borrowing for public investment purposes had also limited the scope for borrowing to meet disaster needs, at least on non-concessional terms. This financing approach had significant drawbacks. Firstly, it left a significant financing gap; in the case of drought, for example, the average humanitarian needs in Ethiopia between 2017 and 2021 varied between \$844.5 million and \$2.8 billion a year, of which only 47-76% was met.¹⁴⁷ Secondly, the reliance on budget reallocations incurred a significant opportunity cost (because of returns forgone when money is diverted from its original purpose) – although Ethiopia-specific evidence on this was lacking at the time. Moreover, the reliance on humanitarian aid is associated with significant delays (the humanitarian appeal process, from assessment to aid being delivered to vulnerable communities, often takes around two months).

In addition, prior to BRE-TA, **MoF did not have a clear understanding of its contingent liabilities associated with disasters**. A Fiscal Risk statement, piloted in 2019, identified some categories of fiscal risks that may befall the government in the event of the risks materialising, but these were not quantified and so could not meaningfully inform fiscal policy decisions. Without this, there was a perception from some parts of MoF that disasters were not central to their mandate and should be left to EDRMC and other relief giving agencies. Fiscal risk monitoring and reporting is one of the areas in which Ethiopia gets the lowest Public Expenditure and Financial Accountability (PEFA) score.

(b) What was achieved?

The main achievement under this pathway is that GoE has **developed and formally adopted a National Disaster Risk Financing Strategy (DRFS)**¹⁴⁸ (box 31 in the DRF workstream outcome map). This strategy sets out clear rules for how costs from disasters of differing magnitudes will be met by setting out a portfolio of financing instruments that can ensure access to reliable, sufficient, and timely resources in the event of a disaster. In addition, it sets out reforms to ensure there are effective delivery mechanisms to ensure resources reach affected parties in a timely, transparent, and cost-effective way. It is significant because it is the first time GoE has set out, ex-ante, how it will meet financial obligations from disasters, in an effort overcome some of the historical challenges of financing gaps and delays, described above. One MoF official noted “the whole federal DRM programming was based on one-off campaigns which usually take place when disaster strikes. And these responses are almost always focused on quick response. The BRE-TA discussions have led to increased understanding of pre-planned preparation and anticipation of disasters.”¹⁴⁹

Moreover, because of the participatory manner in which the DRFS was prepared, with a strong emphasis on capacity building, peer learning, and collaborative development, **MoF and other relevant institutions, have a greater understanding of DRF concepts, and appreciation of its importance to Ethiopia** (box 14 in the outcome map). This is important

¹⁴⁵ Ministry of Finance, 2023. ‘Disaster Risk Financing Strategy 2023–2030’. Addis Ababa. Some disaster costs are met from a modest contingency fund; however, this can be used for a wide range of unforeseen expenses, and its original allocation is usually exhausted by Q2 in the fiscal year, meaning its availability to finance relief/recovery depends on its being topped up – usually through budget reallocations.

¹⁴⁶ There had also been small scale pilots of agricultural insurance at the micro- and meso-levels, but nothing at a national scale, and the uptake of property catastrophe and disaster microinsurance, has, to date, been limited.

¹⁴⁷ World Bank (2017) ‘Quantifying Costs of Drought Risk in Ethiopia: A Technical Note’; United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) (2022) ‘Global Humanitarian Overview’.

¹⁴⁸ Ministry of Finance, 2023. ‘Disaster Risk Financing Strategy 2023-2030’. Addis Ababa.

¹⁴⁹ Notes from key informant interviews (KIIs).

because only after having gained understanding of basic concepts such risk ownership, what instruments are available, and how other countries in the region have found them, could the DRF technical committee define the objectives of the DRFS, and determine which instruments it wanted to pursue.¹⁵⁰ The DRFS has been designed to protect, and limit the impact of disasters on, households, including women-headed households, farmers, pastoralists, front-line workers, youth, and people with lower socioeconomic status.

In the pursuit of the DRFS, other intermediary outcomes were realised, including **MoF's increased capacity to analyze and quantify disaster-related fiscal risks** (box 21 in the outcome map). As detailed below, this was essential to build the case for a DRF strategy, but it is also important in its own right as the fiscal model put concrete numbers to the cost of disasters for GoE for the first time (making clear, for example, that if a 2015/16 type drought occurred again, it would include total fiscal cost of around \$1,578.5 million,¹⁵¹ equivalent to 16% of the Federal Government budget for FY 2022/23¹⁵²). Having a clear understanding of the contingent liability the government faces from disasters is an essential basis for GoE to integrate disaster considerations into its budget. To this end, BRE-TA supported MoF to feed the analysis from its fiscal risk model into the Macroeconomic and Fiscal framework (MEFF), which is used to determine overall expenditure levels.

BRE-TA also supported the MoF to **quantify the opportunity cost of budget reallocation in the wake of COVID-19** (box 21 in the outcome map). This was important not only because it filled an evidence gap, but also because it provided some Ethiopia-specific evidence of the costliness of relying on diverting funding from planned investments to finance disaster response measures; specifically, each dollar mobilised in this way was found to have a wider opportunity cost \$1.30-\$1.56.¹⁵³ This finding was pivotal in helping MoF decide how to finance future emergencies; indeed it underpinned GoE's decision to treat budget reallocations only as a "last resort financing option" under the new DRFS.¹⁵⁴

MoF and MoA jointly conducted a value for money (VfM) study of the Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP), leading to some critical design recommendations (box 26 in the outcome map). PSNP is Ethiopia's flagship social protection programme for supporting vulnerable persons and communities affected by shocks. In a context of fiscal constraints, improving the effectiveness and efficiency of the programme (specifically in relation to issues of timeliness of transfers, and the graduation of recipients) enables GoE to help more vulnerable households, without necessarily spending more. The report was officially endorsed by the MoF management in November 2023. The extent to which these changes will be implemented is ultimately caught up in wider challenges around the financing of PSNP 5. It also provided an input into the DRFS, by setting out a basis for some of the reform actions under the 'Money Out' building block.

(c) How did BRE-TA contribute to the achievement?

Rather than jump straight to the development of the DRFS – which may have failed in line

¹⁵⁰ For example, as a result of BRE-TA knowledge exchange and learning events, MOF determined their interest in an ARC insurance policy and CAT-DDO, and dismissed a CAT-BOND as unsuitable, while also learning about potential models for the reserve fund.

¹⁵¹ MOF, Disaster-Related Fiscal Risk Quantification Model.

¹⁵² The general government revenue (tax and non-tax revenue) forecast for FY 2022/23 is ETB 666,021.61 million (or US\$ 5,493.02 million). The total federal government budget for FY 2022/23 year is projected to be ETB 563,929.6 billion (excluding general and specific purpose grants to regions). The exchange rate used is US\$ 1 to ETB 58.77, which is the value forecast for 2022/23.

¹⁵³ BRE-TA, 2023. 'The Opportunity Cost of COVID-19 Budget Reallocations in Ethiopia'. Oxford.

¹⁵⁴ Ministry of Finance, 2023. 'Disaster Risk Financing Strategy 2023–2030'. Addis Ababa

with past experiences – BRE-TA first took the time to build the case for a strategy, by **developing the evidence base**. This is channel 1a in the outcome map. Indeed, BRE-TA spent the first two years of the project building understanding within MoF as to why disasters deserved to be on its agenda, with an early tasking order on **fiscal risk quantification** being essential in that regard. BRE-TA partnered with Vivid Economics, and later with the UK Government Actuary Services, to design and develop a bespoke fiscal risk model which could quantify the impact of drought, flood, locust infestation and epidemics on key macro-fiscal variables. A comprehensive guideline was prepared and disseminated among the MoF team in 2021. Since then, a simplified step-by-step user manual that describes the model and guides the user on how to use and update it has been developed and regularly updated. In addition, BRE-TA conducted four trainings on how to use the model, including annual updates and how to link it to the MEFF, complemented with two general trainings on MS-Excel and STATA. BRE-TA also worked to ensure the fiscal risk modelling work has been disclosed publicly, through the publication of the Flagship Report¹⁵⁵ and the DRFS, by helping to draft these documents and shepherding their approval through the Ministry's management. This is in line with international best practice on contingent liability management; the scrutiny that comes with disclosure creates pressure to ensure that risks are identified, estimated, and managed.¹⁵⁶

BRE-TA was also critical in **delivering the opportunity cost research**. Members of the core team developed the methodology (which was applied across four countries) and led the research in Ethiopia. In addition to extensive interviews, two workshops were held with GoE officials to validate findings and discuss the recommendations. MoF endorsement of the final report was secured prior to publication, and prominent discussions were organised on the research with the donor community and at international fora.¹⁵⁷ Critically, BRE-TA ensured the findings of the study fed into the risk layering strategy of the DRFS, and that the main recommendation (that GoE develop a pro-active framework for governing budget reallocations in post disaster settings) was integrated into the DRFS action plan. This is intended to ensure the findings impact on future budgeting practice.

BRE-TA was similarly instrumental in the undertaking of the **VfM assessment**, by providing methodological guidance and report drafting (through partner organisation Fiscus). The fieldwork was done in a collaborative approach of multiple teams, consisting of MoF, MoA, Fiscus, and BRE-TA members. Three trainings (on the methodology, data collection, and analysis) were conducted, in addition to report drafting and a validation workshop (which focused on co-developing the recommendations and action plan). BRE-TA also worked to secure official endorsement of the report, from both MoA and MoF.¹⁵⁸

In addition to building buy-in and an evidence base for the DRFS, this pathway also included **process-oriented support to the development of the DRFS itself** (channel 1b in the outcome map). This started in September 2021 with a DRF knowledge exchange workshop, that provided the GoE with a better understanding of how DRF tools can reduce the fiscal burden of disasters (with the Governments of Kenya, Malawi and the Philippines sharing their experiences). Following this, GoE expressed resounding support for the preparation of

¹⁵⁵ See Ministry of Finance, 2021. 'Macro-fiscal Performance in Ethiopia and recent fiscal policy developments'. Addis Ababa.

¹⁵⁶ OECD, 2017. 'Managing Disaster Risk Related Contingent Liabilities in Public Finance Framework.' Brussels.

¹⁵⁷ Including briefings to FCDO's global PFM and DRF teams, arranged by the Centre for Disaster Protection, as well as presentation at the International Health Economics Association annual congress, arranged by the Overseas Development Institute.

¹⁵⁸ Harris, J. et al. 2023. 'Value for Money assessment of Ethiopia's Productive Safety Net Programme – focussed on Efficiency & Effectiveness. Final Report.' Oxford.

a national DRFS and provided some useful pointers for its scope and development process. Thereafter, BRE-TA supported a World Bank led DRF diagnostic over the course of 2022, which served as a foundation for identifying specific gaps and setting policy priorities.¹⁵⁹ BRE-TA then led the process of developing the DRFS, including setting up and supporting strategy governance structures¹⁶⁰, conducting extensive consultations with government and development partners¹⁶¹, undertaking technical analysis (with specialist actuarial support from the Centre for Disaster Protection), and drafting the document. In addition, three learning sessions were held for the strategy's Technical Committee (on the topics of DRF instruments, VfM analysis, and international practice around reserve funds), building their capacity to engage meaningfully in the strategy process. The process took nearly a year to complete, but resulted in a DRFS which was fully owned by GoE, and officially endorsed by the Technical Committee in June 2023, and approved by the Steering Committee in December 2023. It is held up as an example of "excellent practice" in DRF strategy development by the Centre for Disaster Protection (CDP).¹⁶²

(d) To what extent are the achievements likely to be sustained?

The DRFS was formally adopted by GoE, while the final reports on VfM and the opportunity cost of budget reallocations were **approved for publication by the Ministry of Finance, all of which indicates a degree of sustainability**. Moreover, the collaborative way in which the two studies and the strategy were prepared (by joint teams consisting of BRE-TA and GOE officials) ensured **skills transfer** that will endure beyond the BRE-TA project (for example, MoF has expressed an intent to apply the VfM methodology to other sectors, including roads).

Regarding the fiscal risk model, **the fact that it is an embedded part of fiscal policy decision making** (with outputs that feed into the MEFF and are published as part of routine MoF publications) **means MoF's Fiscal Policy department will need to continue to make use of it**. The extensive training that was provided will enable them to do so, as well as the user manual (which is important so that new staff to the department can quickly get up to speed).

G.3.2 Pathway 1 (Sustainable and Optimal Disaster Risk Finance): progress toward the workstream outcomes

Pathway 1 spans three DRF workstream building blocks ('Understand Costs', 'Money In', and 'Money Out') and so contributed to progress towards three higher level outcomes specified in the ToC. The table below shows the direction of travel and the future outcomes to which the achievements under this pathway are expected to lead, if sustained beyond the BRE-TA project.

¹⁵⁹ World Bank (2022) 'Ethiopia Disaster Risk Finance (DRF) Diagnostic.' Washington, DC.

¹⁶⁰ A technical committee was established to provide inputs in the strategy and met four times. A steering committee was established to approve the strategy, meeting once.

¹⁶¹ BRE-TA consulted with over 10 development partner organisations, through five targeted development partner workshops, and extensive bilateral meetings, before bringing donors together and Government together in a validation workshop.

¹⁶² Email from Joanne Meusz, Lead Risk Finance Adviser at the Centre for Disaster Protection. 04.10.23

Table 11: Main achievements in relation to future outcomes for DRF Pathway 1

Building block	Workstream outcome (per ToC)	Contribution to progress from Pathway 1
Understanding Costs	Financial preparations to anticipate the potential cost of climate change and disaster risks clearly integrated in annual and medium-term budgetary forecasts	There has been substantial progress towards this outcome through this pathway. The disaster fiscal risk model is already a concrete input into the MEFF preparation (which sets medium term expenditure ceilings). (Aspects of annual budget integration are dealt with under Pathway 2).
Money In	Increased ex-ante resources from govt. savings and other sources mobilized for mitigating residual risks.	There has been substantial progress towards this outcome. The DRFS commits the government to develop more ex-ante financial instruments, including the disaster reserve fund and African Risk Capacity (ARC) insurance, both of which are actively under preparation.
Money Out	Increased efficiency and effectiveness in climate change and disaster risk expenditure.	PSNP accounts for a large portion of Ethiopia's disaster-related spending, and as such, the findings of the VfM assessment which have to an extent been reflected in the design of PSNP 5, will lead to a more efficient and effective social safety net programme (contingent on it being adequately financed). Moreover, the skills imparted during the VfM assessment of PSNP in MoF and MoA staff can be used in increasing the efficiency of other disaster risk expenditures, for example MOF have expressed an interest in reviewing spending in the roads sector (which has significant resilience, adaptation, and mitigation implications).

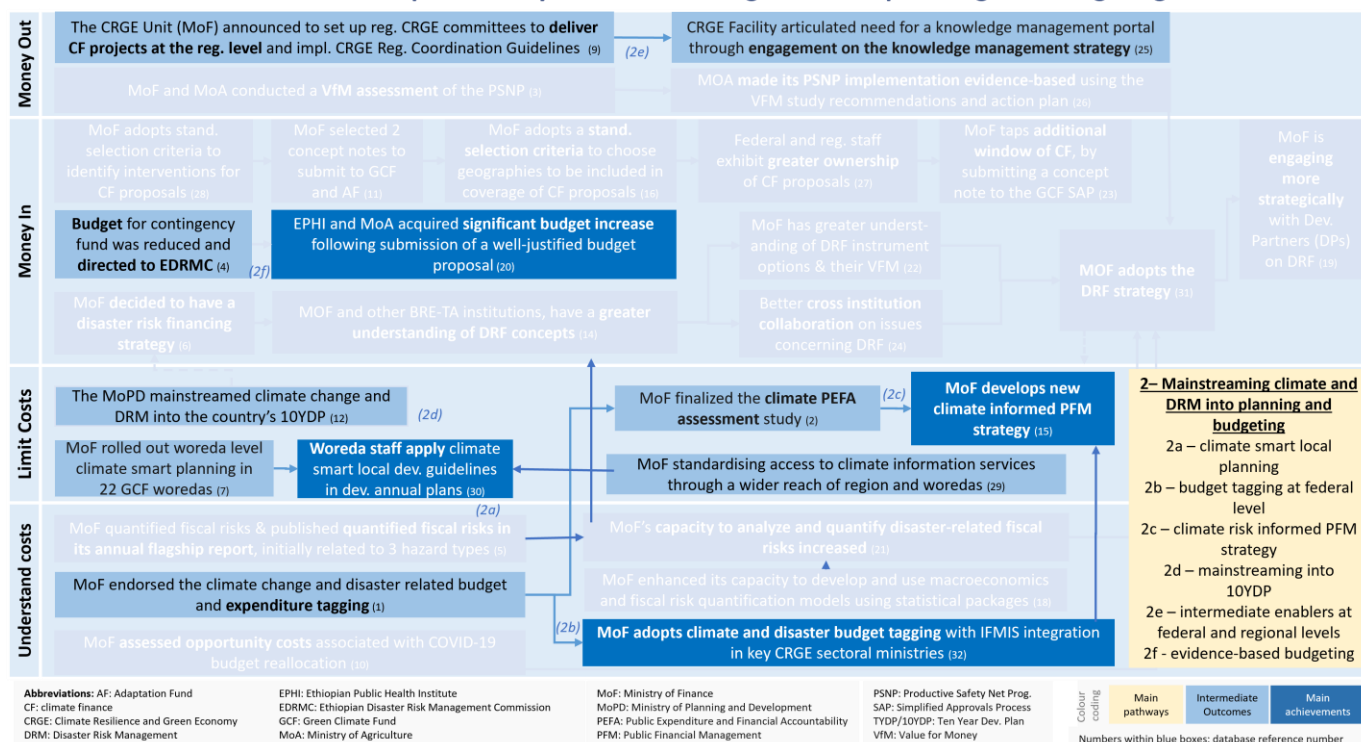
G.4 Pathway 2: Mainstreaming climate and DRM into planning and budgeting (progress toward intermediate and workstream outcomes)

G.4.1 Progress toward intermediate outcomes

The figure that follows presents the first pathway which connects several of the workstream's main achievements, grouped under the umbrella of "mainstreaming climate and DRM into planning and budgeting". Of note are the outcomes in bright blue; the other outcomes associated with other pathways are faded out as they do not directly relate to this discussion.

Figure 28: DRF Pathway 2 (Mainstreaming climate and DRM into planning and budgeting)

DRF: Intermediate Outcome map - Pathway 2 Mainstreaming DRM into planning and budgeting



(a) What was the problem?

As noted earlier (section G.1), effective management of disaster risk requires an accurate understanding of costs incurred to government. However, prior to BRE-TA, MoF had **no way of regularly tracking disaster or climate expenditure**, which, due to its cross-cutting nature, cannot be determined from routine expenditure reporting. Periodic expenditure reviews on climate or disaster spending had been conducted over the previous decade, but these offered one-off snapshots with significant data lags, and therefore were of limited use for the annual budget process.

Efforts to limit the costs of disasters and climate change through the budget requires a *mainstreaming approach*, that seeks to prioritise expenditure on DRM and adaptation across *all sectors and at all levels of government*. Prior to BRE-TA, Ethiopia had established the DRM policy and CRGE strategy but lacked **planning and budgeting mechanisms to implement a mainstreaming approach**, so it was left to the discretion of specific ministries, agencies, and local governments as to whether they prioritised climate and disasters. For example, an early draft of the 10 Year Development showed minimal reference to DRM issues¹⁶³, and woreda level plans were found to include limited climate resilient programmes.¹⁶⁴ This lack of systematic prioritisation in plans feeds through into budgets, materialising at the national level in weak budget proposals from key disaster-relevant

¹⁶³ While climate resilient growth was one of four pillars, the experience from the preparation of the GTPII indicated that this alone is not sufficient to ensure that climate is adequately mainstreamed, or that additional and complementary principles of DRM are included. (Source: interview with CRGE management, as cited in BRE TA, 2020. Tasking Order 2).

¹⁶⁴ BRE-TA, 2021. 'Assessing the Readiness of Woredas to Adopt Climate Smart Development Planning.' Oxford.

ministries, with minimal evidence demonstrating the value of key resilience investments. Moreover, the previous PFM strategy was noted by MoF to have had “little to link climate-related policy aspirations to the budget cycle”.¹⁶⁵

(b) What was **achieved**?

A central achievement under this pathway is that GoE has **adopted a climate and disaster budget tagging system**¹⁶⁶, which is integrated into the IFMIS and rolled out to all CRGE sectors at the national level (box 32 in the outcome map). This is important for a number of reasons, including that having an accurate and up-to-date picture of how much the federal government is spending on disasters provides an ongoing incentive to invest in risk reduction well beyond the lifespan of BRE-TA. Moreover, the climate and disaster risk expenditure tagging allow Ethiopia, for the first time, to comply with Paris Agreement reporting requirements, and to track progress against its spending commitments. As one MoF interviewee put it: “The budget tagging exercise is extremely important for the federal government, not just on climate and DRF programming but also on overall costing transparency issues”¹⁶⁷. MoF is also keen to use this to provide information on the relative contributions of government and nongovernment sectors and forecast the balance between the flow of climate finance and the future investment demand. Moreover, the joint nature of the tag (addressing both disaster and climate spending in one system) is, to the best of the BRE team’s knowledge, a global first, and represents a significant time saving innovation (many budget lines would be considered climate change adaptation and risk reduction expenditure, and so this avoids the need to tag the same lines twice). Other countries are considering adopting a similar system based on Ethiopia’s example.¹⁶⁸

Additionally, with BRE-TA’s support, GoE has introduced multiple mechanisms for **mainstreaming disaster and climate into planning and budgeting** spanning various levels. At the *national level*:

- **Climate change and disaster resilience has been mainstreamed into the 10 Year Perspective Development Plan (TYDP)** (box 12 in the outcome map). This was one of the earliest outcomes of the DRF workstream. All sector inputs into the plan were reviewed to ensure alignment with disaster and climate change policies – and, as a result of BRE-TA’s engagement, the Ministry of Planning and Development (MoPD) (at the time, a commission) added “disaster resilience and climate change” as one of the overarching pillars of the plan. This gave the issue more prominence, establishing it as a guiding principle in line with which ministries are required to prepare their own ministerial plans and budgets.
- Efforts to strengthen evidence-based budgeting, led to **significant budget increases**

¹⁶⁵ For example, “budget circulars are currently silent on how any proposed budget or expenditure should be linked to, appraised against or identified using mitigation and adaptation criteria...the procurement legislative and regulatory framework is also silent on how green policies might be supported. For asset management, there are no guidelines around managing and reporting climate-sensitive assets. Debt information does not include any climate change related data. In terms of revenue policy, there is no carbon tax policy yet in place... [and] in terms of legislative scrutiny of the budget, elected members have no capacity to review budgetary proposals to determine whether or not they are climate smart”. MOF, 2023. ‘Public Financial Management Reform Strategy (2023-2028)’. Addis Ababa.

¹⁶⁶ See IBEX/IFMIS Project Office, Ministry of Finance, 2023. ‘User Manual - Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management Budget and Expenditure Tracking & Reporting by Integrated Financial Management Information System (IFMIS) Addis Ababa; and BRE 2023 (Draft) Guidelines for Ethiopia’s Climate and Disaster Budget Tagging’ Oxford.

¹⁶⁷ Notes from KIIs.

¹⁶⁸For example, the Department of Budget Management in the Philippines is considering integrating disasters into its climate change expenditure tracking system, in part based on the learning from Ethiopia.

for EDRMC, EPHI, and MoA (boxes 4 and 30 in the outcome map). Specifically, working with these institutions to build a stronger case for resilience investments, EDRMC was able to secure a 46% budget increase in 2022/23 – marking a departure from previous years where the Commission’s budget would be increased on an ad-hoc basis from the contingency fund, essentially constituting a shift towards more ex-ante financing.¹⁶⁹ Fiscal year 2023/24 saw a 24% increase for the rural PSNP (under MoA) and a 13% increase for EPHI¹⁷⁰. This is against a backdrop of biting fiscal space constraints (30.6% of total revenues is going to debt servicing in 2023/24 fiscal year¹⁷¹) and reduced expenditure elsewhere in the budget (2023/24 saw a 4% nominal reduction in allocations to pro poor sectors overall). These results are important because they indicate greater fiscal priority being paid to disaster preparedness and response.

- The MoF has demonstrated a commitment to mainstream climate change considerations throughout national PFM processes, through the **adoption of a climate-sensitive PFM strategy**¹⁷² (box 15 in the DRF workstream outcome map). As a result of the climate PEFA exercise (which BRE-TA initiated, then supported, as detailed below) that set a baseline assessment of the extent to which climate change is integrated into everyday PFM processes, the MoF has committed to “greening of the budget”.¹⁷³ This is pivotal because this document will inform the direction of Ethiopia’s PFM reform – and all donor technical assistance to PFM – for the next five years.

At the *subnational level*:

- Several **woredas have prepared their climate smart woreda plans using guidelines prepared by BRE-TA** (box 30 in the outcome map). As a result, the plans of these woredas have more of a focus on adaptation and mitigation than previous plans did, particularly because previously there were no guidelines to direct medium-term planning at that level. Moreover, while this activity has so far only been piloted in woredas under the ongoing GCF programme, it is a strong model of climate smart local planning which can be widely adopted and scaled-up across the country, and the CRGE unit is working to secure MoPD endorsement to this end. The methodology for preparing the plans puts a strong focus on community participation, especially from the most vulnerable or marginalised.

(c) How did BRE-TA contribute to the achievement?

The first area of BRE-TA’s engagement under this pathway was responding to CRGE’s request for support to **mainstream climate and disaster risk under the TYDP** (line 2d in the outcome map). In early 2020, BRE-TA hired a consultant who was well-connected within GoE to undertake a review of the draft sector submissions to the plan. The findings were shared at multiple workshops, where the line MDAs and the Planning Commission were present, which resulted in improved sector submissions and the addition of disaster resilience to the plans overarching pillars. Subsequent work following on from this Tasking Order (TO) was taken forward by BRE-TA’s DRM workstream, and it remained an important win for the DRF workstream as it enabled much of its later work (including the DRF Strategy

¹⁶⁹ This increase was reversed in 2023/24, with the funding was reallocated towards post-conflict reconstruction in Tigray (which while still disaster related spending, is not administered by EDRMC).

¹⁷⁰ Budget proclamations 2022/23 and 2023/24.

¹⁷¹ Budget proclamation 2023/24, total revenues include tax, non-tax revenue, and external assistance.

¹⁷² MOF, 2023. ‘Public Financial Management Reform Strategy (2023-2028).’ Addis Ababa.

¹⁷³ Through a series of ambitious measures, including *inter alia*, integrating climate into the budget circular, assessing budget proposals against climate policies, tracking climate expenditure, commissioning climate public expenditure reviews, assessing the climate impact of new public investments, developing green procurement framework, and formulating a carbon tax policy.

and the climate PEFA assessment) by establishing disaster resilience as an official priority for all of GoE (including MoF).

The support to **climate and disaster budget tagging** (line 2b in the outcome map) was also an early TO, which continued throughout the duration of the BRE-TA project. BRE-TA initiated this area of support to MoF with an early assessment of current financial flows, review of methodologies for climate tagging and piloting of expenditure based the two most commonly used climate tagging methodologies, the Climate Public Expenditure and Institutional Review (CPEIR) and OECD Rio markers. In consultation with key stakeholders with MoF and sector ministries (taking the format of several rounds of training-cum-consultation workshops), the OECD Rio marker approach was recommended and adopted as way forward. BRE-TA also supported a learning exchange tour in July 2022, where Ethiopian MoF officials met with their Kenyan counterparts to discuss climate budget tagging, disaster tagging, and IFMIS integration. Bespoke guidelines were then prepared for each of the seven CRGE sectors.¹⁷⁴ As a key milestone to cement climate tagging in government budgeting the MoF, in September 2022, provided a directive memo¹⁷⁵ to the Integrated Financial Management Information System (IFMIS) Project Office to incorporate climate and DRM codes into annual budgeting. Thereafter, the IFMIS Project Office (with BRE-TA support) prepared a manual¹⁷⁶ for how users would input the information into the system, ready for application in the 2024/25 budget process commencing in early 2024.

BRE-TA's work on climate budget tagging brought to its attention an initiative from the PEFA secretariat to pilot a **climate PEFA assessment** (line 2c in the outcome map). The team proposed Ethiopia's inclusion in the pilot to the MoF and the PEFA Secretariat, and with their agreement an assessment team was assembled. The assessment team included some BRE-TA team members who supported collection and analysis of expenditure data as well as arranging and conducting interviews. BRE-TA also helped secure the MoF's endorsement of the final report in January 2023¹⁷⁷, and drafted an analysis of possible reform actions following the assessment which were subsequently integrated into the new PFM strategy, which the MoF published in November 2023.¹⁷⁸

BRE-TA's support to **climate smart woreda planning** (line 2a in the outcome map) was designed to enable MOF to meet its commitments to build climate finance capacity at the local level under an ongoing project funded by the Green Climate Fund (GCF). Specifically, based on detailed stakeholder consultations to identify gaps and needs, BRE-TA supported the CRGE Facility prepare, pilot, and refine climate smart development planning guidelines. Drawing from the principles of climate resilient development planning framework, and existing guidelines that woreda staff already use, the team road-tested a process that could be institutionalised relatively simply, ensuring compatibility and integration with existing planning processes and potentially leaving a lasting transformational legacy. After drafting guidelines in two volumes, extensive training on the new guidelines and the principle underlying them was provided for local government staff in advance of the planning process. After covering 20 woredas under the training phase, 16 woredas prepared and submitted

¹⁷⁴ BRE 2023 '(Draft) Guidelines for Ethiopia's Climate and Disaster Budget Tagging' Oxford.

¹⁷⁵ IFMIS-CC and DRM Budget Tagging and Tracking State Minister Approval Memo, 1 September 2022.

¹⁷⁶ IBEX/IFMIS Project Office, Ministry of Finance, 2023. 'User Manual - Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management Budget and Expenditure Tracking & Reporting by Integrated Financial Management Information System (IFMIS) Addis Ababa.

¹⁷⁷ PEFA, 2022. 'PEFA Assessment of Climate Responsive Public Financial Management: Ethiopia. Final report'. Washington DC.

¹⁷⁸ MOF, 2023. 'Public Financial Management Reform Strategy (2023-2028).' Addis Ababa.

their woreda development plans using these guidelines, which were then reviewed by BRE-TA, and feedback provided.¹⁷⁹

A number of additional supportive measures were implemented by BRE-TA that complemented the strengthening of local capacity in climate smart development planning by **improving coordination and management of climate finance** (line 2e in the DRF workstream outcome map). These included: the development of guidelines to support regional and local coordination of climate finance; a digital reporting tool for woreda and regional staff to support the CRGE Facility's monitoring and evaluation needs for the GCF project; a knowledge management strategy to provide a roadmap to the CRGE Facility to create a digital repository of climate change related information (e.g., scientific reports); as well as a manual to support woreda planners integrate climate information services into their plans; and a finance training module to woreda and regional staff on financial management and reporting for externally funded climate programmes.

During the inception period, BRE-TA identified **evidence-based budgeting (EBB)** as a key area where technical support was needed, but it took some time to get buy-in from the Budget Directorate (line 2f in the outcome map). Following extensive negotiations, an embedded advisor was positioned in the Ministry in end of 2021 and supported the greater use of evidence by BRE-TA focal institutions in both the 2022/23 and 2023/24 budget processes. This support started with a review of historic submissions, to diagnose weaknesses. Thereafter, annual multi-day workshops were held to build capacity of BRE-TA focal institutions and the MoF Budget Directorate on the principles and practice of evidence-based budgeting, and how it aligns with Ethiopia's programme-based budgeting practice. Subsequent hands-on support was provided by the EBB advisor throughout the budget proposal formulation. A two-day final workshop was organized to discuss the draft budget proposal and share experience among the BRE-TA focal institution before submitting the budget request to the MoF. Consequently, the MoF budget officers praised the quality of budget proposal submitted by the BRE-TA focal institutions; for example, MOF found BRE's input to be "exceptionally useful on our work with the Ministry of Agriculture – which in our view had numerous challenges putting clarity and objectives in its budget requests".¹⁸⁰

(d) To what extent are the achievements likely to be sustained?

The signing of the memo and provision of directive to MoF to integrate climate and DRM code into IFMIS is a **major milestone on Ethiopia's progress toward institutionalising a system of tagging public budgets**. Moreover, continued progress on budget tagging and other element of climate-responsive PFM were cemented in the newly adopted revised PFM strategy.

Given two successive rounds of training, evidence-based budgeting knowledge should be **sufficiently embedded in the working practices of existing sectoral and MoF staff**. While this bodes well for the continued fiscal prioritisation of disaster expenditure, ongoing pressures around a narrowing fiscal space and increased debt servicing requirement, mean this remains ultimately beyond BRE-TA's control – and lifecycle.

In terms of climate-smart local planning, while the target woredas have produced climate-smart local plans, **there is a moderate risk of the capacity not being sufficiently embedded from a single planning process**, requiring further support going forward.

¹⁷⁹The outstanding regions were affected by conflict in Amhara and Tigray.

¹⁸⁰ Notes from KIIs.

Should MoPD endorse nation-wide rollout of the guidelines, this will secure their enduring relevance.

G.4.2 Pathway 2 (Mainstreaming climate and DRM into planning and budgeting): progress toward the workstream outcomes

Pathway 2 spans three main building blocks ('Understand Costs', 'Limit Costs', and 'Money In') and so contributed to progress towards three longer term workstream outcomes specified in the DRF workstream's ToC. The table below shows the direction of travel and the future outcomes to which the achievements under this pathway are expected to lead, if sustained beyond BRE-TA.

Table 12: Main achievements in relation to future outcomes for DRF Pathway 2

Building block	Workstream outcome (ToC)	Contribution to progress under Pathway 2
Understanding Costs	Financial preparations to anticipate the potential cost of climate change and disaster risks clearly integrated in annual and medium-term budgetary forecasts	There has been substantial progress towards this outcome through this pathway. From the 2024/25 budget process (starting in January 2024) the budget tagging system will demarcate climate and disaster allocations and spending in the annual budget.
Limit Costs	More predictable, accountable and timely allocations of resources to preventative measures in budget.	This long-term ambition is on a good footing to be being achieved, as the Climate Smart Local Planning guidelines (which prioritise climate adaptation and disaster risk reduction in woreda plans) have the backing of and attention of the MoF and in due course, the Ministry of Planning and Development (which will enable their rollout to non-GCF woredas).
Money In	Increased ex-ante resources from govt. savings and other sources mobilized for mitigating residual risks.	There has been substantial progress towards this outcome. As detailed above, EDRMC received and budget increased in 2022/23, as did MOA and EPHI in 2023/24, despite a backdrop of substantial fiscal consolidation.

G.5 Pathway 3: Enabling access to Climate Finance (progress toward intermediate and workstream outcomes)

G.5.1 Progress toward intermediate outcomes

The figure that follows presents the first pathway which connects a number of the DRF workstream's main achievements, grouped under the umbrella of "Enabling access to Climate Finance". Of note are the outcomes in bright blue; the other outcomes associated with other pathways are faded out as they do not directly relate to this discussion.

Figure 29: DRF Pathway 3 (Enabling access to Climate Finance)

DRF: Intermediate Outcome map - Pathway 3 Enabling access to climate finance (CF)



(a) What was the problem?

When BRE-TA started, GoE had been implementing the climate-resilient green economy strategy since 2011, and recently updated its nationally determined contributions (NDCs) to reduce Ethiopia’s greenhouse gas emissions by 68.8%, compared to the business-as-usual scenario by 2030.¹⁸¹ This ambitious goal requires significant investment, with an estimated total of \$316 billion needed for adaptation and mitigation actions between 2021 and 2030, including \$252 billion in international climate finance. However, stringent access requirements from the major international climate funds as well as extensive specialist proposal demands, constrained GoE’s ability to apply for and secure climate finance. Most of Ethiopia’s earlier climate finance submissions were supported through international accredited entities. Through BRE-TA, the MoF has been able to go for the direct access modality (applying for international climate funding through domestic accredited entities, in this case the MoF itself), promoting country ownership in the process.

(b) What was achieved?

The leading achievement under Pathway 3 is that with BRE-TA support, MoF has submitted a **concept note to the Green Climate Fund (GCF) worth \$25 million under the newly tapped Simplified Approval Process (SAP)** (box 23 in the DRF workstream’s outcome map), in addition to \$10 million from the Adaptation Fund (AF). If successful, these projects will represent substantial investments in climate change adaptation in Ethiopia, serving some highly climate vulnerable communities (including women-headed households in

¹⁸¹ Updated National Determined Contributions Plan, 2021

drought affected communities; and this TO will have demonstrated very good value for money, returning \$110 for every \$1 invested by BRE-TA's donors).

Moreover, through the highly participatory approach that BRE-TA adopted, it has built significant capacity across government (specifically, four federal ministries, 27 regional bureaus, and 26 woreda offices) in climate fund project proposal development, which it can then apply to future proposals. It has also left behind a number of proposal development tools, including **standardised selection criteria** to identify which pipeline interventions to take forward into proposals, and to identify which geographies the project will target (boxes 16 and 28 in the outcome map). These are important because not only do they enable objective targeting of climate finance resources (ensuring that funding is channelled to the most vulnerable regions and woredas), but by avoiding the political brokering which usually affects climate finance programme design, they are helping circumnavigate a considerable source of delays. The CRGE Facility can use these same criteria when developing other climate finance proposals going forward.

(c) How did BRE-TA contribute to the achievement?

BRE-TA responded to this direct request from CRGE Facility in mid-2021, initially agreeing to support the development of a \$10 million proposal to the AF, and a \$200-250 million proposal to the GCF (the latter of which was expected to facilitate an upgrade of MoF's accreditation status to GCF to the medium funding category). However, upon recognizing some access challenges related to GCF's Medium funding category, the BRE-TA team brought to the attention of the MoF the smaller but less time-consuming application process—the Simplified Approval Process, and the MoF swiftly made the decision to access GCF under this streamlined procedure.

BRE-TA then supported the CRGE Facility in shortlisting potential projects that could be developed further into proposals for submission. A set of objective selection criteria were developed for this purpose, which sought to prioritise interventions that were aligned with GoE priorities on climate action, project selection criteria of the funds, and which served marginalised or excluded communities, including gender inclusive parameters. Once the project interventions were selected, BRE-TA arranged a series of write-shops involving a wide range of stakeholders, including four federal ministries, 27 regional bureaus from nine regional governments, and 26 woreda offices from 13 woredas. This inclusive approach not only ensured that the proposals are well-informed and aligned with the needs, but also provided opportunities for capacity building of government officials. Moreover, the involvement of stakeholders from different levels of government fostered stronger intergovernmental collaboration and coordination across the three layers of government.¹⁸² During the write-shops, government developed key aspects of the project proposals, including intervention design, desired outcomes, and specific activities, with facilitation and technical guidance from BRE-TA. In addition, standardized geographic selection criteria were used to select target regions, woreda, and kebeles for the two proposals, which included such factors as vulnerability to key climate risks at woreda and kebele levels, gaps in existing funding in addressing these risks, share of women-headed households (which would be prioritised for select interventions), thereby supporting equity and inclusion.

¹⁸² BRE TA, 2023. Learning Note.

(d) To what extent are the achievements likely to be sustained?

The strong focus on capacity building bodes well for sustainability. By engaging in the proposal drafting process, government officials gained valuable skills and knowledge in project proposal development. Moreover, the standardised selection criteria, for project interventions and geographies, as well as the training materials, are a “leave-behind” that the CRGE Facility can use for future proposals.

G.5.2 Pathway 3 (Enabling access to Climate Finance): progress toward the workstream outcomes

Pathway 3 spans one building block (‘Money In’) and contributed to progress towards one workstream outcome specified in the DRF workstream’s ToC. The table below shows the direction of travel and the future outcomes to which the achievements under this pathway are expected to lead, if sustained beyond the BRE-TA project.

Table 13: Main achievements in relation to future outcomes for DRF Pathway 3

Building block	Workstream outcome (ToC)	Contribution to progress under Pathway 3
Money In	Increased ex-ante resources from govt. savings and other sources mobilized for mitigating residual risks.	There has been substantial progress towards this outcome. In terms of external financing, submissions worth \$35m have been submitted to international climate funds. Moreover, the collaborative learn-by-doing approach to preparing proposals whereby GoE was firmly in the driver seat, has left MOF in a better position regarding its ability to bid for and secure more external climate finance.

G.6 What mechanisms underpin the achievement of outcomes under this workstream?

The following were the key mechanisms that enabled achievement under this workstream¹⁸³:

- The strong expertise of the TA and high quality of their contributions.
- Flexibility of the TA (including willingness of embedded advisors to work on MoF priorities not directly related to BRE-TA’s mandate).
- The standing of national TA in GoE and their existing networks and connections.
- A demand-driven approach to identifying areas of technical assistance and capacity support.
- The focus on capacity building, through trainings, learning seminars, and on-the-job support.
- Coordination with MoF counterparts.
- Work in a cross-cutting manner via coordination other workstreams of BRE-TA, and through that access to other institutions.

¹⁸³ These mechanisms are drawn from the two outcome harvesting workshops held in October 2023, one with GoE officials and the other with BRE-TA staff.

G.7 Lessons and recommendations

G.7.1 Lessons learned

Aligning with MoF's interests and building on nascent efforts builds trust and buy-in and helps ensure effectiveness. For example, MoF took the first step towards recognising the importance of fiscal risks in 2019, and on this basis BRE-TA supported the quantification of disaster related risks. As detailed earlier, these efforts were critical to follow-on achievements.

Focusing on capacity building, not replacement, ensures relevance and impact. The central involvement of government staff in designing climate finance project proposals, in preparing evidence-based budgets or climate smart plans, in conducting VfM and opportunity cost studies, and in designing the DRFS, was key to their relevance and impact. BRE-TA adopted an advisory/support role in all of these.

Close involvement of the MoF in the development of bespoke technical approaches ensures relevance and sustainability. For example, the team engaged regularly with the MoF and sectoral representatives during the budget tagging piloting phase when the most suitable tagging approach was being tested out.

Building upon existing systems and processes helps ensure viability and sustainability. The climate smart local planning process made use of existing planning processes, while the budget tagging system integrated into the existing chart of accounts, and the evidence-based budgeting training focused on improving existing programme-based budgets. By relying on the planning and budget tools already in use, BRE-TA ensured the viability and sustainability of its operations.

Taking the time to generate evidence and build the case, rather than jumping straight into developing 'solutions', enhances effectiveness. TA in the area of disaster risk finance, tends to treat the development of a DRF strategy as the first step, which can lead to strategies which are developed by donor agencies with minimal government buy-in. BRE-TA spent the first two years of the project building understanding within the MoF as to why disasters deserved to be on its agenda.

Using targeted, localised research to inform national policy decisions helps ensure understanding and buy-in. Global evidence, or evidence for other countries is less compelling than national evidence. The opportunity cost study and work on evidence-based budgeting demonstrated this clearly.

Support to related learning exchange and training tours augurs well for sustained cooperation and focused involvement from government partners. Peer learning opportunities in the preparation of the DRFS, the design of the budget tagging system, and the quantification of fiscal risks, were identified as particularly valuable by MoF counterparts.

Bringing an impartial approach to the problem builds trust and buy-in. BRE-TA acts as a trusted independent adviser to the government, the project or its implementers had no financial products to "sell". This helped build trust and buy-in.

Publishing outputs is a means of increasing awareness and underpinning sustainability. The fiscal risks model's outputs have been published in routine publications, thereby generating an expectation that it will continue to be updated and used. Similarly,

GoE endorsement and publication of the VfM report, the Opportunity Cost study, and the DRFS underpins their prospects for implementation.

G.7.2 Recommendations

Future programmes should integrate the lessons from BRE-TA detailed above. Moreover, subsequent engagements in Ethiopia on the DRF agenda should:

- **Continue to build on momentum and progress achieved with the national Government.** Key areas in need of further support should include designing the new instruments specified in the DRF strategy, expanding and updating the fiscal risk model, and responding to feedback on proposals from the climate funds
- **Replicate key achievements of BRE-TA DRF workstream at the regional level, taking time to build demand and evidence first.** Some of the deliverables described in this annex had the ambition for future replication at regional level (including the budget tagging system and the DRF strategy). This would appear to be a strategic direction to take, given the regional nature of aspects of Ethiopia's risk profile. However, in line with learning at the national level under BRE-TA, engagement with regional authorities on DRF should take the time to generate evidence and build the case, prior to pursuing solutions, even where those solutions have proven effective at the national level. Moreover, different regions should be expected to adopt different paths to achieving fiscal resilience to disaster risks.

Annex H: Summary of lessons from the learning notes

Learning notes were prepared towards the end of BRE-TA's core implementation period. The objective of the notes was **to capture key learnings across two cross-cutting themes** (sub-national programming and conflict sensitivity/gender equality and social inclusion (CS/GESI)) **and across the project's four workstreams**. These learnings could then be used **to inform future programming**.¹⁸⁴

The content of the learnings was discussed at a workshop held in Ethiopia in December 2023, attended by officials from the Government of Ethiopia (GoE) and by BRE-TA's donors (FCDO and USAID), along with the BRE-TA team. The learnings were refined during the workshop and subsequently finalised and recirculated among the participants.

This annex provides the summaries from the final version of each learning note.

H.1 Summary of lessons from the learning notes on DRM sub-national programming

1. Tailor the project to the needs and capacities of the regional government hosts, but ensure a good working relationship with the federal counterpart.
2. Focus on regional governments with well-established systems in the first instance, but involve other regions at a lower level of intensity from the start.
3. Extend support to lower levels of government after strengthening the regional core, particularly zones.
4. Prioritise gender, equality, and social inclusion in DRM.
5. Consider whether to attach capital funds to technical assistance, and use multi-party MoUs to manage expectations and define obligations.
6. Plan for the technical assistance to be provided for a minimum of ten years.
7. Organise a formal launch of the new project.
8. Ensure that the managing agent develops theories of change aligned with government policies, undertakes regular political economy and institutional analysis, selects credible and trusted staff, and invests in peer learning.
9. Strengthen coordination across government and beyond it.
10. Improve the targeting of DRM services.

¹⁸⁴ In line with the recommendation from the VfM assessment of the year 2022 that suggested that the programme "...distil learning to inform other programmes, and help donors to develop follow-on work where there is demand from government". BRE-TA, VfM Assessment for the year 2022, 6 March 2023.

H.2 Summary of lessons from the DRM workstream learning note

- **Early and continuous investment in building relationships and developing trust were critical to later achievements.** This included ensuring the timely delivery of quality outputs and ad-hoc support when requested by the government. It also involved patiently building shared understanding of problems and consensus on the way forward.
- **Developing a solid evidence base was a critical step in making the case for reform.** In the case of the DRM policy and legal framework, it took considerable time and effort to build the evidence base, and some observers expressed frustration at the initial slow pace of reform. But it paid off by providing a solid foundation for the way forward, while also helping to deepen the relationship with the EDRMC and a shared understanding of what reforms were needed and their relevance to others (in particular the Ministry of Finance and sectoral ministries).
- **Working simultaneously at federal and regional level strengthened results at both levels.** The federal DRM policy reform process was strengthened by inputs from the regions, while the DRM bureaus in some regions felt more engaged in the reform process and were informed early on of what it involved. This multi-level approach also helped BRE-TA understand the differences between regional administrations and their in-house DRM capacity and recognise the need for different policy and strategy processes at regional and federal levels.
- **It was important to work organically and opportunistically, waiting for the right moment to capitalise on earlier successes.** For example, the EDRMC was more open to attempt early warning system reform - which had been much contested and fraught with setbacks over a number of years - after the progress made on DRM reform and the EDRMC's repositioning in the Office of the Prime Minister, both achieved with BRE-TA support.
- **The frequency of natural disasters built a strong case for DRM reforms, while the fact that BRE-TA was available for the government when they needed it most helped build trust, including in the affected regions.** For example, BRE-TA's assistance to the government's COVID-19 response and then to the La Niña and negative Indian Ocean Dipole induced drought response was quickly put in place to address problems arising in key regions.

H.3 Summary of lessons from the PHEM workstream learning note

- **Local ownership:** from its inception, BRE-TA worked hard to ensure the government was in the lead. Activities were identified and requested by government counterparts and overseen by a technical working group led by EPHI's Deputy Director General.
- **Adding value:** the participation of experts from government and non-government stakeholders helped ensure activities were appropriately harmonised and coordinated and that BRE-TA's 'value-addition' was clear.
- **Results-oriented:** the workstream's ToC clearly described the pathways to change, with the indicators for tracking progress (outputs and outcomes) providing a roadmap towards the desired results.

- **Accountability:** close engagement of government counterparts at all stages encouraged a sense of shared accountability between the government and BRE-TA.

H.4 Summary of lessons from the SRSN workstream learning note

- **The nature of BRE-TA's aid modality required extensive discussion and agreement with the government, which slowed early implementation.**
- **The importance of establishing trust and credibility:**
 - SRSN workstream staff demonstrated their added value through high levels of technical competence and professional integrity.
 - Key positions in the workstream were held by Ethiopian nationals who shared cultural capital and experience with their government counterparts.
 - The first year of implementation focused on providing insights into the challenges of implementing the SRSN, through the applied policy research, and was a critical time in building consensus on what needed to be done.
- **The importance of flexible and responsive support.**
- **There was significant value in working simultaneously at both federal and regional levels.**
- **Pay attention to the political economy of collaboration and coordination.**
- **Ensure alignment with government plans and schedules.**

H.5 Lessons from the DRF workstream learning note

- **Importance of aligning with the MoF's interests** and building on nascent efforts already underway.
- **Essential to understand the institutional as well as the information environment** of public budgets.
- **Use targeted and localised applied policy research to inform national policy decisions but prepare it in a genuinely collaborative way.** Take time to generate evidence and build the case for reform and ensure an impartial approach to the problem at hand.
- **Close involvement of the MoF and sectors in the selection of tools** (such as a budget tagging Rio marker) was key to identifying and formulating a suitable technical approach.
- **Adopt a path of least disruption.** For example, a new layer was introduced to the budget classification in a way that would not disrupt its existing hierarchy. Similarly, it may be easier to clarify and modify roles within existing systems and structures than try to create new structures and hierarchies.
- **There is little experience of incorporating socially differentiated climate risks into local-level planning but training can address this.** Similarly, integrated cross-sectoral

planning needs to be approached in a very practical manner as organisational culture is deeply sectoral.

- **Local-level strategic planning for climate risk and uncertainty is a challenge but co-developing climate scenarios with stakeholders helped.** However, a stronger institutional entry point to locally-led climate-smart development planning is needed in order to sustain the transition.
- **Getting the oversight and governance structure right** helps to secure political interest and support for reforms.
- **As experience grows with implementing climate finance projects there will need to be a gradual shift in responsibility for delivery and ownership from federal to regional levels.** To ensure the various tools to strengthen climate finance coordination are effective then **the federal government needs to initiate a more structured way of working with the regions on climate finance projects.**

Annex I: VfM assessment against the 5 Es

Parts of this VfM assessment have been redacted to remove sensitive commercial information.

I.1 Introduction

I.1.1 Reference period

This VfM assessment covers the period January to December 2023. Some of the financial analyses only cover the period January to October 2023 to ensure timely completion of the assessment in line with BRE-TA's final reporting schedule and FCDO's project closure schedule.

As this is the final VfM assessment for BRE-TA, the judgements made are shown across the five assessments undertaken since 2019/20. **Outcomes data used to assess effectiveness, cost-effectiveness and equity in this assessment are cumulative in order to capture the changes achieved across project duration.** Financial data are also shown across the five assessments.

I.1.2 VfM framework

The assessment should be read in conjunction with the BRE-TA VfM framework for 2023,¹⁸⁵ which shows the conceptual framework and the full rubrics used for the assessment. Note that in the assessment **the five criteria are in a different order than used in the VfM framework.** The rationale for this is as follows:

- The Efficiency section comes first, as it describes project delivery and key management practices.
- The Effectiveness section follows, as it assesses BRE-TA contribution further along the results chain to intermediate outcomes.
- The Equity section is next, as it reviews how GESI considerations have informed delivery and intermediate outcomes.
- The Economy section follows, as it discusses the costs incurred to deliver the achievements secured during the year.
- The Cost-effectiveness section is last, as it considers the relationship between all outcomes to which the project has contributed and total cost, as well as the project's approach to sustainability of outcomes.

I.1.3 How VfM judgements are made

A judgement on VfM is made against each criterion (the Es). Generally, all the standards at a given level of the standards table and below must be met. For example, to merit a judgement of Good, all standards for Good and Adequate must generally be met. However, **the judgement is ultimately a reflection of the totality of the evidence presented, such that a small shortfall at one level may be cancelled out by achievements at a higher level.** Whether a standard has been 'Met' or 'Not Met' is shown in the standards tables ('Not applicable' (N/A) is used where all higher standards have been met), so that judgements are

¹⁸⁵OPM (2023) 'BRE-TA Value for Money Framework for 2023 VfM assessment, v5, July 2023', Oxford, United Kingdom.

transparent, traceable and challengeable. The evidence and rationale for each judgement is shown in a summary box at the end of each criterion, and in a summary in Table 14.

I.1.4 Sources

The sources of evidence used for this assessment include:

- Discussions among key government counterparts during an **outcome harvesting workshop** on 17th October 2023. The 26 participants represented the following **institutions**: EDRMC and a regional DRM office, MoH, EPHI and two regional Public Health Institutes, the FSCO from MoA and regional Bureaus of Agriculture, and MoF.
- Discussions among national and international BRE-TA staff representing all four workstreams, the GESI team, and BRE-TA management and administration, during an **outcome harvesting workshop** on 19-20th October 2023.
- Interviews with **informants from key regional government institutions**, and one informant from the federal MoF, conducted in September-November 2023.
- Interviews with **two informants from FCDO** conducted in September 2023.¹⁸⁶
- **Interviews with BRE-TA management and administrative staff.**
- Data from **OPM's financial system.**
- **Relevant BRE-TA documents** including 2023 quarterly reports, quarterly KPIs, and the BRE-TA Project Completion Report (BRE-TA PCR) submitted to FCDO in mid-January 2024.

Much of the material needed for the VfM assessment appears in the BRE-TA PCR, to which this assessment is annexed, and **cross-referenced where relevant, rather than repeat information**, in order to produce a more concise report.

Financial data are based on costs invoiced to FCDO and USAID from January-October¹⁸⁷ 2023. Some transactions undertaken before the reporting period are included, if they were invoiced at the beginning of the year, and some transactions undertaken at the end of the year are excluded, if they were invoiced after October 2023.

I.1.5 VfM team

The assessment was carried out by the **BRE-TA VfM expert (a member of the Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) team) and the BRE-TA Project Manager**, with inputs from other BRE-TA team members (the Team Leader, MEL team, and management and operations staff in Addis Ababa and Oxford). The financial analyses were undertaken by the BRE-TA Project Administrator. The report was reviewed by the Team Leader.

¹⁸⁶ An interview with USAID staff was requested.

¹⁸⁷ November and December 2023 were not included in order to facilitate timely completion of the assessment before project closure. The exclusion of the months of November and December is unlikely to bias our financial analyses – we do not believe that expenses invoiced during November and December differ in any substantive way from other months.

I.1.6 Organisation of the VfM assessment

The rest of the assessment is organised as follows:

- Section I.2 summarises VfM judgements for 2023 and across all five VfM assessments made during the project.
- Section I.3 provides evidence and judgement against each VfM criterion.
- Section I.4 presents progress against recommendations made in the 2022 assessment.
- Section I.5 discusses learning from this VfM assessment that may be useful for future TA projects.

I.2 Judgements on project VfM

I.2.1 VfM judgement for 2023

Table 22 presents the judgements for each criterion (the Es), along with a summary of the evidence, for 2023 (the evidence and rationale are presented in detail in the next section). **The evidence is presented in relation to the sub-criteria set out in the agreed VfM framework and should be read in conjunction with the framework document.**¹⁸⁸

An overall judgement for the project in 2023 is proposed. As stated in the VfM framework (2023, p3), because the project is nearing completion, **greater weight goes to the effectiveness, cost-effectiveness and equity criteria, which are collectively about results, and less weight on the economy and efficiency criteria, which are related to inputs and outputs.** This has become irrelevant since judgments of Excellent are proposed against each criteria, therefore giving a **judgement of Excellent overall.**

Table 14: VfM judgements for 2023

VfM criterion	VfM judgement 2023	Summary of evidence for judgement in 2023
Efficiency	Excellent	<p>Outputs were judged to be of high quality and relevance by project stakeholders, and the work has been completed within budget and largely as planned. Delays to completion of deliverables, where they occurred, were largely due to the need to work at the pace of the government.</p> <p>There is good evidence that the project was implemented adaptively, even within the constraints of careful planning needed in the final year. The adaptive approach used across the project lifetime, with careful and patient work in the early years, paid off in later years and enhanced results significantly.</p> <p>Sound planning processes involving key government counterparts were used to ensure an appropriate mix of inputs and activities. A comprehensive planning process in late 2022-early 2023 ensured that finite resources were allocated to interventions with the potential to maximise outcomes, while some initiatives lacking traction were dropped.</p> <p>The project followed good practice to manage key efficiency drivers; variance of spend against budget was just 3% from January-October 2023.</p>

¹⁸⁸OPM (2023) 'BRE-TA Value for Money Framework for 2023 VfM assessment, v5, July 2023', Oxford, United Kingdom.

VfM criterion	VfM judgement 2023	Summary of evidence for judgement in 2023
Effectiveness	Excellent	<p>The project achieved, or made important contributions to, all of its intended intermediate outcomes, and overachieved against some of them, in the context of a number of constraining factors. The intermediate outcomes that have not yet been fully achieved are expected to be realised soon, and were delayed due to internal processes within GoE that were beyond BRE-TA's control.</p> <p>The project followed good practice to manage key effectiveness drivers; at 91%, the proportion of national staff in the core full-time team was above the level of 80% set in the commercial proposal.</p>
Equity	Excellent	<p>The GESI Advisor reported substantial improvement in the workstreams' understanding of the importance of GESI and ability to use GESI evidence to inform design of their activities and outputs. The improvements were realised through staff training and the introduction of guides and tools.</p> <p>The project has demonstrated that GESI considerations have been integrated into workstream activities and deliverables. This was accomplished through planned activities with Gender Directorates and MoWSA, including training, workshops, and a new GESI Community of Practice, alongside direct initiatives by the workstreams and relevant ministries.</p> <p>There was greater demand from government for BRE-TA support on GESI in this last year, and there is good evidence that government incorporated GESI considerations into the development of workstream intermediate outcomes (such as policies, plans and guidelines). BRE-TA has put measures in place to help government to continue this work.</p>
Economy	Excellent	<p>The project followed good practice to manage key economy drivers and costs, and secured good cost savings through 2023-2024.</p> <p>The average unit costs for key inputs (fees and reimbursables) were almost all below agreed benchmarks. The main exception was the weighted average fee rate for project leadership; the Team Leader's higher fee rate was no longer offset by the lower fee rate of one of the Deputy Team Leaders who left in 2022 and was not replaced. The average cost of flights was slightly above the benchmark due to three business class tickets (approved by FCDO for medical reasons), but below the benchmark without these tickets. As these were the only exceptions, the project met the standard for Good VfM for this sub-criterion, allowing it to meet the conditions for Excellent for the Economy criterion.</p> <p>The percentage of total fees spent on technical work was nearly 89%, well above the benchmark of 75%.</p>

VfM criterion	VfM judgement 2023	Summary of evidence for judgement in 2023
Cost-effectiveness	Excellent	<p><i>Narrative accounts of workstream progress in the BRE-TA PCR confirm that there has been movement towards all of the workstream outcomes shown on the ToCs, and in some cases the changes have been quite significant. There is some evidence that the collaboration between BRE-TA and the government has helped to improve the government's response to recent shocks. There is still plenty to do, but given there was no expectation workstream outcomes could be fully achieved within five years, the evidence is sufficient to justify a judgement of Excellent.</i></p> <p><i>The project has generated a number of additional positive effects and no known negative effects, thereby extending the overall value provided by BRE-TA beyond expected outcomes within the resources available to the project.</i></p> <p><i>From the very beginning BRE-TA went to great lengths to maximise the likelihood that the reform processes supported would continue, and the gains achieved can be sustained. This was complemented by comprehensive sustainability and transition planning in 2022, and actions to disseminate project learning and secure further support where needed in 2023. It is, however, important to recognise that five years is a short period for systems strengthening work, and there are risks to the progress that has been made.</i></p>
Project VfM	Excellent	The project met the standards for Excellent against all sub-criteria.

I.2.2 VfM judgements for project duration (2019/20-2023)

Table 15: VfM judgements for project duration (2019/20 to 2023)

VfM criterion	Evaluative judgement 2019/20 ¹⁸⁹	Evaluative judgement 2020	Evaluative judgement 2021	Evaluative judgement 2022	Evaluative judgement 2023
Efficiency	N/A	Good	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent
Effectiveness	N/A	Good	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent
Equity	N/A	Good	Good	Good	Excellent
Economy	Good	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent
Cost-effectiveness	N/A	Excellent	Good	Good	Excellent

¹⁸⁹ The first VfM assessment, after 8 months of implementation (October 2019 to May 2020) focused only on the Economy criterion as it was too early to make judgements on delivery and results-related criteria.

VfM criterion	Evaluative judgement 2019/2020 ¹⁸⁹	Evaluative judgement 2020	Evaluative judgement 2021	Evaluative judgement 2022	Evaluative judgement 2023
Project VfM	N/A	Good	Good	Good	Excellent

The project was **judged to provide good VfM overall (i.e. 'Project VfM') in the first four assessments, rising to excellent VfM in this last assessment.** There was improvement on every sub-criterion, from good to excellent VfM, at some stage in the project.

There was only **one deterioration in the scoring, when cost-effectiveness fell from excellent to good from 2020 to 2021.** This was because, although there were promising early signs that the project was on course to contribute to its higher-level workstream outcomes (the outcomes shown in yellow at the top of the ToCs¹⁹⁰), at that stage the project was too far away from being able to judge contributions to all of the workstream outcomes. 2021 was the first year we assessed contribution to higher level outcomes (cost-effectiveness sub-criterion 1). In the prior year (2020), cost-effectiveness was judged on only two of the three criteria, meaning the bar for a judgement of excellent was lower.

I.3 Findings on VfM criteria

I.3.1 Efficiency

Table 16: Standards for Efficiency

Performance	Sub-criteria
Excellent	Project outputs are judged to be of <i>high</i> quality, value and usefulness by key stakeholders, and are completed within available resources allowing for delays caused by stakeholders (technical efficiency) [MET] The project can demonstrate that it has enhanced results <i>significantly</i> through adaptive management (dynamic efficiency) [MET] And meets all criteria under 'good' performance
Good	Project outputs are generally judged to be of <i>good</i> quality, value and usefulness by key stakeholders, with <i>only a few exceptions</i> , and are completed within available resources allowing for delays caused by stakeholders (technical efficiency) [N/A] The project can demonstrate that it has enhanced results <i>moderately</i> through adaptive management (dynamic efficiency) [N/A] And meets all criteria under 'adequate' performance
Adequate	Project outputs are generally judged to be of <i>acceptable</i> quality, value and usefulness by key stakeholders, <i>with only a few exceptions</i> , and are completed within available resources allowing for delays caused by stakeholders (technical efficiency) [N/A] The project has processes in place for adaptive management, but cannot demonstrate that these have enhanced project performance (dynamic efficiency) [N/A]

¹⁹⁰ The workstream ToCs are shown at the beginning of their respective annexes (Annexes D-G) in the BRE-TA PCR.

Performance	Sub-criteria
	The project can demonstrate that it uses sound planning processes to determine an appropriate mix of inputs and activities which collectively can maximise outcomes and impact (allocative efficiency) [MET] The project can demonstrate that it is following good practice to manage key efficiency drivers [MET]
Poor	Any of the criteria for 'adequate' not met

Providing VfM at Efficiency level requires not only the conversion of inputs into outputs, but also:

- That outputs are of good quality, relevant, and useful to key stakeholders.
- The flexibility to adapt planned activities and outputs as conditions evolve.
- Identifying the 'right' mix of inputs and activities which, in combination, can maximise the likelihood of achieving outcomes.
- Good management of 'drivers' that enable efficient project delivery, including sound project and financial management and coordination.

These are examined in turn below.

Sub-criterion 1: Completion of outputs,¹⁹¹ judged to be of quality, value and useful by key stakeholders, and within budget, allowing for changes due to adaptive management and/or delays caused by project stakeholders (technical efficiency)

The 2023 quarterly reports contain a full account of deliverables and activities by each workstream during 2023. A full list of the key deliverables produced by each workstream throughout BRE-TA's lifetime is shown in Annex A. **The project produced a total of 126 key deliverables against 20 TOs.** The deliverables were completed within available resources (i.e. the project has not overspent against the overall budget). Outputs and deliverables were largely completed in line with the TOs and workplans, with few delays to completion, largely due to the need to work at the pace of the government.

Some of the deliverables were, or led to, global or continental firsts:

- Based on a new WHO Guideline, the PHEM team worked with the GoE to produce **the first IARs, instead of AARs.** The IARs are intended to identify practical areas for immediate remediation and improvement during an ongoing response, whereas AARs seek to learn lessons after a shock has passed.
- The **budget tagging system developed by the MoF with BRE-TA support uses joint tags to identify both disaster and climate spending in one system.** It represents a significant time saving innovation (many budget lines would be

¹⁹¹ The terms 'outputs' and 'deliverables' are used synonymously throughout this report. In the BRE-TA project, outputs (shown in the workstream ToCs) are a high-level summary of the deliverables detailed in the TOs. Deliverables include activities and the selection and placement of technical assistants (federal and regional), as well as written documents. The workstream ToCs are shown at the beginning of their respective annexes (D-G) in the BRE-TA PCR.

considered climate change adaptation and risk reduction expenditure, and so this avoids the need to tag the same lines twice). Other countries are considering adopting a similar system based on Ethiopia's example. For example, the Department of Budget Management in the Philippines is considering integrating disasters into its climate change expenditure tracking system, in part based on the learning from Ethiopia.

- The **first Climate PEFA in Africa**.
- The first **sub-national risk informed plans prepared in Africa** (VRAM-EPRPs).

BRE-TA's activities and outputs were judged to be of high quality, value and usefulness by key stakeholders. KPI scores agreed with FCDO (KPI 1.1¹⁹²) (5 for Qs1-3) indicated that deliverables met and sometimes exceeded requirements.¹⁹³ The project also met FCDO's expectations around deliverables set out in the **logframe indicator 1.1 annual milestone,¹⁹⁴ as it has in every year since the start of the project (see Section 3 and Annex A.1 of the BRE-TA PCR).**

An informant from the MoF highlighted that technical discussions in BRE-TA organised workshops and events were 'highly relevant to my work' and that new approaches introduced by BRE-TA (such as budget tagging, evidence-based budgeting, and climate risk informed budgeting) helped the Ministry to improve its budgeting processes:

"The entry of BRE[-TA] into our work has provided significant support and guidance in these areas, enhancing the effectiveness and efficiency of our budgeting processes.....The technical support was valuable because we have had consistent [project] budget implementation challengesBRE[-TA]-supported technical discussions provided a crucial awareness and mechanisms for solutions to our challenges".¹⁹⁵

Regional government partners interviewed for the regional learning note indicated their **satisfaction with the TAs embedded in their regions**. Based on informant accounts, the learning note observes that, despite initial challenges,

"....over time, the RTAs established themselves as valuable resources to improve the effectiveness of existing systems within the limitations regions faced. They did so through personal endeavour, technical competence, and the flexibility to help out where asked.....".¹⁹⁶

FCDO staff informants also received feedback on the quality of BRE-TA's work during field visits to Amhara in early 2023:

"We tried to push the people we were interviewing to say a bit about what it was in particular that they liked about BRE[-TA], because it was clear there w[ere] also other

¹⁹² "Milestones/deliverables on time to the satisfaction of the client".

¹⁹³ KPIs are out of a maximum total of 6, where 1 is low and 6 is high.

¹⁹⁴ "Core deliverables from relevant TOs delivered to government and signed off".

¹⁹⁵ Interview with MOF official, 3 November 2023

¹⁹⁶ BRE-TA, 2023. Supporting sub-national disaster risk management lessons from the BRE-TA project in Ethiopia., section 4.

*players working in this space, but what was particularly valued is the quality of the technical advice and quality of the consultants BRE[-TA] is bringing”.*¹⁹⁷

Table 17 shows spend and number of days invoiced by workstream¹⁹⁸ in 2023 to produce their activities and outputs. It is important to note that **the relative spend across workstreams reflects many different factors.** Each workstream supports a different set of partners, faces different obstacles and challenges, and needs to prioritise different kinds of activities and deliverables. These, in turn, require different kinds and combinations of expertise, at different costs.

Ranking of spend and number of days invoiced correlate across workstreams. DRM spend was highest due to the high number of full-time staff (including a high number on TO#19). PHEM ranked second due to the advisors taken on at the request of FCDO from the Sustaining and Accelerating Primary Health in Ethiopia (SAPHE) project, as well as a number of Regional Technical Advisors (RTAs). DRF spend was also at the higher end due to the number of staff hired by the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) under TO#9. SRSN spend was lower than the other workstreams due to a smaller number of RTAs, some of whom left during the year and were not replaced. Spend on OR and the COVID-19 work package was low as both were wrapped up early in the year.

Table 17: Spend and number of days invoiced per workstream, 2023

Workstream	Spend			No of days		
	Spend	Share of total	Rank	No of days	Share of total	Rank
DRM	£1,347,688	34.0%	1	4579	38.3%	1
PHEM	£974,738	24.6%	2	2366	19.8%	2
SRSN	£528,991	13.4%	4	2100	17.6%	4
DRF	£942,962	23.8%	3	2348	19.7%	3
OR	£165,361	4.2%	5	484	4.1%	5
COVID-19	£1,985	0.05%	6	64	0.5%	6

Source: Project Administrator. Based on costs invoiced to FCDO from January-October 2023.

Sub-criterion 2: Evidence that the project is managed adaptively to reflect evolving opportunities and risks, respond to Government needs, and build on learning, and resources are reallocated accordingly; and results are enhanced through adaptive management (dynamic efficiency)

FCDO indicated that BRE-TA worked flexibly and adaptively. Scores against KPI 4 (5 for Q1-Q3) indicate that FCDO judged the TA project to be meeting, and sometimes exceeding, requirements in terms of being adaptive and responsive. FCDO staff interviewed for this assessment noted that:

“The [project] has been quite good at picking up on opportunities and working in spaces where there is traction. It’s very clear that there have been constraints and drivers and barriers that are related to some of the incentive structures within the

¹⁹⁷ Interview with FCDO staff, 21 September 2023.

¹⁹⁸ Spend includes fees and reimbursable expenses. Fees are for the core team and subcontractors working on TOs. Reimbursables include expenses for the core team and subcontractors, and activities such as workshops. Time is that invoiced by the core team and subcontractors working on TOs.

system that BRE[-TA] has had to negotiate and navigate, and I think it has done it quite well on the whole”.¹⁹⁹

Feedback from government informants indicated that, on the whole, they found BRE-TA to be responsive and adaptive. Federal government partners noted that “...one of BRE-TA’s strengths was that it was relatively flexible and dynamic”,²⁰⁰ and regional government partners reported that individual RTAs “...were responsive to their concerns and needs”.²⁰¹

Stakeholders from regional governments interviewed for the regional learning note²⁰² indicated that the **strategy used during BRE-TA – with regional work evolving outwards from the centre, as an extension of federally-designed initiatives – meant that some initiatives were not sufficiently adapted to regional circumstances and challenges.** The regional learning note argues for a greater focus on regionally defined and led projects in the future, with significant initial investment in discussing and agreeing programmatic approach and design with regional governments. Such an approach was not an option in BRE-TA, in which regional support for DRM only started two years into the project, around the COVID-19 response, and grew incrementally based on a federally negotiated package of support. BRE-TA has identified lessons from this experience that can help to inform future sub-national programming.

BRE-TA’s ability to be responsive to emerging needs and demands from the government and its donors was more limited in this last year of the project than in previous years, due to the need to allocate all remaining resources carefully to the highest priority work (see more information below under Efficiency sub-criterion 3). This was acknowledged by FCDO staff:

“[BRE-TA] was certainly a responsive [project] – now less so because we have programmed all the resources.....and its normal that there is little flexibility to take on additional work”.²⁰³

Despite these constraints, the project **continued to respond proactively and reallocate resources to emerging opportunities as far as it could during 2023.** For example, in response to improvements in security conditions in Tigray and Afar regions, BRE-TA deployed a PHEM Advisor to each state. The Advisors took up their posts late in the year (September 2023), but were still able to contribute to important outcomes, including adaptation of the national PHEM Strategy to their regions, and operationalisation of the VRAM/EPRP planning. Work also quickly proceeded to include Tigray’s Mekelle University among the universities that incorporated emergency nutrition into their curricula. BRE-TA also reacted quickly to the splintering of the former SNNP into four new regions in late 2023, responding to requests to strengthen DRM capacity, for instance through provision of DRIP training to new officials in each region. FCDO staff recognised that BRE-TA’s flexibility to pick up consultants that had been working on another project, at FCDO’s request, enabled “really important support on emergency health work in Tigray” to continue.

¹⁹⁹ Interview with FCDO staff, 23 September 2023.

²⁰⁰ Based on FCDO Annual Reviews: <https://devtracker.fcdo.gov.uk/projects/GB-GOV-1-300363/documents>.

²⁰¹ BRE-TA (2023) ‘Supporting sub-national disaster risk management: lessons from the BRE-TA project in Ethiopia’, OPM, Oxford, United Kingdom, see section 4.

²⁰² BRE-TA (2023) ‘Supporting sub-national disaster risk management: lessons from the BRE-TA project in Ethiopia’, OPM, Oxford, United Kingdom.

²⁰³ Interview with FCDO staff, 23 September 2023.

Being adaptive and working ‘with the grain’ required a lot of careful and patient work in the first three years of the project. During this time there were significant investments in small, incremental steps to build trust and develop critical evidence bases and policy options in response to reform opportunities, while navigating highly political and contested issues. **These adaptive processes, with careful prioritisation of activities, and the reallocation of resources in response to opportunities, paid off in the final stages of the project and enhanced results significantly.** This is demonstrated by the large range of outcomes reported in the BRE-TA PCR (see Section 3 and Annexes D-G), and especially the particularly hard-fought-for results such as the DRM Policy and legal framework, the DRFS, cascading training on the SRSN Operational Manual, and the integrated emergency nutrition plan.

FCDO staff recognised that **BRE-TA’s responsive and ‘demand-led’ approach was important to get traction and achieve more than it otherwise would have:**

“If we had been [more directive], the [project] might not have achieved as much as it has”; “...the demand-driven nature of BRE was also the reason why BRE had more traction ...than other support programmes”; “Unless you have something that is country led – the likelihood that any of this would stick is limited.”²⁰⁴

Sub-criterion 3: Evidence that sound planning processes are used to determine an appropriate mix of inputs and activities which collectively can maximise outcomes and impact (allocative efficiency)

BRE-TA undertook a comprehensive planning and rebudgeting process from late 2022 into 2023 in order to direct effort and resources to key priority interventions identified through the sustainability planning process that required a ‘final push’. Other activities that were no longer a priority to the government, or had little chance of progressing in the remaining time, were deprioritised. The prioritisation exercise was based on: (1) the Sustainability Strategy which, by late 2022, had identified priority actions for 2023 for BRE-TA to complete to maximise the sustainability of key reforms; and (2) a final review of the workstreams ToCs in early 2023, which helped to identify which expected intermediate outcomes were most ‘achievable’ in the last year of implementation.

The remaining **budget was reallocated accordingly**, with significant funds moved out of the core budget to active TOs in a major contract amendment approved by FCDO in June 2023.

The project took difficult decisions to deprioritise some interventions that had not gained sufficient traction. This was critical, as it meant that resources allocated to activities that were unlikely to be productive could be redirected to more promising interventions to maximise outcomes. Interventions that were deprioritised included:

- Attempts to set up a **Project Partners Implementation Committee (PPIC)**. The PPIC was convened by EDRMC in 2022 as a way to improve coordination and alignment across development partners involved in DRM. But by mid-2023 it was clear that the idea of EDRMC leading the coordination of DRM had not gained traction among development partners, and the BRE-TA resources allocated to setting it up should be redirected to more productive areas.

²⁰⁴ Interview with FCDO staff, 23 September 2023.

- BRE-TA inputs to PSNP’s idea of preparing a **Drought Risk Financing Strategy** (DrFS) were dropped. Work on the DrFS had been slow and felt increasingly out of step with the government’s desire for a ‘multi-hazard, multi-response’ system of social protection, with the need for funding captured under the broader DRFS under responsibility of the MoF. The SRSN and DRF workstreams therefore prioritised other work on the DRFS and helping the government to secure much-needed climate finance.

The Senior Management Team played a key role in this process, holding the ‘big picture’ across workstreams, ensuring coherence across workstreams, and determining where the remaining finite resources could be put to best use.

The expectation described in our last VfM report, following an encouraging meeting in late 2022, that the BRE-TA Steering Committee would play a more active role in BRE-TA’s planning, particularly around sustainability, were ultimately not fulfilled. After a promising start at the beginning of 2023, with a pre-Committee technical meeting to develop a concrete workplan for 2023, renewed tensions among donors and the government around food aid diversion and conflict in Amhara meant the Committee did not reconvene until a final meeting in December 2023. This was not detrimental to BRE-TA’s planning and consultation processes, as **the workstream-level TWGs, composed of Director-level technical leads from government and BRE-TA staff, played a critical role in ensuring that BRE-TA plans and activities remained strategically aligned with government and donor priorities.**

Sub-criterion 4: The project is following good practice to manage key efficiency drivers

- See **Box 5** below for evidence against this sub-criterion. In summary, the evidence demonstrates that the project followed good practice to manage key efficiency drivers:
- **Delivery and spending are closely tracked** to ensure early identification of potential problems; there was **no significant variance against budget** for the 10-month period to October 2023 (spend was 3% under forecast).
- **Significant cross-workstream collaboration** has been crucial to developing synergies and ensure progress towards intermediate outcomes.

Box 5: Key efficiency drivers and associated good practices

Project and financial management

Definition in the VfM framework: Detailed quarterly workplans/trackers and budgets are monitored closely on a regular basis, with remedial action taken promptly to address significant positive or negative variance in spend and delivery

Project delivery is monitored against the workstream ToCs and deliverables tracker in the monthly reports and associated meetings. The tracker allows granular tracking of deliverables against the plans and budgets laid out in TOs and early identification of potential delivery problems. Spending was closely monitored on a weekly basis during 2023 in order to bring the project in on budget, avoid underspend of available funds, and ensure optimal allocation of available resources to the highest priority interventions. The Team Leader, Project Manager and Project Coordinator worked closely with the workstreams throughout the year to streamline their TO budgets, based on realistic planning. This culminated in a contract amendment in June 2023 to move savings from the core budget to increase the TO ceiling. FCDO staff stated that they were *“really pleased with how the finances have been*

*managed, including accurate forecasting and clear expenditure reporting, sometimes at short notice”.*²⁰⁵

Variance of spend from budget was approximately 3% across the 10-month period January-October 2023. Variance was high in March 2023 (overspend of 66% when a BRE-TA partner submitted a large invoice) and in August and September 2023 (underspend of 29% in both months, due to delays waiting for approvals on two large pieces of work (contracting for the EW implementation plan and SRSN’s cascade training in Tigray)). Monthly variance can be difficult to control due to the demand nature of the project (it is difficult to plan too far in advance and often there are last minute requests), and because the timing of large invoices from partner organisations can be unpredictable.

Ensuring coordination and synergies across workstreams

Definition in the VfM framework: Close coordination and communication across workstreams ensure that knowledge is regularly shared and cross-team synergies are created, helping to encourage innovation and prevent siloes (OPM commercial proposal, 2018:2)

Significant collaboration across the workstreams has helped to ensure progress towards intermediate outcomes. During 2023 this included:

- **Work to strengthen the EWS has been advanced by collaboration across the DRM and SRSN workstreams**, with joint efforts to improve the EW Dashboard for PNSP’s SRSN, train EDRMC staff under the EW Bulletin Enhancement Plan, and preparing a plan to implement the EWS reform roadmap.
- **DRM and SRSN also worked together to help regional governments strengthen DRM planning capacity** at woreda level through DRIP training in Afar and Sidama.
- Work on the **DRFS and associated DRM Reserve Fund has been advanced by collaboration across all four workstreams** to ensure alignment between the DRFS and the new DRM Policy and legal framework.
- All four workstreams worked with the GESI team to bring representatives of key ministries and commissions together for **training on CS/GESI in DRM**.

Judgement against Efficiency: Excellent.

- ***Outputs were judged to be of high quality and relevance by project stakeholders**, and the work has been completed within budget and largely as planned. Delays to completion of deliverables, where they occurred, were largely due to the need to work at the pace of the government.*
- ***There is good evidence that the project was implemented adaptively**, even within the constraints of careful planning needed in the final year. The adaptive approach used across the project lifetime, with careful and patient work in the early years, paid off in later years, and enhanced results significantly.*
- ***Sound planning processes involving key government counterparts were used to ensure an appropriate mix of inputs and activities**. A comprehensive planning process in late 2022-early 2023 ensured that finite resources were allocated to interventions with the potential to maximise outcomes, while some initiatives lacking traction were dropped.*
- ***The project followed good practice to manage key efficiency drivers**; variance of spend against budget was just 3% from January-October 2023.*

²⁰⁵ Interview with FCDO staff, 21 September 2023.

I.3.2 Effectiveness

Table 18: Standards for Effectiveness

Performance	Sub-criteria
Excellent	The project has met its expected contribution to <i>all</i> of its intended intermediate outcomes in collaboration with relevant stakeholders, allowing for changes to intermediate outcomes due to adaptive management, major disruptions, and/or delays caused by project stakeholders [MET] And meets all criteria under 'good' performance
Good	The project has met <i>most</i> of its expected contribution to its intended intermediate outcomes in collaboration with relevant stakeholders, with only a <i>few minor exceptions</i> , allowing for changes to intermediate outcomes due to adaptive management, major disruptions, and/or delays caused by project stakeholders [N/A] And meets all criteria under 'adequate' performance [MET]
Adequate	The project has met <i>some</i> of its expected contribution to its intended intermediate outcomes in collaboration with relevant stakeholders, with <i>some exceptions</i> , allowing for changes to intermediate outcomes due to adaptive management, major disruptions, and/or delays caused by project stakeholders [N/A] The project can demonstrate that it is following good practice to manage key effectiveness drivers [MET]
Poor	Any of the criteria for 'adequate' not met

Providing VfM at Effectiveness level requires:

- That project activities and outputs successfully contribute to the realisation of key intended intermediate outcomes.
- Good management of 'drivers' that underpin a project's ability to contribute to outcomes, including good relationship management with key stakeholders, management of risks, using monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) information to understand progress and identify course corrections, and embedding project implementation in local knowledge and expertise.

These are examined in turn below.

Sub-criterion 1: Evidence that the project has met its expected contribution to achievement of its intended intermediate outcomes²⁰⁶ in collaboration with the relevant stakeholders, allowing for changes to intermediate outcomes due to adaptive management, major disruptions, and/or delays caused by project stakeholders

The project achieved 29 (>90%) of its 31 intermediate outcomes (shown in the blue boxes on the workstream ToCs²⁰⁷). Detailed narrative accounts of BRE-TA's contribution to the intermediate outcomes are shown in Annexes D-G of the BRE-TA PCR, and summarised in Section 3 of the BRE-TA PCR (see specifically Table 5 in Section 3).

²⁰⁶ Movement towards the higher-level outcomes in the cost-effectiveness section, sub-criterion 1.

²⁰⁷ The workstream ToCs are shown at the beginning of their respective annexes in the BRE-TA PCR.

Only two intermediate outcomes had not been fully achieved at the end of the core implementation period (December 2023²⁰⁸):

- The delay in approval of the DRM Policy during 2023 had significant knock-on effects, as EDRMC was reluctant to initiate familiarisation workshops to increase knowledge and understanding of the new policy and framework among staff in sectoral ministries and the regions (**DRM IO2²⁰⁹**), although some familiarisation happened organically during DRIP training.
- Senior-level capacity-strengthening efforts in EDRMC (**DRM IO3²¹⁰**) were constrained by various challenges, not least the demands on EDRMC of managing complex response efforts to multiple external shocks, which was further aggravated by the burden of a protracted relocation to a new office in the latter part of 2023.

The groundwork has been laid for these intermediate outcomes, and it is expected that they will be realised during 2024.

There were **a number of examples of the workstreams overachieving against the ambitions set out in their ToCs**. For example:

- DRM was mainstreamed into regional development plans in five regions (the goal was four) (DRM IO5).
- DRIP training was delivered in six regions (the goal was four) (DRM IO6).
- The work on emergency nutrition (PHEM IO3) went beyond standardised training and an integrated plan on emergency nutrition interventions, to include implementation of the plan (started in July 2022), integration of MAM into SAM surveillance and reporting, and integration of an emergency nutrition module into the masters programmes of 15 universities.
- The IARs related to the COVID-19 response (PHEM IO5) sparked two additional achievements: (1) improved RCCE, resulting in improved communications between the centre, regions and communities, particularly around cholera; and (2) a strategic framework for improved engagement with HEIs, representing a significant step from ad-hoc to systematic engagement between the health and education sectors.

BRE-TA achieved the intermediate outcomes against a **backdrop of a number of constraining factors, outlined throughout the BRE-TA PCR** (see especially Section 2.4 and Annex B), and summarised below:

- The achievement of intermediate outcomes depended on the government acting on TA recommendations and was thus within BRE-TA's sphere of influence, but not under its direct control. **Many of the issues with which BRE-TA engaged were politically-charged and contested**, and in some cases had been stagnant in the face of years of disagreement (for example, the EWS, and integration of HFA and

²⁰⁸ One intermediate outcome was achieved in late February 2024 (DRM IO1. Revised DRM Policy approved).

²⁰⁹ DRM IO2. Knowledge and understanding of new DRM Policy and legal framework increased in four sectoral ministries and five key regions.

²¹⁰ DRM IO3. Improved leadership capacity in EDRMC to coordinate DRM operations.

PNSP). Painstaking and slow work was required to build consensus and a shared plan of action among multiple stakeholder groups.

- The BRE-TA project was designed to be demand-led, in response to government needs and priorities. This was important to garner the necessary political will and buy-in for reform, and to ensure national ownership and long-term sustainability of the achievements. The consequence of this design feature was the **need to work at the pace of the government, which was frequently slower than desired due to competing demands on officials' attention, staff shortages, and high staff turnover.**
- **The biggest 'competing demand' on politicians' and officials' attention was the succession of shocks** which demanded urgent attention and action from government staff. These are described in detail in Annex B of the BRE-TA PCR.²¹¹ The nature and extent of shocks intensified in the later stages of the project, and the operating context for BRE-TA was recognised to be significantly more challenging than when the project was designed. Often the same government officials were involved in responding to real-time crises and working with BRE-TA on long-term systems reform.

The extent of the achievements meant that BRE-TA met its logframe **annual milestones against** indicator 1.2 related to outcomes,²¹² as it has in every year since the start of the project (see Section 3 and Annex A.1 of the BRE-TA PCR). **FCDO staff informants recognised the significant and wide-ranging achievements of the project:**

*"It is clear to me that this [project] has achieved a huge amount.....", and "there [are] a lot of different work strands at the technical level that have been working well in terms of pushing along and making changes in the system that gets us in the right direction".*²¹³

Overall, the BRE-TA project met the Excellent standard for this sub-criterion by achieving, or making **important contributions to, all of its intended intermediate outcomes, and overachieving against some of them, despite a number of constraining factors.** The intermediate outcomes that have not yet been fully achieved are expected to be realised soon, and were delayed due to internal processes within GoE that were beyond BRE-TA's control.

²¹¹ In 2023, these included: severe drought in southern regions, and then flooding due to unseasonal rains, leading to high levels of livestock deaths, food insecurity and malnutrition; significant numbers of IDPs, and an upward revision in humanitarian assistance requirements; food and fuel price inflation due to the war in Ukraine; and suspension of food aid following concerns of aid diversion across Ethiopia. Over the lifetime of the project, severe internal conflicts and COVID-19 also had major ramifications for project implementation.

²¹² "Significant contributions towards each of the four workstreams' long-term vision as exemplified by the completion of selected, or comparable, deliverables" (although the statement refers to deliverables, the agreed milestones represent intermediate outcomes).

²¹³ Interview with FCDO staff, 23 September 2023.

Sub-criterion 2: The project is following good practice to manage key effectiveness drivers

See **Box 6** below for evidence against this sub-criterion. In summary, the evidence demonstrates that the project followed good practice to manage key effectiveness drivers:

- BRE-TA continued to maintain **good working relationships with the government**.
- BRE-TA **engaged with a broad spectrum of relevant programmes in and beyond Ethiopia**, including the World Bank, the European Union (EU), the WHO, CDP, Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (APDC) and BBC Media Action, in order to learn from others, ensure alignment, leverage additional expertise, and secure ongoing support for the GoE beyond BRE-TA.
- Risk was managed on a weekly basis as the first item of discussion in the Senior Management Team meetings and changes captured in a **quarterly review of the Risk Matrix** with mitigation measures taken as needed.
- **MEL was used strategically to underpin strategic thinking and direction**. The intermediate outcomes on the workstream ToCs were reviewed in early 2023 to ensure they reflected project ambitions to the end of its implementation period. The project continued to use outcome harvesting to identify and review outcomes, and to distil learning to inform implementation.
- **91% of the full-time core team were nationals**, above the threshold of 80% set out in the commercial proposal. This demonstrates the project's ethos of delivery by local staff who best understand how to collaborate effectively with government on reform processes, and are likely to remain working within the Ethiopian DRM sector.

Box 6: Key effectiveness drivers and associated good practices

Good relationship management with Government

Definition in the VfM framework: The project develops and maintains good working relationships and a high level of trust with key counterparts in relevant Government ministries, departments and agencies (KPI 2.2)

BRE-TA invested heavily in developing and maintaining good working relationships with its government counterparts through

out its lifetime. There were many indications of a **high level of trust up to senior levels in government**. Some of the policy work to which BRE-TA contributed, such as the new DRM Policy and legal framework and the DRFS, illustrate confidence in BRE-TA at the highest levels of government. BRE-TA also established strong relations in the Ministry of Education (MoE) for the first time from the end of 2022, facilitating the incorporation of emergency nutrition into university curricula and preparing a framework for integrating universities into the PHEM system. The achievements described in the BRE-TA PCR could not have been secured without the ongoing and careful work to maintain good working relationships at all levels of government.

FCDO awarded a **score of 5 for Qs1-3 against KPI 2.2** ('good relationship management with Government'), and reported in its March 2023 annual review, '*...BRE TA is well regarded by GoE officials and there are indications that this element of the [project] is contributing to BRE's overarching outcome.*' Regional government officials interviewed for the regional learning note reported that the

BRE-TA RTAs had access to senior levels of government in their sectors, due to their technical, political and socio-cultural capital.²¹⁴

Collaboration with other relevant TA programmes

Definition in the VfM framework: The project engages with relevant international and national programmes in order to ensure alignment and avoid duplication (KPI 2.3)

The BRE-TA project engaged with a **broad spectrum of relevant programmes** in order to learn from the experience of others, ensure alignment, and leverage additional expertise. The quarterly reports provide information on specific collaborations during 2023, which included:

- The PHEM workstream joined the **UK-MED²¹⁵ and WHO** in supporting the MoH and EPHI to develop a National Strategy for Emergency Medical Response to guide emergency medical teams in managing mass casualties and ensuring continuity of essential health services in humanitarian situations.
- Work with **APDC** on PHEM leadership training at EPHI following agreement to use their WHO-approved PHEM leadership training programmes.
- A collaboration with **BBC Media Action** to build capacity in, and establish trust between, the media and EPHI/MoH on public health and nutrition emergencies.
- Ongoing regular collaboration with two **World Bank** teams on the SRSN component of PSNP and development of DRFS instruments.
- Collaboration with the **CDP and the UK's Government Actuary Department on disaster risk modelling and using it** to develop the DRFS, and support for a request from MoF to the CDP to continue their support to develop DRFS instruments in 2024.
- Engagement with the new '**EU Support for PFM Reforms in Ethiopia (EUSPRE)**' who want to continue the tagging and tracking support to the CRGE unit and evidence-based budgeting support to MoF.

FCDO scores of 5 for Qs1-3 against KPI 2.3 (collaboration with non-management agent funded TA and other local partners) indicate that the project was meeting, and sometimes exceeding, requirements.

Risk management

Definition in the VfM framework: There are processes in place to identify, assess and manage project risks; the risk management process is updated on a regular basis and risk management strategies are implemented effectively

Risk was managed through weekly Senior Management Team meetings and changes captured quarterly in reviews of a Risk Matrix. Each risk was rated in terms of its inherent probability, impact and criticality. Countermeasures taken to mitigate each risk were reported, and the ratings modified to reflect the countermeasures. Risks and challenges with a tangible impact on planned activities and outputs were reported in quarterly reports. One of the main risks was that of physical harm to staff or subcontractors due to security and conflict crises across the country. Staff received Hostile Environment Awareness Training (HEAT) from OPM's security provider Spearfish to minimise the risk of harm.

A particular risk flagged by FCDO, which needed close management during 2023, was the potential loss of key national staff members leaving for longer-term offers of employment. Loss of too many key staff members, especially those working directly with government, could have robbed the project of momentum towards its key outcomes. This was managed closely by the management team, with strategies in place to retain key staff where possible (for example by providing contracts for most staff through the closure period of January-March 2024), and the provision of mentoring and support to less

²¹⁴ BRE-TA, 2023. Supporting sub-national disaster risk management lessons from the BRE-TA project in Ethiopia., section 4.

²¹⁵ UK-Med is a WHO-verified Emergency Medical Team (EMT) and delivery partner of the UK Emergency Medical Team, the UK Government's frontline health response to disasters overseas - www.uk-med.org/emergency-medical-team/. Accessed 14 December 2023.

senior members of staff to enable them to step up into vacated roles (e.g. in the MEL team, Senior Management Team and the Operations team).

Project internal MEL

Definition in the VfM framework: The project has a clear ToC for each workstream and regularly reviews and updates the ToCs and its outputs and outcomes to ensure they remain relevant, and periodic review meetings feed into learning and adaptation

The project has **clear ToCs for each workstream**. The ToCs were used dynamically by the workstreams to set direction, track progress, and ensure they stayed on course towards their goals. They also provided the framework against which to report progress to donors in monthly and quarterly reports. The intermediate outcomes on the ToCs were reviewed for the last time in early 2023 to ensure they reflected the ambitions of the project to the end of its implementation period. The outputs shown on the ToCs were updated as needed, often as part of the monthly reporting process.

The project continued to use the outcome harvesting methodology to identify and review outcomes. A sense-making workshop was held in January 2023 to identify key learnings and their implications for implementation during the remainder of the project. The last outcome harvesting workshops were held, with government officials and BRE-TA regional and national staff, in October 2023. The information gathered during these workshops was used to inform this VfM assessment and the BRE-TA PCR.

National staff in the core team

Definition in the VfM framework: The ratio of the number of national to international staff in the full-time core team remains at or near the level set out in the commercial proposal (80%) (OPM, 2018:3), ensuring that local knowledge is used and outputs are relevant to the local context, while also strengthening local capacity

At the end of 2023, 91% of the full-time core team were Ethiopians (31 of 34), above the threshold of 80% in the commercial proposal. This is higher than in all past years, although it has always been above the threshold. This demonstrates the project's ethos to ensure the project is delivered by staff who understand and can navigate the cultural context most effectively and whose skills are likely to be retained and used within the DRM sector in-country at the end of BRE-TA.

Judgement against Effectiveness: Excellent.

- *The project **achieved, or made important contributions to, all of its intended intermediate outcomes**, and overachieved against some of them, in the context of a number of constraining factors. The intermediate outcomes that have not yet been fully achieved are expected to be realised soon, and were delayed due to internal processes within GoE that were beyond BRE-TA's control.*
- *The project **followed good practice to manage key effectiveness drivers**; at 91%, the proportion of national staff in the core full-time team was above the level of 80% set in the commercial proposal.*

I.3.3 Equity

Table 19: Standards for Equity

Performance	Sub-criteria
Excellent	The project can demonstrate that GESI considerations have informed the development of workstream intermediate outcomes with the relevant Government stakeholders [MET] And meets all criteria under 'good' performance [MET]

Performance	Sub-criteria
Good	The project can demonstrate that GESI considerations have been integrated into workstream activities and deliverables/outputs [MET] And meets all criteria under 'adequate' performance [MET]
Adequate	Workstreams have used context-specific GESI evidence and analysis to inform their understanding of GESI issues in the Ethiopian context, and to design their activities and deliverables/outputs accordingly [MET]
Poor	Any of the conditions for 'adequate' not met

Providing VfM at Equity level requires:

- Sound understanding of context- and project-relevant equity issues.
- Integration of relevant equity issues into project activities and outputs.
- Collaboration with key stakeholders to ensure that equity issues are integrated into policies, procedures and practices, as relevant.

These are examined in turn below.

Sub-criterion 1: Workstreams have used context-specific GESI evidence and analysis to inform their understanding of GESI issues in the Ethiopian context, and to design their activities and deliverables/outputs accordingly

Since starting on BRE-TA in August 2021, the GESI Advisor has spent a lot of time **building the capacity of the BRE-TA team**. The GESI Advisor reported that there was substantial improvement in the teams' understanding of the importance of GESI, and moreover their ability to use GESI evidence to inform design of their activities and outputs with support from the GESI team:

“Every team member asks for support or our [GESI] inputs when they design any event, and how [to make sure they are] gender sensitive.”²¹⁶

In Q1 2022, following a request from members of the BRE-TA team, the GESI Advisor and Conflict Sensitivity and Protection Advisor developed a '**Conflict Sensitivity and GESI guide**²¹⁷ to support the BRE-TA team's efforts in using conflict and sensitivity approaches while working with government. This showed an eagerness from the team to build their capacity to better integrate GESI. The GESI team have since **adapted the guide and shared it with government counterparts** – focusing on useful tools for policy formation and revision, and key questions to address at each phase, to ensure consideration of GESI.

At the start of this year, **BRE-TA rolled out the 'Gender Marker' tool (shown in Figure 9 in the BRE-TA PCR)**, designed to help staff assess how well GESI was addressed in TOs. Scores on the Marker range from 0, where GESI is not reflected, to 2b, where the purpose of the intervention is to address inequalities through targeting or by redressing power relations between groups. The marker is used by workstreams and the GESI team to improve the integration of GESI in planned activities. For example, during the implementation of the VRAM/EPRP training, an evaluation using the Gender Marker highlighted that some

²¹⁶ Interview with BRE-TA GESI Advisor, 18 August 2023.

²¹⁷ BRE-TA (2023) 'Conflict-sensitivity/GESI Guidelines for Staff', OPM, Oxford, United Kingdom.

improvements could be made. The PHEM lead, in collaboration with the GESI Advisor, sought to improve the integration of GESI in the training, despite activities having already started.

Sub-criterion 2: The project can demonstrate that GESI considerations have been integrated into workstream activities and deliverables/outputs

At the beginning of 2023, BRE-TA designed a GESI-specific workplan. This was developed following consultation with workstreams and their respective government directorates. **The aim was to assist the Gender Directorates** to advance gender equality, conflict sensitivity and social inclusion in their respective ministries by promoting and strengthening government systems and policy processes to respond to shocks in a way that benefits the most vulnerable. Due to budget constraints in the overall TO budget, activities were selected that could be implemented through existing TOs or the core budget. **The GESI team were nevertheless able to implement all but one of the activities planned under the workplan:**

- **Provide conflict sensitivity and GESI training to government counterparts and BRE-TA staff** to ensure that they have the necessary knowledge and skills to integrate GESI into their work. The training took place in May 2023 with 21 participants over four days. The training consisted of exercises to help participants to develop a common language and understanding of conflict and gender sensitivity concepts and how to apply them in their work; and how to apply participatory tools to identify and explore contextual issues relating to community conflict, gender roles, and social inclusion.
- **Follow up on the consultative workshop that took place in October 2022 with Government counterparts and BRE-TA staff.** The purpose of the workshop in October 2022 was to develop an action plan to achieve the common goals and objectives of the workshop and agree on the responsibilities and timelines to ensure accountability and support. The initial workshop was used in support of the GESI workplan development. A follow up workshop took place in August 2023, when participants provided updates on what they did after the training, tools they have used, and the impact it has had in their workplace. BRE-TA also presented case studies to the group on how it integrates GESI activities in the design and implementation of its TOs. A member of BRE-TA staff presented on the pastoral areas in DRM, as geographical vulnerability is often excluded from the policy agenda. He explained, for example, how to use existing platforms (for example the gender responsive budgeting and planning) to support GESI integration in policy.
- **Establish a Community of Practice (CoP) among the four workstream Gender Directorates** to foster collaboration, encourage knowledge sharing on best practice, lessons learned, case studies, and continue the work initiated by BRE-TA in this area. BRE-TA has developed standard operating procedures (SOPs) for the CoP which have been shared with members. On closure of BRE-TA, the Ministry of Women and Social Affairs (MoWSA) will take ownership of the TCoP, while ERDMC and Oromia Regional Health Bureau will co-chair. BRE-TA implemented a trial session in January 2024 for participants to share lessons. Engagement on the CoP focused on the federal level in 2023, but in November, BRE-TA ran a workshop for participants from the regions to share their experiences, with a view to invite them to participate in the CoP in the future.

The GESI team planned to **engage with the MoWSA as a key partner through a formal Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)**. However, as BRE-TA was entering into its closure phase, it was not appropriate to formally engage a new partner. Instead, the GESI team formed an informal relationship with MoWSA, keeping them informed of key activities through regular meetings.

The GESI team also sought to provide **capacity building to the Gender Leadership team in the humanitarian departments of government counterparts** on how to lead gender

related initiatives in the humanitarian context. Unfortunately, this was not achieved because the relevant senior management in government were not supportive of the initiative and were not able to provide budget to support the activity.

In addition to the specific GESI activities, below are key **examples of how GESI considerations have been addressed in workstream activities and deliverables** through the direct initiatives of the workstreams and relevant ministries:

- **CS/GESI programming integration into the VRAM-EPRP training.** BRE-TA introduced the ‘power walk’ tool – a group exercise that facilitates participants to ‘walk’ in someone else’s shoes and experience what it feels like to be powerless or powerful based on gender, occupation, education level, disability, age, health, or other characteristics in the face of different obstacles or shocks. The training helped “*shed a light on previously overlooked dimensions of PHEM... [and].... highlighted the need to integrate GESI considerations at all stages of emergency management. It strengthened participants’ understanding of the potential consequences of unintentional exclusion for diverse groups, and the need to consider tailored emergency response strategies to address different vulnerabilities*”.²¹⁸
- **Rapid assessment for the SRSN component of PSNP.** The assessment identified and analysed social development, gender, GRM, and nutrition issues relevant to the SRSN component of the PSNP. It examined the proposed strategies to address gaps, which included identification of vulnerable groups and understanding the impact of shocks on those groups, designing and evaluating assistance and risk mitigation measures, and planning and proposing strategies for the midterm review.
- **Gender Responsive Fiscal Policy and stimulus package of COVID-19 in Ethiopia.** The assessment reviewed the gender responsiveness of the fiscal stimulus package and existing fiscal policies and related legal frameworks to identify gaps as well as good practices to provide policy recommendations. In July 2023, the draft was presented to the PSNP Linkage to Social Services (LASS) technical committee. The SRSN team conducted a validation workshop in December and the comments received during the workshop were integrated into the final report.
- **Early Warning Bulletin Enhancement Plan.** BRE-TA supported the EDRMC’s EWRD to improve its early warning bulletins. Prior to BRE-TA involvement through the Bulletin Enhancement Plan, the bulletins only provided the number of people impacted and could not be used to target support or prioritise the needs of specific groups. The Bulletin Enhancement Plan stipulates that early warning bulletins include disaggregated data relating to need in order to target humanitarian response (including IDPs, and the food insecure).
- **Technical brief on El Nino for government partners.** In July 2023, the DRM team conducted a study and accompanying technical brief on the impact of El Nino on in the highly populated central and northern highlands and north-eastern pastoral rangelands. Both documents outline the emerging risks from El Nino (for example increased food assistance needs predicted in 2024 and through to the harvest of

²¹⁸ ReBUILD Consortium (2023) ‘Unveiling new perspectives in public health emergency management: integrating gender equality and social inclusion in vulnerability risk mapping and emergency planning’, Blog article, www.rebuildconsortium.com/public-health-emergency-management/.

2025), early actions required based on previous trends, and how women and vulnerable groups are likely to be impacted.

- The DRF workstream supported the development of a proposal to **scale up a climate adaptation project**, which included selection of woredas to implement the project. The DRF team developed a criterion based on women-headed households, so that women’s vulnerability could be used in the selection process.
- **RCCE** is a technical procedure to communicate risks and engage the community in relation to emergencies. The PHEM team developed a training manual, implementation guide and outcome assessment tool, for RCCE in collaboration with EPHI. The GESI team provided support to identify a variety of communication mechanisms that women use to ensure they are reached, e.g. community radio and agricultural health workers.

Sub-criterion 3: The project can demonstrate that GESI considerations have informed the development of workstream intermediate outcomes with the relevant Government stakeholders.

Relative to the last VfM assessment (end of 2022), the **GESI Advisor saw an improvement in understanding of the need to address GESI in DRM among members of the government, and received more requests for support in relation to GESI from members of the government**, including the request for a GESI TO to fund GESI specific activities. One key informant from the MoF stated:

*“The BRE[-TA] assistance has complemented the existing approach to equity and the need to reach the most vulnerable of communities”.*²¹⁹

The Gender Directorates have also been more engaged with BRE-TA on DRM than in 2022. The regional learning note also indicated that there has been ‘considerable demand for GESI support’ from BRE-TA at the sub-national level.²²⁰

During the final Outcome Harvesting Workshop in October 2023, the workstreams identified the degree to which the intermediate outcomes address GESI considerations. Many of these examples are described in the workstream annexes of the BRE-TA PCR (Annexes D-G). **Key examples of government’s integration of GESI integration into policies, plans and guidelines are outlined below:**

- **The DRM Policy recognises that women, children and other vulnerable groups are disproportionately affected by shocks and that their needs must be met intentionally.** For example, the Policy puts provisions in place for vulnerable groups to sit on local committees to monitor implementation and targeting of shock relief efforts and designates the MoWSA to provide special support for vulnerable groups such as disabled people, the elderly, and women, during emergencies. It also mandates that at least 35% of resources must be allocated to vulnerable groups such as people with disabilities, older people, residents of female-headed households, and pregnant and lactating women.
- **EDRMC’s DRIP training** includes guidance on ensuring that women and the most vulnerable are included in community-level planning processes, and on **integrating**

²¹⁹ Interview with MOF official, 3 November 2023.

²²⁰ BRE-TA, 2023. Supporting sub-national disaster risk management lessons from the BRE-TA project in Ethiopia., section 3.

social impact and gender equity analysis into the DRIP project management cycle.

- In Q2 2023, BRE-TA helped re-establish coordination platforms such as the Regional DRM TWGs. Participation in the TWGs has given EDRMC access to better, up-to date evidence, including **information on gender which it uses to develop and implement its disaster response and recovery plans.**
- The **national PHEM Strategic Plan addresses vulnerability and social inclusion**, stating, for example, that service providers should ensure that services expand to reach underserved areas, the poor, and vulnerable populations, and envisions engagement of civil society and local communities in the provision of services for highly vulnerable populations.
- EPHI's PHEM **leadership training for high- and mid-level PHEM leaders included topics related to gender, equality, and social inclusion.**
- BRE-TA supported the new Centre for Research and Training in Emergency Nutrition at the University of Gondar, established in 2023, to **include a module on gender and vulnerable groups in its emergency nutrition curriculum.**
- DRAPs implemented in PSNP woredas by SRSN operators since 2022 ensure that SRSN support is allocated to where it is most needed. **The assessment in the DRAP identifies and prioritises vulnerable people (for example pregnant and lactating women, particular age groups, and people with disabilities).** BRE-TA contributed significantly to strengthening PSNP-SRSN capacity to develop, implement and monitor annual DRAPs.
- The SRSN Public Works implementation guideline contains guidelines for the relevant federal level institutions that detail: when the SRSN programme scales up; how it will scale up; to which populations; for how long; and how much assistance will be received in conjunction with the public work activities. The BRE-TA SRSN team led the development and implementation of the guidelines. **The Public Works guidelines mainstream gender by including a provision for targeting criteria, and considering women in planning** (for example, inclusion of women in the planning team, prioritising activities that reduce women's work burden, and flexible working conditions), **and implementation** (for example considerations around distance of the Public Works site from client's home, allocation of light work for women, and labour support).
- The government's **DRFS has been designed to protect, and limit the impact of disasters on, women-headed households, farmers, pastoralists, front-line workers, youth, and people with lower socioeconomic status.**
- Several woredas have prepared climate smart woreda plans using guidelines prepared by BRE-TA, giving them more of a focus on adaptation and mitigation than in previous plans. The methodology for preparing the plans puts a **strong focus on community participation, especially from the most vulnerable or marginalised.**
- Following the training provided by BRE-TA in two workshops - March 2023 and August 2023 - **participants from the Gender Directorates have used the tools provided by BRE-TA to help with integration of GESI into the DRM work of their respective ministries.**

BRE-TA has contributed significantly to a more robust approach to GESI within government during its lifetime. Gender Directorates are in a stronger position than they were before BRE-TA to help their departments to address GESI issues in DRM programming. The training provided by BRE-TA to key government counterparts and to trainers in the regions, and the new CoP, should help to ensure continued support for GESI integration in DRM after the closure of BRE-TA.

Significant challenges nevertheless remain, among them:

- The **high turnover of staff** in Gender Directorates.
- Staff assigned to the Directorates tend to be inexperienced **and lack knowledge of the ministries' mandates.**
- Staff of the Gender Directorates are often not included in the design of policy, and are generally not invited to sit on working groups or participate in workshops. That means that to be successful in the role, **Gender Directorates staff need to be self-motivated and push to ensure they are involved in these activities.**
- The Gender Directorates do not have their own budgets, instead they are meant to draw on the budgets assigned to their departments. However, the departments tend to prioritise other spending over the needs of the Gender Directorates. As a result, **the work of the Gender Directorates is significantly under resourced.**

More support will be required to ensure that capacity develops further and is sustained, and for equity considerations to continue to be mainstreamed into DRM programming in the long term. If this is not in place there is a risk that the progress made will be lost.

Judgement against Equity: Excellent

- *The GESI Advisor reported **substantial improvement in the workstreams' understanding of the importance of GESI and ability to use GESI evidence to inform design of their activities and output.** The improvements were realised through staff training and the introduction of guides and tools.*
- *The project has demonstrated that **GESI considerations have been integrated into workstream activities and deliverables.** This was accomplished through planned activities with Gender Directorates and the MoWSA, including training, workshops, and a new GESI Community of Practice, alongside direct initiatives by the workstreams and relevant ministries.*
- *There was **greater demand from government for BRE-TA support on GESI in this last year, and there is good evidence that government incorporated GESI considerations into the development of workstream intermediate outcomes (such as policies, plans and guidelines).** BRE-TA has put measures in place to help government to continue this work.*

I.3.4 Economy

Table 20: Standards for Economy

Performance	Sub-criteria
Excellent	The project can demonstrate that it is following good practice to manage key economy drivers and key costs [MET] And meets all criteria under 'good' performance [MET]

Good	Average unit costs for key inputs generally ²²¹ meet agreed benchmarks [MET] Percentage of total fees spent on fees for technical work at or above agreed benchmark [MET] And meets all criteria under 'adequate' performance [N/A]
Adequate	Average unit costs for key inputs do not consistently or materially exceed agreed benchmarks [N/A] Percentage of total fees spent on fees for technical work does not fall significantly below agreed benchmark [N/A]
Poor	Any of the conditions for adequate are not met

Providing VfM at Economy level requires:

- Good management of 'drivers' that underpin good cost management, including sound procurement practices, managing fiduciary risk, and generating cost savings without compromising on quality.
- Tracking key costs to ensure they do not regularly exceed benchmarks without good reason.
- Ensuring management and administration do not absorb a disproportionately high share of overall budget.

These are examined in turn below.

Sub-criterion 1: The project is following good practice to manage key economy drivers and costs.

- See **Box 7** below for evidence against this sub-criterion. In summary, the evidence demonstrates that the project followed good practice to manage key effectiveness drivers:
- The project followed **procurement policies which ensure that the project identifies the most suitable and economically advantageous option.**
- The project followed the **procedures for technical and financial evaluation and due diligence of subcontractors** and verified that suppliers conducted equivalent Due Diligence checks on their own suppliers.
- The project used the **consultant fee caps set in the commercial tender** without exception.
- The project used **sound financial controls to manage fiduciary risk**, as outlined in the BRE-TA Finance Manual (2019).

²²¹ 'Generally' means for the most part, allowing for a few reasonable exceptions. As the purpose of the rubric is to facilitate a transparent and defensible judgement, it would be inappropriate to specify exact thresholds because such thresholds would be arbitrary and would not support meaningful assessment. All judgements made will be transparent and therefore challengeable.

Box 7: Key economy drivers and associated good practices**Procurement processes:**

Definition in the VfM framework: Robust procurement policies and processes are in place and followed, including procedures for securing multiple competitive quotes (as appropriate depending on level of expenditure), and appropriate levels of approval

The project continues to follow the procedures set out in its Procurement Policy (2020)²²² (which is based on OPM's Standard Procurement Procedures) and Contracting Manual for Tasking Orders (2020)²²³ for evaluating multiple quotes for services (from organisations) above specified values. These procedural documents are reviewed annually and updated based on learning. The procedures ensure that the project always identifies the most suitable and economically advantageous option. Where single quotations have been obtained, justification is recorded for future reference. If costs exceed agreed budget lines, the project team obtain approval from FCDO before proceeding. The Procurement Policy and Contracting manual was reviewed in the first quarter of 2023 but no changes were needed. These procedures do not cover services from individual consultants, which are covered by the Legal Subcontracting process. The approval levels set out in the procurement documents have been followed.

Definition in the VfM framework: Appropriate technical and financial evaluation and due diligence are conducted before engaging sub-contractors (as set out in BRE-TA Contracting Manual for Task Orders (TOs), June 2020)

The project follows the procedures for technical and financial evaluation of potential subcontractors, as set out in its Contracting Manual for Tasking Orders (TOs) (2020, section 5). These include scoring technical proposals based on a clearly defined set of criteria, and assessing the reasonableness of commercial proposals through cost or price analysis. It follows procedures for due diligence, as set out in its Contracting Manual for TOs (2020, section 4.3). These include examination of subcontractors' legal and financial standing, conflicts of interest, counter terrorism checks, insurance levels, and confirmation of subcontractors' compliance with OPM's policies and procedures, or their own equivalent (including anti-bribery, security, code of conduct, data security, and equality). It also verifies that all suppliers conduct equivalent Due Diligence checks on their own suppliers and can provide the evidence as required.

Consultant fee rate setting methodology:

Definition in the VfM framework: Consultant fee rates are set using a robust benchmarking methodology based on market analysis and OPM and local partners' experience (OPM commercial tender: 3)

The project uses the fee caps set in the commercial tender (OPM, 2018)²²⁴ to guide negotiation of consultant fee rates. The caps were set based on market analysis, OPM and local partners' experience, and information provided by FCDO Ethiopia.

Fiduciary risk management:

Definition in the VfM framework: The project has sound financial controls to minimise fiduciary risk, including appropriate authorisation levels for approvals of expenses, clear separation of financial duties, and regular audits

The project uses sound financial controls to manage fiduciary risk. Financial reporting by the OPM Ethiopia office is fully aligned with International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) issued by the International Accounting Standards Board (IASB) (HST, 2020; OPM Ethiopia Financial Policies Manual (no date)). Financial controls are outlined in the Project's Finance Manual (2019), and include: appropriate authorisation levels for approval of expenses by the Office Manager, Team Leader and Project Manager, as defined in the Field Office Budget Delegation Policy and Procedure (2020); clear separation of financial duties in the country office and OPM Oxford office across the Project Assistant, Project Manager, Project Finance Officer and OPM Central Finance, as defined in OPM's Project Management Framework; and independent annual audits of the project and OPM. The project's Procurement Policy (2020:8-9) sets out clear procedures for identifying and managing conflict of interest. The procedures are guided by FCDO's Conflict of Interest policy and underlined by UK

²²² BRE-TA, 2020. Procurement of Goods and Services for BRE-TA. Addis Ababa, Ethiopia Office. June 2020.

²²³ BRE-TA, 2020. BRE-TA Contracting Manual for Task Orders. June 2020.

²²⁴ OPM, 2018. Commercial proposal, p4.

legislation, including the Bribery Act 2010 and the Fraud Act 2006. OPM also reports quarterly on its compliance with Counter Aid Diversion and has reported no cases of aid diversion.

Below are examples of cost savings secured during 2023-2024. The information on mean unit costs of fees and reimbursables presented below (under sub-criterion 2), with most costs consistently coming in under benchmarks, also demonstrates good ongoing cost management.

1. Workshop savings

Through the years, BRE TA has built a good relationship with hotels and as a result has managed to negotiate corporate rates for the accommodation and refreshment costs for workshop participants. This has resulted in substantial savings on workshop costs. In October to December alone, the **operations team provided a saving of £70,024 across eight workshops**, against planned spend of £168,147 by using hotels with negotiated corporate rates.

2. Office rent

Through negotiation with the landlord, the BRE-TA Operations Manager was able to reduce the size of the project office in the months of February and March 2024, once Addis based technical staff left the project. **This resulted in a saving of £6,700.**

Sub-criterion 2: Average unit costs of key inputs of appropriate quality

1. Consultant fee rates

The data in **Table 21** and associated analyses in the paragraph below it have been redacted.

Table 21: Weighted mean fee rates, overall, by origin, and by job family

Weighted mean fee rates (£)							
	Sept 2019 – Mar 2020 ³	Jan-Dec 2020	Jan-Dec 2021	Jan-Dec 2022	Jan-Oct 2023	Bench mark	Difference to benchmark (2022)
By origin¹							
National						n/a	n/a
International						n/a	n/a
By job family							
Project Leadership							5.87%
Project Management							-3.46%
Technical Advisory/Expert							-5.92%
Support and Administration							-1.78%
Overall²						n/a	n/a

Source: Project Administrator. 2023 data based on fees invoiced to FCDO from January-October 2023 (this includes some older transactions as a result of subcontractor late invoicing). Notes: 1-the overall mean fee rates by origin were not calculated in the first assessment, and there are no benchmarks for fee rates by origin in the commercial proposal; 2-there is no benchmark for the overall

fee rate in the commercial proposal; 3-the first assessment covered the period Sept 2019-March 2020, thus there is some overlap between the first and second assessments.

The fees paid are weighted by the share of the number of days paid within each category and across all consultants combined. **All weighted means were below the benchmarks for all categories, except for project leadership.** The weighted mean for project leadership was nearly 6% above the benchmark. This was because the Team Leader's fee rate was previously offset by the Deputy Team Leaders (DTLs), both of whom had lower fee rates. However, one DTL left the project towards the end of 2022 and was not replaced, which increased the average weighted rate for project leadership. Project Management was 3.46% below the benchmark. The technical advisory/expert weighted mean was just under 6% below the benchmark. The mean for support and administration was just under 2% below the benchmark.

Feedback from donors indicates that the project secured good quality staff and consultants while generally keeping fees within the benchmarks. Scores against KPI 3 for 2023 indicate good performance of the team, scoring a 5 in Qs1-3. Feedback from FCDO staff interviewees also indicated good performance:

*“The quality of the advisors working on the different strands was really appreciated and should be seen as one of the contributing factors to the success of the [project]”.*²²⁵

2. Reimbursables

Table 22: Mean unit cost of reimbursables (flights and hotels)

	Cost of reimbursables (£)						
	Sept-Dec 2019	Jan-Dec 2020	Jan-Dec 2021	Jan-Dec 2022	Jan-Oct 2023	Bench mark	Difference to benchmark (2022)
Flights							
Mean cost	£645.18	£621.41	£590	£990.45	£1,097.54	£990	1.1%
Number of flights	13	13	1	27	26	-	-
	<i>Without business class tickets:</i>						
Mean cost				£937.53	£977	£990	-1%
Number of flights				26	23		
Hotels							
Mean cost	£100	£74.06	£56.82	£69.21	£65.22	£126	-49%
Number of nights	223	201	407	369	385	-	-

Source: Project Administrator. 2023 data based on expenses invoiced to FCDO from January-October 2023.

The mean cost of international flights was similar to last year. Twenty-five flights were booked from the UK to Addis and one flight was booked from Addis to the UK. The average cost was £1,097, which is above the benchmark. This is because three flights were business class (booked on medical grounds and approved by FCDO). When the business flights are removed, the average cost falls to £977, 1% below the benchmark. Seven other flights cost

²²⁵ Interview with FCDO staff, 21 September 2023.

more than the benchmark because they were last minute bookings or booked during the peak season. The project had issues obtaining visas from the immigration office, which contributed to the higher costs incurred due to last minute bookings.

The average cost of a hotel night in Addis has consistently remained below the £126 per night benchmark. **In 2023, the mean cost of a hotel night in Addis was £65**, 49% lower than the benchmark. This is due to negotiated discounts with the hotels and efforts by the Operations team to identify cheaper alternatives.

Sub-criterion 3: Percentage of total fees spent on technical work

88.7% of total fees was spent on technical work,²²⁶ nearly 14% higher than the 75% benchmark set out in the VfM framework. The data for 2023 covers the period of January to October 2023. Through the life of the project, the amount of time spent on technical work has remained consistently above the benchmark. This indicates that spend on management and administration has been well controlled.

Judgement against Economy: Excellent

- *The project followed **good practice to manage key economy drivers and costs**, and secured good cost savings through 2023-2024.*
- ***The average unit costs for key inputs (fees and reimbursables) were almost all below agreed benchmarks.** The main exception was the average fee rate for project leadership, as the Team Leader's higher fee rate was no longer offset by the lower fee rate of one of the Deputy Team Leader who left in 2022 and was not replaced. The average cost of flights was slightly above the benchmark due to three business class tickets (approved by FCDO for medical reasons), but below the benchmark without these tickets. As these were the only exceptions, the project met the standard for Good VfM for this sub-criterion, allowing it to meet the conditions for Excellent for the Economy criterion.²²⁷*
- ***The percentage of total fees spent on technical work was nearly 89%, well above the benchmark of 75%.***

²²⁶ Staff time was classified as technical or non-technical (management/administration). Most staff do exclusively one or other. Two staff members have mixed roles, the Project Director and the Team Leader. Their time was split equally between technical and non-technical work.

²²⁷ As stated in the standards table for Economy, average unit costs for key inputs should *generally* meet agreed benchmarks, allowing for a few reasonable exceptions.

I.3.5 Cost-effectiveness

Table 23: Standards for Cost-effectiveness

Performance	Sub-criteria
Excellent	<p>The project has met its expected contribution to <i>all</i> of its intended higher-level outcomes and/or generated additional unplanned positive outcomes/effects, within the total allocated budget and in collaboration with relevant stakeholders, allowing for changes to outcomes due to adaptive management, major disruptions, and/or delays caused by project stakeholders [MET]</p> <p>The project uses approaches across the board to maximise the likelihood that outcomes will be sustained beyond its lifetime [MET]</p> <p>And meets all criteria under 'good' performance</p>
Good	<p>The project has met its expected contribution to <i>most</i> of its intended higher-level outcomes within the total allocated budget and in collaboration with relevant stakeholders, with only a few minor exceptions, allowing for changes to outcomes due to adaptive management, major disruptions, and/or delays caused by project stakeholders [N/A]</p> <p>The project has generated <i>no</i> known negative effects [MET]</p> <p>The project's approach to sustainability is generally acceptable, with a few shortcomings in some areas [N/A]</p> <p>And meets all criteria under 'adequate' performance</p>
Adequate	<p>The project has met its expected contribution to <i>some</i> its intended higher-level outcomes (<i>assessed from end of Year 2</i>) within the total allocated budget and in collaboration with relevant stakeholders, allowing for changes to outcomes due to adaptive management, major disruptions, and/or delays caused by project stakeholders [N/A]</p> <p>The project has generated <i>no significant</i> known negative effects [N/A]</p> <p>The project's approach to sustainability is mixed, with some promising efforts, but some serious weaknesses [N/A]</p>
Poor	Any of the criteria for 'adequate' not met [N/A]

Providing VfM at Cost-effectiveness level requires:

- That intermediate outcomes contribute to significant change, and do so within the allocated budget. If additional positive outcomes or effects are generated, this adds further to cost-effectiveness.
- Avoiding unintended negative consequences that detract from cost-effectiveness.
- Taking measures to maximise the likelihood that the outcomes realised by project closure will be sustained.

These are examined in turn below.

Sub-criterion 1: Evidence that the project has met its expected contribution towards intended higher-level outcomes (workstream level)²²⁸ in collaboration with the relevant stakeholders and within allocated budget, allowing for changes due to adaptive management, major disruptions, and/or delays caused by project stakeholders

In the Effectiveness section, the achievement of intermediate outcomes was shown, but in this section movement further up the results chain is shown - to review *movement towards* the higher-level workstream outcomes (shown in the yellow boxes in the ToCs²²⁹). **The workstream outcomes should be understood as an articulation of ‘direction’ not ‘destination’.** They are broad, long-term ambitions for Ethiopia’s DRM system, and there was no expectation that they could be realised by the end of the project. There was also no expectation that BRE-TA alone could make them happen; the wide-ranging reforms needed in Ethiopia’s DRM systems require the **concerted and coordinated effort of many stakeholders (government and others).** BRE-TA was one of a range of actors that **could influence** key stakeholders (especially government) to take necessary actions, but the implementation of reforms was beyond BRE-TA’s direct control.

Narrative accounts of the movement towards workstream outcomes are provided in Annexes D-G of the BRE-TA PCR.²³⁰ **These accounts confirm that there has been movement towards all of the workstream outcomes shown on the ToCs, and in some cases the changes have been quite significant.** Key examples are highlighted in Table 6 in Section 3 of the BRE-TA PCR (‘Examples of emerging higher-level outcomes across the workstreams’). The progress described is wide-ranging, and covers three of the important components of organisational and institutional development of the systems reform framework laid out in BRE-TA’s Sustainability Strategy:²³¹

- (1) new or revised policies, strategies and frameworks providing strategic direction;
- (2) improved mechanisms for inter-governmental collaboration and coordination;
- (3) enhanced organisational development and enhanced skills among government officials, with training programmes and materials in place that can continue beyond BRE-TA.

Underpinning these changes is some evidence of a **shift in mindset** in some parts of government to recognise the value of managing risk. This, in itself, is a big achievement in a context where the norm has been to respond only after a disaster has occurred:

- EDRMC staff reported a **shift in mindset in some areas of government, from managing crisis to managing risk, due to the collaboration with BRE-TA.**²³²
- BRE-TA staff similarly reported **greater appreciation for the importance of risk management** among some government counterparts.²³³

²²⁸ In the most recent review of the workstream ToCs, the ‘higher-level outcomes’ were renamed as ‘workstream outcomes’.

²²⁹ The workstream ToCs are shown at the beginning of their respective annexes.

²³⁰ In each Annex, evidence of movement towards the higher workstream outcomes follows on from the account of progress against the intermediate outcomes under each workstream building block.

²³¹ See framework set out in the BRE-TA PCR, section 2.5.1.

²³² Outcome harvesting workshop with government officials, 17 October 2023.

²³³ Outcome harvesting workshop with staff, 19-20 October 2023.

- A key informant from the MoF reported **increased understanding of the need to anticipate and plan for shocks due to discussions with BRE-TA:**

“Pre BRE[-TA], the whole federal DRM programming was based on one-off campaigns which usually take place when disaster strikes.... The BRE-TA discussions have led to increased understanding on pre-planned preparation, integration of institutions and anticipation of disasters”.²³⁴

What does this high-level progress in systems, processes and mindset ‘add up to’? Do the achievements make **any difference to the way the government handles the frequent crises that beset the Ethiopian people?** There is some evidence – albeit tentative – that this may be so:

- **EDRMC was better able to organize and lead the relief/humanitarian operation to Tigray and adjacent regions of Amhara and Afar,** leading to better access to and uptake of humanitarian assistance than in the 2015/16 El Niño episode, which was similarly overlaid with internal conflict.
- **EDRMC and the MoF effectively mobilised resources** for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of war-affected areas from bilateral, multi-lateral and domestic sources, notably a rehabilitation fund of US\$300 million from the World Bank.²³⁵
- **EDRMC collaborated effectively with regional DRM bureaus, to mobilise resources** to improve relief efforts in the drought-affected pastoral areas during 2022/23.
- According to EDRMC and regional officials, there is some evidence of an **improved response to the recent drought in southern regions by regional governments supported by BRE-TA RTAs, when compared with previous droughts.**²³⁶

Nevertheless, in spite of the above examples of progress, there is no claim that the workstream outcomes have been fully realised. DRM reform is a long-term ambition and there is still plenty to do in the technical sphere to embed and operationalise reforms, create instruments and processes to institutionalise the changes, and prepare government staff at all levels to use new systems and procedures. The government will continue to need support from external sources to progress the DRM reform agenda. This is discussed further under sub-criterion 3 below.

Any improvements to shock response on the part of the government are not attributable solely to the BRE-TA project. Many actors have contributed – the government itself, as well as other TA providers working in the DRM space in Ethiopia. But the accounts provided in Annexes D-G of the BRE-TA PCR highlight the significant contributions of the BRE-TA project.

FCDO staff interviewed concurred that there has been movement towards the workstream outcomes, while recognising that it would be unrealistic to expect

²³⁴ Interview with MOF official, 3 November 2023.

²³⁵ Announced by the World Bank in a press statement on 13 April 2022.

²³⁶ Outcome harvesting workshop with government officials, 17 October 2023. See DRM progress report in Annex D of the BRE-TA PCR.

comprehensive reform of the DRM system within the five-year timeframe of the BRE-TA project:

“There are a lot of areas where we can see some movement towards the higher level outcomes..... we’ve laid a lot of groundwork with BRE-TA but it’s not surprising that we’re not seeing a complete reform – it would be extraordinary if we did”.²³⁷

FCDO staff also recognised that **systems reform is a complex and highly politicised process** that places much of the change that needs to happen outside the control of an external TA project:

“... there are all sorts of incentives, political imperatives and vested interests that.... the project has to tackle and navigate, and its ultimately outside of the project’s control”.²³⁸

The progress has been achieved within the total allocated budget. The project budget was revised to £25,972,402²³⁹ at the time of a no-cost extension in July 2022. The project expected to incur a small underspend by the end of the project in March 2024.

Sub-criterion 2: Evidence of additional positive effects and unintended negative effects

Additional positive effects include outcomes that were not anticipated on workstream ToCs, and/or other secondary benefits which represent gains to the government or other stakeholders, and are attributable to the TA project. **They add to cost-effectiveness by extending the overall value provided by BRE-TA beyond expected outcomes within the resources available to the project.**

Additional positive effects of the project in 2023 included:

- BRE-TA staff believe that some government officials have come to have **greater appreciation for the value of TA in systems change**, along with the importance of drawing on evidence, in no small part due to the progress that has been achieved in collaboration with BRE-TA.²⁴⁰
- BRE-TA’s work in several regions **helped to nurture a growing appetite for DRM reforms at the regional and sub-national levels.** The learning event in late 2023 helped to consolidate recognition of the need for reforms at the sub-national level and a sense that this was the direction the government should support after the end of BRE-TA. This included interest in the reform initiatives among regional participants from new administrations, following the splintering of the former SNNP. This is a wholly unexpected outcome and was not foreseen in the original Business Case.

²³⁷ Interview with FCDO staff, 23 September 2023. Guidance for DFID Advisors on Conducting Institutional Appraisal and Development, published in 2002, also recognises the long horizon required for institutional strengthening: ‘Institutional development is often a long-term process, requiring a willingness to maintain involvement over a decade or more’.

²³⁸ Interview with FCDO staff, 23 September 2023.

²³⁹ From the slightly higher amount of £25,966,490. Note that approximately US\$15m of the total amount was contributed by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) through a Delegated Cooperation Agreement which started in December 2019.

²⁴⁰ Outcome harvesting workshop with staff, 19-20 October 2023.

- **BRE-TA helped FCDO to develop a better understanding of how the government works** than it previously had, alongside a better understanding of what assistance was needed:

“...what it has meant for us to have the BRE team as our ‘go to’, to help us understand how government works and what’s going on. That is not a specific objective of the [project] at all, but it has been incredibly valuable and something that we will miss when the [project] comes to an end.” ²⁴¹

- **BRE-TA contributed evidence for USAID’s developmental evaluation** which covers all USAID DRM investments in Ethiopia. The information contributes to learning which can be used by USAID managers and other projects.
- BRE-TA contributed to a **stock of highly-qualified national experts which will remain available to the government and partner institutions**. Some of BRE-TA’s staff and advisors were already highly experienced professionals. But many more came on board with less experience and have honed their technical and political knowledge and skills while working with BRE-TA. Many of them will use what they have learned to continue to help strengthen DRM systems and practices in all relevant sectors in Ethiopia.
- BRE-TA **provided mentoring and support to allow some of its more junior national staff to step up into roles vacated by key staff members during 2023** (for example in the national MEL and Operations teams). This was done in preference to advertising for more experienced new staff. The opportunities afforded to these staff members put them in a stronger position for future career advancement and to contribute to future development projects.
- BRE-TA continued to contribute to the **development of young Ethiopian professionals by providing work experience for interns** (referred to as Junior Consultants in the head contract with FCDO).

Negative unintended consequences occur when a project inadvertently creates problems through displacement, substitution, or other negative externalities. They detract from cost-effectiveness by reducing the overall impact of the project. BRE-TA management are not aware of any negative unintended consequences. The potential for government dependency on embedded TAs, a risk in many TA projects, has been mitigated to the extent possible in the last year before closure (see further discussion under sub-criteria 3, below). A government informant asked about negative effects caused by BRE-TA was not concerned with dependency on BRE-TA assistance:

“There ha[ve] been no cases where any aspect of the BRE-TA project harmed government work, or where the government officials showed indications of dependency on external assistance”. ²⁴²

²⁴¹ Interview with FCDO staff, 23 September 2023.

²⁴² Interview with MOF official, 3 November 2023.

Sub-criterion 3: The project adopts approaches to ensure that outcomes and impact will be sustained beyond its lifetime

The BRE-TA PCR (Sections 2.5.1 and 3.2.2) identifies a number of ways in which **sustainability was built in to BRE-TA's approach to systems reform from the start of the project:**

- **Demand-led, needs-driven TA**, with each BRE-TA intervention requested by and designed with government counterparts to ensure their **contextual relevance, and government ownership**.
- A focus on **strengthening existing government machinery** rather than investing in parallel structures outside government.
- **Participation in governmental working groups and committees** to ensure that ideas were generated collaboratively, reforms were 'interlocking' across government, and 'institutional memory' of the TA processes remained within government.
- A sharp focus on **skills development in key government departments**, including intensive training programmes with significant reach in terms of the numbers trained (e.g. the DRIP training, and training on the SRSN operational manual); and the provision of high quality curricula and guidance notes and TOT programmes with follow-up mentoring, to ensure that skills transfer can continue beyond BRE-TA.

From mid-2022 and through 2023, BRE-TA devoted considerable attention to maximising the likelihood that outcomes would be sustained beyond its lifetime, including:

- **Explicit transition and sustainability planning** from mid-2022, with the identification of key sustainability risks and mitigation plans.
- **Sustainability Strategy submitted to FCDO in March 2023 and finalised in June.**²⁴³ The Strategy identified priority areas requiring a 'final push' to take them as far as possible before closure of the project. It also identified the interventions most at risk of non-completion and proposed necessary activities to continue momentum towards sustainable reforms after BRE-TA closure, along with cost estimates and alternative sources of support.
- Worked with the government to **secure support from other TA providers for the continuation of key reform processes** such as operationalisation of the DRM Policy (World Bank²⁴⁴), EWS reform (the United Nations EW4All), development of DRFS instruments (CDP), and support for evidence-based budgeting and budget tagging and tracking (EUSPRE).
- Production of **Learning Notes and a final Learning Event** with the government in December 2023, making the learning from BRE-TA and GoE collaborations available to relevant parties, including the GoE, other country governments, and TA providers.

²⁴³ OPM (2023) 'BRE-TA Sustainability Strategy, Draft of 16 June 2023', Oxford, United Kingdom.

²⁴⁴ World Bank (2023) 'Emergency Preparedness and DRM Consultancy for EP&R and Disaster-FCV Nexus Thematic Areas', Advertisement Details, wbgeprocure-rfxnow.worldbank.org/rfxnow/public/advertisement/955/view.html [accessed 10 October 2023].

The **termination of embedded advisor contracts at the end of December 2023, and the loss of the additional skills and capacity they provided to government**, has been a key sustainability challenge. The Sustainability Strategy triggered conversations with key TWGs during 2023 about the need to consider taking on advisors, or maximise skills transfer before terminating advisor contracts. Training was stepped up in a bid to transfer skills to government staff. For example, the regional advisors hired through TO#19 provided significant capacity-building around the provision and use of EW information. Some advisors were hired by government before the end of BRE-TA, for example the Technical Support Specialists (TSSs) working on the SRSN; and at the end of January 2024, BRE-TA contacted its former embedded advisors and found that half of them were still providing support to the government, through a direct contract with government, or funded through an external organisation. There were nevertheless some unavoidable losses to government. This is in no way a unique problem to BRE-TA or Ethiopia, but rather a perennial development problem reflecting deep structural issues related to government resources, the capacity to hire and retain staff, and salary levels relative to other professional opportunities.

The BRE-TA project went to great lengths to maximise the likelihood that the reform processes underway will continue and the gains achieved can be sustained. **The BRE-TA PCR considers whether BRE-TA's achievements are likely to be sustained** (see section 3.2.2, and the workstream annexes (Annexes D-G)), and concludes that the picture is complex, with some outcomes having a higher likelihood of sustainability than others. An FCDO informant recognised that some facets of the work with government were well embedded:

*"I think some of the technical work seems to be relatively embedded. We can certainly see elements of the work that have reached a degree of maturity, that.... have become part of business as usual and something that is picked up."*²⁴⁵

It is, however, important to recognise that **five years is a short period for systems strengthening work, there are risks to the progress that has been made**, and the government will continue to need external financial and technical support for some time. The work on the SRSN illustrates the risks well. There has been significant progress on creating a harmonised system with agreed operations and procedures, and staff qualified to take the system forward. But in the current absence of adequate funding for the safety net to be activated in response to a shock, there is a risk that the technical progress could be lost.

²⁴⁵ Interview with FCDO staff, 21 September 2023.

Judgement against Cost-effectiveness: Excellent

- *Narrative accounts of workstream progress in the BRE-TA PCR confirm that there has been **movement towards all of the workstream outcomes shown on the ToCs, and in some cases the changes have been quite significant**. There is some evidence that the collaboration between BRE-TA and the government has helped to improve the government's response to recent shocks. There is still plenty to do, but given there was no expectation workstream outcomes could be fully achieved within five years, the evidence is sufficient to justify a judgement of Excellent.*
- *The project has generated **a number of additional positive effects and no known negative effects**, thereby extending the overall value provided by BRE-TA beyond expected outcomes within the resources available to the project.*
- *From the very beginning BRE-TA went to great lengths to **maximise the likelihood that the reform processes supported would continue, and the gains achieved can be sustained**. This was complemented by comprehensive sustainability and transition planning in 2022, and actions to disseminate project learning and secure further support where needed in 2023. It is, however, important to recognise that five years is a short period for systems strengthening work, and there are risks to the progress that has been made. It is, however, important to recognise that five years is a short period for systems strengthening work, and there are risks to the progress that has been made.*

I.4 Progress against recommendations made in the 2022 VfM assessment

#	Recommendation from 2022 VfM assessment	Progress in 2023
1	Push for further cross-workstream collaboration where relevant, in line with BRE-TA Steering Committee recommendations, in order to maximise synergies across workstreams and within government.	Box 5 (under the sub-title 'Ensuring coordination and synergies across workstreams') illustrates the high level of cross-workstream collaboration in 2023 and how this contributed to achievement of intermediate outcomes.
2	Continue to push towards expected intermediate outcomes , particularly in areas that are critical to DRM effectiveness but have been difficult to progress (e.g., the EWS and the Joint Consolidated Plan)	A comprehensive planning and rebudgeting process from late 2022 into 2023 ensured that effort and resources were channelled towards critical interventions that required a 'final push'. Almost all intermediate outcomes had been achieved by the end of 2023.
3	Enhance tracking and articulation of outcomes in the remaining period, using outcome harvesting to help workstreams to identify outcomes.	Progress towards intermediate outcomes was tracked by workstreams in regular reports and in a bespoke harvesting database (Podio). Final harvesting workshops were held, with government officials and staff, in October 2023. The final set of outcomes are well-articulated in the BRE-TA PCR.
4	Continue the work that is just starting to strengthen capacity in Gender Directorates to integrate GESI into the design and delivery of government DRM systems in relevant line Ministries	Significant efforts were made to strengthen capacity in the Gender Directorates, described under sub-criterion 2 of the Equity section.

#	Recommendation from 2022 VfM assessment	Progress in 2023
5	Work closely with donors to ensure that appropriate feedback is provided on government plans and strategies, including critical feedback where relevant , without compromising BRE-TA's relationship with government	BRE-TA continued to ensure donor's critical feedback was provided to government through formal mechanisms (written comments and verbal feedback at meetings and validation events) and informal ones (e.g. the workstream TWGs), and successfully navigated these different interests, including around the DRM Policy and DRFS. There was only one instance in 2023, related to FCDO's concern on a key element of the SRSN Public Works Guideline, that risked compromising BRE-TA's relationship with government. Through numerous mechanisms BRE-TA helped share FCDO's concerns, but ultimately the Guideline is a government document and implementation rests with them. In the process, hopefully BRE-TA did not compromise the relationship with FCDO.
6	Ensure that transition and sustainability planning is fully integrated into workstream and management activities in the remaining period. This includes sound transition planning for ending embedded TA contracts.	The Sustainability Strategy developed during 2022 informed a thorough planning and rebudgeting exercise in early 2023 (see cost-effectiveness sub-criterion 3). Discussions were held with key TWGs in preparation for the termination of embedded advisor contracts, and skills transfer by TAs was stepped up ((see efficiency sub-criterion 3).
7	Use available forums to consolidate and disseminate findings and learning with government counterparts and other interested stakeholders who can continue BRE-TA's support.	There was more focus in 2023 on disseminating information on government reforms through established government channels (DRM Council, national PHEM forums, PSNP's Joint Review and Implementation Supervision (JRIS) and mid-term review (MTR), the national Day for Disaster Risk Reduction and COP28) and local media. This was made easier as a number of activities of wider public interest were finalised (e.g., DRFS). These efforts culminated in the BRE-TA Learning Event in December 2023 and dissemination of a series of BRE-TA Learning Notes.

I.5 What was learned about providing VfM on a TA project to government that may be useful in other similar TA projects

What was learned about VfM in the course of BRE-TA may be useful to other future projects providing TA to governments. The lessons below focus specifically on how to provide good VfM. Generic lessons and recommendations from the BRE-TA project have been discussed elsewhere (see Section 5 of the BRE-TA PCR, and the BRE-TA learning notes produced in late 2023).

Good VfM requires balancing cost with quality, rather than cost-cutting at the expense of quality. This may require paying a little more for inputs (including people), rather than choosing the cheapest option, in order to boost results. For example, BRE-TA paid higher fee rates to bring in an international partner with specialist expertise in local climate smart development planning (higher, for example than to hire independent consultants), a key component in the DRF strategy to improve woreda-level preparation for shocks. It can nevertheless be useful to track costs of key inputs (the largest cost

categories) against benchmarks (in the case of BRE-TA, the costs estimated in the commercial tender to FCDO) in order to guard against excessive costs.

Good VfM requires effective planning processes to identify the right mix of strategies, activities and outputs which can collectively maximise impact. Delivering high quality activities and outputs will not lead to good VfM if the chosen activities/outputs do not have the potential to create the desired effects (i.e. the hypothesised causal pathways towards change are incorrect). On BRE-TA, planning was informed by a broad base of stakeholders with sound understanding of the context and the political economy of reform. These included Director-level government counterparts sitting on TWGs with expert national project staff and sub-contractors, as well as national and country-based donor representatives.

Projects must adapt to evolving conditions to achieve good VfM. Sticking to a plan that has become obsolete over time will not deliver good VfM. Being adaptive requires real-time intelligence to understand emerging opportunities and risks, regular checks that hypothesised pathways are holding true, agile staff who can respond quickly to new information and change tack if required, and budget flexibility to quickly reallocate resources to where they are needed. On BRE-TA, national staff were closely attuned to developments through their professional networks and sound understanding of the political economy and institutional dynamics around reform processes, staff were able to pivot when required, and the financial system had enough flexibility to incorporate new activities at short notice.

VfM of an investment cannot be demonstrated without understanding project contribution to outcomes. Measuring progress towards, and contribution to, outcomes can be particularly hard on a TA project. Changes in government systems and capacity may be incremental and difficult to discern, and information on what is changing may be difficult to access, or incomplete. On BRE-TA, outcome harvesting in the last two years of the project proved invaluable as a methodology for capturing and documenting outcomes, and tracking them over time, with frontline staff and government counterparts. The methodology was also useful for identifying unplanned outcomes, which can extend impact and add additional value to an investment.

Achieving VfM on a TA project requires time and patience for tangible results to emerge. The early years of BRE-TA involved intense investment to identify the right stakeholders in government, build relationships and trust, identify problems and their root causes, and reach consensus on solutions, sometimes in areas with a history of fraught discord and institutional tensions. There was little to show in the way of tangible results at this stage. But this period of investment was critical to gaining traction to progress key reforms that were previously elusive. It paid off in the significant reforms that were achieved by the end of the project.

Good VfM cannot be achieved if government reforms are not designed and implemented with the equitable distribution of benefits in mind. This requires context-specific understanding of the issues that need to be addressed to ensure that benefits are equitably distributed across relevant sub-population groups, and intentional strategies to work with government counterparts to understand if and how systems should be adjusted to ensure fairer resource allocation. For BRE-TA, it was important to first build capacity among project and government staff to understand relevant equity issues, and then to identify allies in government (such as line ministry Gender Directorates and the MoWSA) who could champion equity measures and provide continuity after project closure.

A project cannot claim to represent good VfM if its results are not likely to be sustained over time, even if those results are impressive at the time of project

closure. This means that sustainability must be built into project design from the start. On the BRE-TA project, this was done by building government ownership of reform processes from the start, so that there was commitment to continue beyond BRE-TA; building government staff capacity, and putting training material and ToT programmes in place, so that capacity development work could continue beyond BRE-TA; ensuring that key stakeholders understood when the support would end and could seek other sources of support if needed; explicit project-closure and transition planning starting from around 18 months prior to the end.

VfM assessment of a TA project requires bespoke metrics. A simple 'off the shelf' metric such as cost-benefit analysis wouldn't be useful to assess VfM on a TA project, because it's not realistic to monetise or otherwise quantify the benefits of a TA project, and attribution of changes observed in government systems to a given TA project would be difficult, given there are usually many actors working in the same space. For BRE-TA a framework of quantitative and qualitative metrics was agreed upfront with project staff and the donor.

Annex J: The BRE-TA team

The BRE-TA team was led by Mark Essex with other members of the project management team, including Deputy Team Leader Girma Kassa, Project Manager Shiva Faramarzifar and Project Coordinator Liluy Yohannes.

The project's technical leads were Disaster Risk Management (DRM) Lead Akloweg Nigatu, Public Health Emergency Management (PHEM) Lead Dr. Ayana Yeneabat, Shock Responsive Safety Net (SRSN) Lead Tsedey Asheber, Disaster Risk Finance (DRF) Lead Fantahun Asfaw, Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Lead Nils Riemenschneider, and Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) Lead Bella Roman.

The management team and technical leads were supported by members of the wider BRE-TA team and OPM Oxford office staff, including national and international external specialist experts, all of whom helped make the critical contributions that made the project's achievements possible.

Figure 30: The BRE-TA team at the October 2023 outcome harvesting workshop

