



# Frequently Asked Questions

Support WeForest in saving 23 000 farmers' families from poverty and starvation in Tigray, Ethiopia

## Additional information on the crisis:

<https://www.bbc.com/news/topics/cr2pnx1173dt/tigray-crisis>

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-55879681>

<https://www.dw.com/en/ethiopia-tigray-crisis-too-little-aid-for-distraught-citizens/a-56706478>

### What is this crisis about?

The people in the region of Tigray in Northern Ethiopia are facing a severe crisis: a dry spell, internal conflict, crops damaged by locust swarms and COVID mean that farmers are struggling to feed their families.

### What are aid agencies doing about this crisis?

Aid agencies are doing amazing work by focusing on the conflict-displaced refugees. Unfortunately, due to access constraints and security volatility, very little help reaches the remote villages where our farmers cultivate their small plots. The Ethiopian Red Cross warned in February that without improved humanitarian assistance, tens of thousands of people could starve to death.

### What is the link between this crisis in Tigray and WeForest's activities?

WeForest's forest restoration programme has been active in remote villages east and south-east of Mekelle since 2016, and knows first-hand how poor these farmers already are, with absolutely no reserves to face crises like these. The loss of one harvest would break the cycle of annual seed saving and impact them and their families for a long time. With farmers already struggling to feed their own families, the failure of the next harvest will be devastating. All too often, immediate food aid is all that is available, meaning there is a huge and deadly gap.

### What are the exact needs of these villages and farmers?

Besides insecurity (due to the war), farmers tell us that their main concern is not being able to feed their families. They have had to already consume the seeds meant for the next harvest. Our research with our agriculture and rural development partners confirms that what they need most is wheat, barley and pulse together with some hand tools and equipment to prepare the land.

The average farm size around Desa'a (the forest we are restoring) is 0.67 ha including back yard plots and corridors for livestock. The estimated average farm plot size for cereal and pulses is 0.375 ha (0.25 ha for cereals and 0.125 for pulses and vegetables).

### Who defined these needs?

These numbers for seeds and material to cultivate their plots came straight from the farmers of these communities and were confirmed by the local authorities at districts and regional levels.

### Why is WeForest legitimate to intervene in this humanitarian crisis?

WeForest Ethiopia is a registered non-profit organization with the purpose of transforming entire landscapes. After five years in Tigray, we have developed strong and long-term partnerships to help us source, purchase, transport, and organize the distribution of the seeds and equipment quickly and safely across the communities, while also ensuring transparency and accountability.

### Why is \$2million needed, and how will this money be used by WeForest?

WeForest Ethiopia estimates that a budget of an equivalent of \$18 per person would be needed to



sustain these communities of 110 000 people. Every farm will receive 50kg of wheat (or barley) and 20kg of pulse seeds, securing not just food for this year but also seeds for the next harvest for the years to come. Every household will also be provided with two spades and a watering can. This budget covers the sourcing, purchasing, transport, distribution and organisation of the delivery of seeds and materials.

### **Why is it so urgent?**

With the harvest in November, we need to secure funding by the end of April, as the seeds have to be sown in May just before the rains arrive. Otherwise it will be too late to secure the farmers' next harvest, and a new cycle of poverty and starvation will occur.

### **Who are the partners involved in this intervention?**

WeForest Ethiopia is the Project Lead. The Bureau of Agriculture and Rural Development in Tigray (TBoARD) and the District Office of Agriculture and Rural Development (DoARD), and the District and village administrations are local and public partners. The 23 000 farmers' families and the 110 000 people of these 13 remote villages are beneficiaries.

### **What will be the procurement process?**

WeForest Ethiopia and TBoARD are working together on procurement with other local and regional partners. They are developing a list of criteria for the required cereals and pulses that will be most beneficial to the villages. Based on these criteria, an open bid will be offered to local seed suppliers following the appropriate procurement procedures by the government.

### **How will WeForest Ethiopia source the seeds and tools for the farmers?**

The open bid to national and regional seed centres, as well as private seed suppliers near the villages, will include the sourcing of seeds and transportation. There will also be a bid particularly targeted to local suppliers of farming tools, but also at national and regional level, to submit offers for the provision and transport of the tools to the villages.

### **How will WeForest Ethiopia monitor the distribution of the seeds and tools?**

WeForest Ethiopia and TBoARD will manage the distribution of the seeds and tools. First, agreements will be signed with the suppliers regarding transport. Second, WeForest will manage the beneficiary selection process in collaboration with local stakeholders (village administration and community representatives, district experts and development agents, the regional office of TBoARD and any other supportive NGOs). Finally WeForest, TBoARD and the local administration will prepare the distribution list and distribute the seeds and tools. As part of our control mechanism, the detailed distribution list will include the recording of signatures upon receipt.

### **How will WeForest monitor the success of this campaign and report to its donors?**

The success of the campaign will be measured by the number of households receiving the seeds and tools by June, and a beneficiary survey will be conducted in November during the next harvest.

Our M&E experts will follow our normal monitoring procedures, which includes documenting the beneficiaries and the distribution process, collecting evidence (via signatures) that beneficiaries have received seeds and tools, collecting photos and videos, post-distribution monitoring to make sure the supplies have been used for the intended purpose. WE will take 5-10% of the total beneficiaries for baseline and impact assessment, and the yield will be assessed from these beneficiaries. Donors will receive an intermediary and final report.

### **How can donors stay informed about their donation?**

Two reports will be shared to the donors: one intermediary report in August after the distribution, and one final report in February after the harvest. The reports will be accompanied with stories and pictures of the beneficiaries.

### **What will be the impact of our action?**

The forest and landscape restoration approach of WeForest's work is always about creating long-term resilience: developing livelihoods to eradicate poverty. Hence, this campaign bridges the gap between the immediate food aid being provided by relief organizations and our long-term approach. We are in the best position to make a real difference and save 23 000 farmers' families – 110 000 people – from further cycles of poverty and starvation.

For more details about this fundraising campaign and the situation in Tigray, please contact the CEO of WeForest, Marie-Noëlle Keijzer, at [marioenelle.keijzer@weforest.org](mailto:marioenelle.keijzer@weforest.org) or [+32 47 40 70 762](tel:+32474070762).

Please also visit our crowdfunding campaign at: [www.globalgiving.org/projects/relief-fund-avoiding-starvation-for-110000-people](http://www.globalgiving.org/projects/relief-fund-avoiding-starvation-for-110000-people)