

April 21, 2020

Dear donor community,

We write to you on behalf of organizations working on the front lines of the COVID-19 response to strongly encourage the funding of the Common Services components of the COVID-19 Global Humanitarian Response Plan (GHRP).

We have been encouraged by the willingness of donors to support global COVID-19 humanitarian efforts. In a context in which all countries have pressing national concerns, we appreciate your continued commitment to humanitarian operations and the global response necessary to prevent the spread of the virus and ensure all are safe.

To enable the response, it is critical that the humanitarian community has structures in place that allow for the transport of critical materials, including medical supplies, personal protective equipment (PPE) and staff. Ensuring the continuation of supply chains and transportation in and out of countries is essential if front line providers are to stay and deliver.

The World Food Programme (WFP) is leading in the coordination and provision of these logistical requirements on behalf of the humanitarian system and has requested \$350 million to support activities outlined in its Common Service Plan. The Plan includes four components that enable NGOs to move forward with a robust response: air and cargo services, air passenger transport, medical evacuation services (medevac), and ocean transport. Through four international consolidation hubs and seven regional staging areas that include seven field hospitals, WFP's Common Services ensure that life-saving materials and staff will reach the frontline and contribute to the safety and wellness of humanitarian and health responders.

Without these common services, it is unlikely that NGO partners will be able to carry out a robust and effective COVID-19 response. As the curtailment of commercial transport and cargo services restrict operations and air, sea and land ports close, NGOs face increasing restrictions that inhibit their ability to mobilize, position, and transport supplies and staff. The Common Services Plan will enable humanitarian actors to continue to operate despite these obstacles, but requires additional funding to be implemented. Without it, NGOs will be forced to halt operations and possibly pull out of critical response locations.

While supporting these services, we also must acknowledge the role of national NGOs and the national staff working with international organizations in fighting the spread of COVID-19. Services critical to ensuring NGOs are able to stay and deliver, such as medevac, should be extended to frontline national staff directly involved in managing the fallout from the virus. As we know, national NGOs and national staff are essential to this response, and the international community must do its part to ensure duty of care and that they are not put at undue risk in

performing essential tasks. While supporting the Common Services Plan, we encourage donors to call for greater inclusion of national staff and the extension of safety measures, such as medevac services, to them.

Thank you again for supporting the global response to COVID-19 and in advance for committing resources to common services that will enable all humanitarians to stay and deliver.

Sincerely,

