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ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|--------|--|
| CFSTF | Community Food Security Task Force |
| DS | Direct Support |
| FAO | Food and Agriculture Organization |
| FSCB | Federal Food Security Coordination Bureau |
| FSS | Food Security Survey |
| FSP | Food Security Programme |
| GOE | Government of Ethiopia |
| HABP | Household Asset Building Programme |
| ICESCR | International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights |
| IDS | Institute of Development Studies |
| IFPRI | International Food Policy Research Institute |
| ILO | International Labor Organization |
| KAC | Kebeele Appeal Committee |
| MDG | Millennium Development Goal |
| MoARD | Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development |
| MoFED | Ministry of Finance and Economic Development |
| ODI | Overseas Development Institute |
| OFSP | Other Food Security Programme |
| PIM | Programme Implementation Manual |
| PoU | Prevalence of Undernourishment |
| PSNP | Productive Safety Net Programme |
| PW | Public Works |
| SNNPR | Southern Nations Nationalities and People's Region |
| UDHR | Universal Declaration of Human Rights |
| WFS | World Food Summit |
| WFSTF | Woreda Food Security Task Force |

1. Introduction

1.1. Food insecurity in the world

The last half of a century has brought about significant improvements in aggregate food security, thanks to increased per capita availability of food and decreasing real food prices (Barrett 2002; FAO, IFAD and WFP 2013). Furthermore, the diversity of food has increased markedly, reflected by an increased share of fruits, vegetables and animal-source products available (by 90, 70, and 32 per cent respectively, since 1990), in comparison to a decreasing share of cereals, roots and tubers (FAO, IFAD and WFP 2013).

Nonetheless, many people particularly in developing countries have not been able to benefit from these improvements. In 2013, there are an estimated 842 million people (12 per cent of the world population) who are unable to meet their dietary energy requirements necessary to live an active and healthy life, or to put it another way, around one in eight people on our planet are likely to have suffered from chronic food insecurity¹ (FAO, IFAD and WFP 2013).

From these 842 million, 827 million or 98.2 per cent of the people are living in developing countries, with the highest number of undernourished² people coming from Southern Asia, followed by Sub-Saharan Africa and Eastern Asia (FAO, IFAD and WFP 2013). While the total number of undernourished people in Sub-Saharan Africa rose from 173.1 million in the period of 1990-92 to 222.7 million in the period of 2011-13, the prevalence of undernourishment³ decreased from 32.7 per cent to 24.8 per cent respectively. In comparison, South-East Asia experienced an impressively high decrease in its prevalence rate, dropping from 31.1 per cent to 10.7 per cent in the same period of time, with the total number of undernourished people falling from 140.3 million to 64.5 million (FAO, IFAD and WFP 2013).

¹ According to the FAO, chronic food insecurity occurs when people are unable to meet their minimum food requirements over a sustained period of time;
<http://www.fao.org/docrep/013/al936e/al936e00.pdf>

² 'Undernourished' or 'undernourishment' refers to "*[f]ood intake that is insufficient to meet dietary energy requirements continuously*" (FAO 2000, 26).

³ The FAO's Prevalence of Undernourishment Indicator (PoU) is an estimation of the proportion of each country's population whose dietary energy consumption is lower than their dietary energy requirements (HLPE, 2012)

Figure 1 provides an overview of the state of food insecurity in the world between the years of 2009 and 2013.

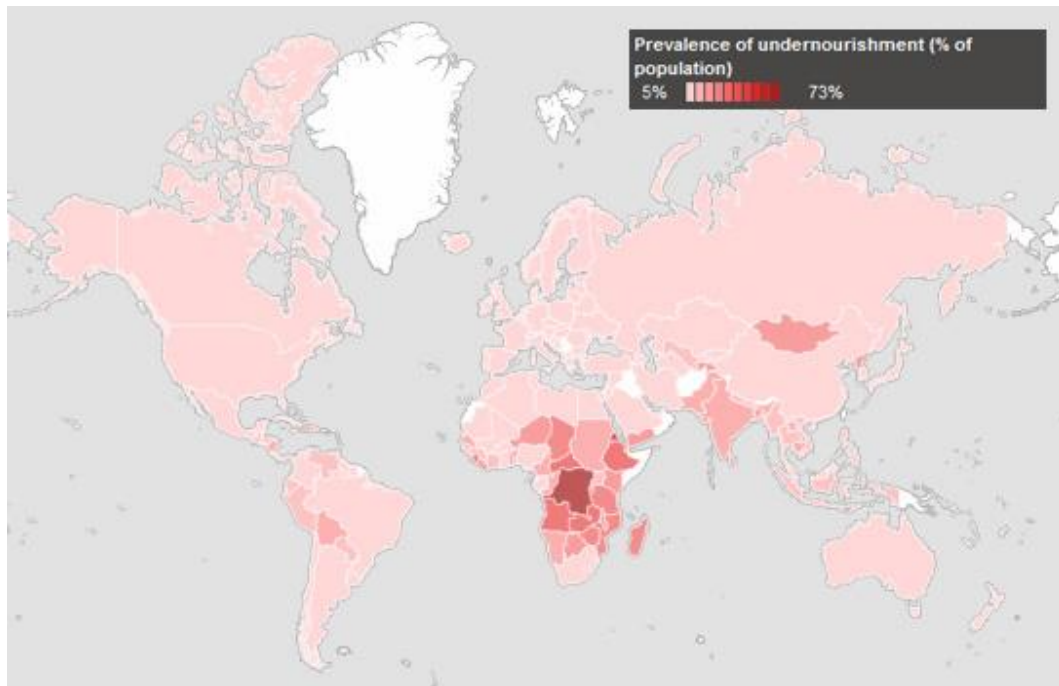


Figure 1: Prevalence of undernourishment in the world 2009-2013, Source: World Bank

Besides the 12 per cent of the global population being undernourished in terms of energy intake (as captured by the PoU indicator), an estimated 26 per cent of children in the world are stunted (resulting from chronic undernutrition)⁴ and 2 billion (bn) people suffer from one or more micronutrient deficiencies⁵ (Barrett 2002; FAO 2013; Pinstrip-Anderson 2008).

In order to address this situation, two food security-related targets were set at the international level - the World Food Summit in 1996 and the Millennium Summit of 2000. The former with the intended goal of halving the *absolute* number of undernourished people, while the latter putting its focus on halving the *proportion* of people facing chronic hunger (MDG⁶ 1). For both targets, the timeframe has been set until 2015. The implication of this divergence is shown in Figure 2 and Figure 3, illustrating that the World Food Summit (WFS) target is the more ambitious one (FAO, IFAD and WFP 2013). While Figure 2 shows the progress being made at a global level, Figure 3 refers the progress made in Africa.

⁴ 'Undernutrition' can be defined as "[t]he result of undernourishment, poor absorption and/or poor biological use of nutrients consumed" (FAO 2000, 26).

⁵ Micronutrient deficiencies are caused by inadequate intake and/or absorption of vitamins or minerals (FAO 2000, 26)

⁶ Millennium Development Goal 1

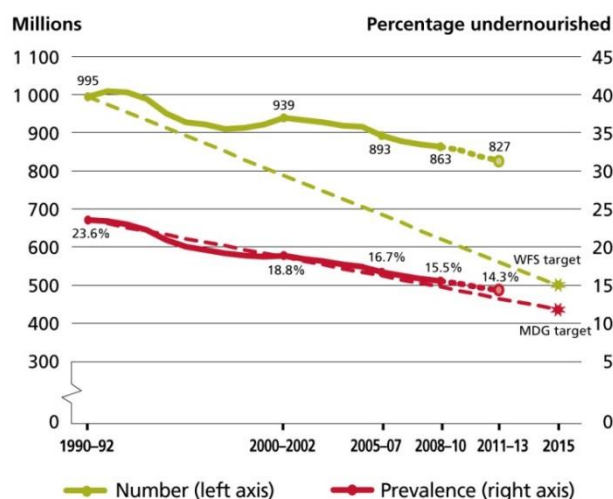


Figure 2: Global progress and target achievement trajectories towards the MDG and WFS targets
Source: FAO, IFAD and WFP (2013)

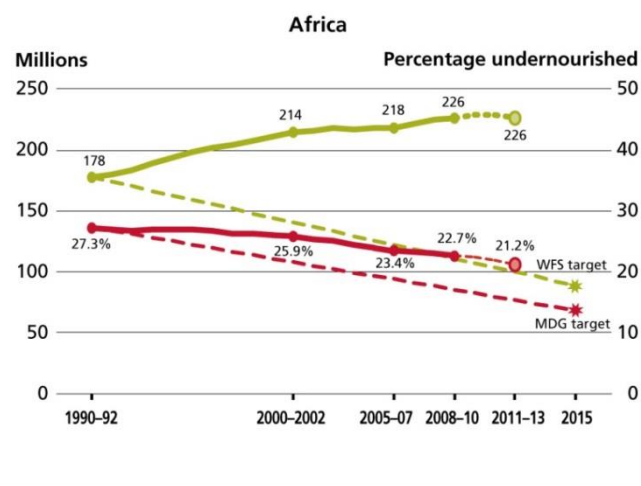


Figure 3: Progress and target achievement trajectories towards the MDG and WFS targets in Africa
Source: FAO, IFAD and WFP (2013)

While several regions have already reached the MDG hunger target (Central Asia, East Asia, South-Eastern Asia and the Caucasus) or are well on track do to so (Latin America and the Caribbean), for Africa and Oceania this achievement seems highly unlikely (FAO, IFAD and WFP 2013). The WFS target, on the other hand, will not be achieved on a global scale, but indeed some individual countries managed to reach it already in 2012 (FAO, IFAD and WFP 2013).⁷

Despite the progress that has already been made in some developing countries, there are several factors that potentially threaten these achievements. One challenge in this regard is the high rate of population growth in some parts of the world and the consequent increase in demand for food. The United Nations Population Division estimates the world population to grow from 7.1 billion in 2013 to more than 9.5 billion in 2050, with the highest growth rates coming from Sub-Saharan Africa, where the total population is expected to more than double from 0.9 billion in 2013 to 2 billion in 2050.⁸ Figure 4 below shows the agency's prediction of population growth by world regions for the period of 1950 to 2100. Figure 5 shows trends for African regions for the same period of time, with Eastern Africa ranking at the top (with an expected population growth from 373 million in 2013 to 869 million in 2050)⁹.

⁷ Armenia, Azerbaijan, Cuba, Djibouti, Georgia, Ghana, Guyana, Kuwait, Kyrgystan, Nicaragua, Peru, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, Sao Tome and Principe, Thailand, Turkmenistan, Venezuela and Viet Nam

⁸ United Nations Department of Social and Economic Affairs, Population Division:
http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/publications/pdf/trends/WPP2012_Wallchart.pdf

⁹ See footnote 7

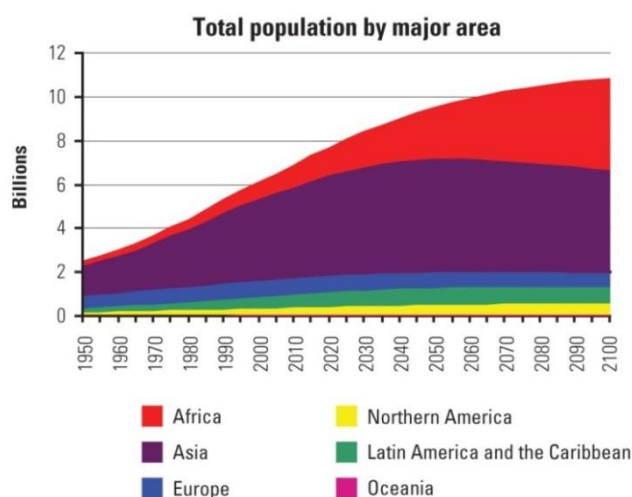


Figure 4: Total population growth by major area
Source: UN Population Division

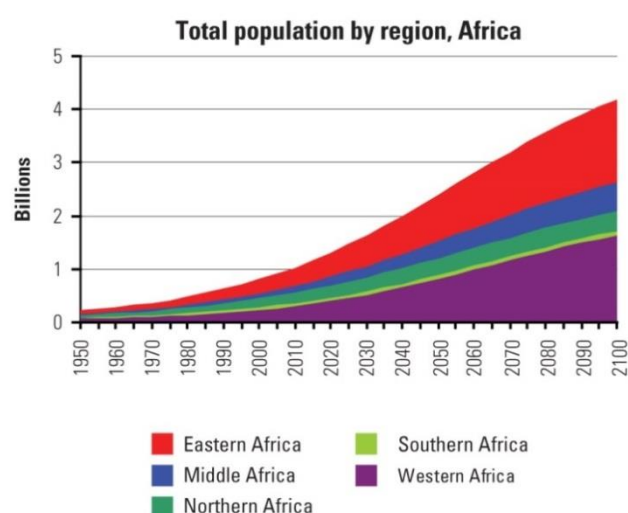


Figure 5: Total population growth by region in Africa
Source: UN Population Division

Other substantial challenges for food security are the adverse effects of climate change (in form of, for example, recurrent droughts or floods), as well as the global food price volatility experienced in recent years. While the former may increase the variability and unpredictability of food production, the latter may lead to sharp increases of food prices in domestic markets, thus, restricting the accessibility to food particularly for the (income) poor (CFS 2012).

In order to deal with these different contingencies, governments in developing countries have implemented various social protection¹⁰ instruments. While the set of interventions is broad – ranging from narrowly targeted safety nets, to, for example, general input or food subsidies – these programmes have three functions in common: 1.) to help protect a basic level of consumption, 2.) to facilitate investments in human capital and other productive assets, and 3.) to strengthen the agency of those in poverty (Barrientos 2010). Prominent examples of such social protection programmes include Brasil's 'Bolsa Família' programme, India's 'National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme', or South Africa's 'Child Support Grant' (Barrientos 2010). Some of these programmes have been explicitly introduced with the objective of reducing hunger and increase food security, for example, the Bolsa Família cash transfer programme which is the core-element of the government's zero hunger strategy.

¹⁰ According to Bertranou *et al.* (2006), social protection can be defined as an "entitlement to benefits that a society provides to individuals and households through public and collective measures – to protect against low or declining living standards arising out of the number of basic risks and needs" (cited by Barrientos 2010, 8).

This is also the case in Ethiopia, where in 2005 the government launched the Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP), which today is the second largest social protection programme in Sub-Saharan Africa, providing social transfers to 7.6 million food insecure Ethiopians in 2009 which is equivalent to around 10 per cent of the country's population (Wiseman *et al.* 2010). The programme's objective is to provide transfers in form of food, cash or a combination of both to the chronically food insecure population in order to smooth food consumption, prevent asset depletion at the household level and promote asset creation at the community level. Concerning the programme design, the PSNP is combining a public works (PW) component, for those able to perform labor-intensive work, and a direct support (DS) component, for those unable to participate in PW e.g. the elderly or pregnant women (GoE 2006).

1.2 Research Questions

The aim of this research paper is to analyze to what extent the Productive Safety Net Programme in Ethiopia – through both the provision of PW and DS - has been able to reduce food insecurity and vulnerability among beneficiary households. Furthermore, I want to look at the main challenges the programme has been confronted with since its implementation and in how far these were moderating programme impacts. More specifically the following question shall be answered:

- In how far has the PSNP an impact on food security of beneficiary households in terms of caloric availability per person, the months of food gaps per year, and the perceived food security of individuals?
- In how far has the PSNP an impact on household's vulnerability in terms of asset and livestock development, including the frequency of distress-sale of assets?

1.3 Methodology

In order to give answer to the main questions, all relevant information will be gathered from descriptive and analytical reports of the PSNP, published by the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), the Institute for Development

Studies (IDS), the Overseas Development Institute (ODI), and the World Bank. The data being analysed in these reports is primarily based on two sets of longitudinal surveys.

The first set - referred to as the Food Security Surveys (FSS) - has been conducted by the Central Statistical Agency of Ethiopia in the years of 2006, 2008 and 2010 respectively. A mixed methods approach has been applied – using quantitative methods (*inter alia*, *woreda* capacity surveys, households surveys, community and price questionnaire surveys) and qualitative methods (including key informant interviews at the federal, regional, *woreda*, *kebeele*¹¹, household and individual level, and focus group discussions).

The second set of surveys has been conducted by members of the ODI, IDS and IDLgroup, A-Z Consult and Indak International in 2006 and 2008. They provide panel data for the years of 2006 and 2008, while also adopting a mixed methods approach, including quantitative household surveys, community questionnaires, market surveys and qualitative key informant interviews at all levels and focus group discussions.

The available surveys provide information on a range of programme specific implementation issues and food security indicators of beneficiary households (i.e. food consumption, the size of food gaps¹² per year, asset and livestock development, coping strategies and perceived welfare) in comparison to non-beneficiary households and – as far as possible – separated from outcomes of complementary food security programmes e.g. the Household Asset Building Programme (HABP). Both sets of surveys have been conducted in four regions of the country, namely Tigray, Amhara, Oromiya and Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples' Region (SNNPR), thus, my analysis will also be restricted to these regions.

Due to the actuality of the topic, particularly concerning implementation and impact assessments of the PSNP, basically all of the literature will derive from internet sources.

¹¹ *woredas* (i.e. districts) are the third-level tiers of administration in Ethiopia; *kebeeles* (i.e. wards) are the smallest units of government

¹² The food gap refers to the number of months that a household is unable to satisfy its food needs (Berhane *et al.* 2011).

1.4 Structure

Chapter 2 will subsequently shed light on the concept of food security, including legal aspects related to the right to adequate food, the multidimensional nature of the concept, the different types of malnutrition, aspects of household food security, the role of the agricultural sector for poverty reduction and economic growth, general trends on the measurement of food security and the recent discussions on global food price volatility. Furthermore, the concept of social protection will be introduced by presenting different approaches (including a brief introduction of the World Bank's and the ILO's approach) and instruments (e.g. conditional and unconditional cash transfers).

Chapter 3 will initially present some of the main sources of food insecurity and risk in the context of Ethiopia, including poverty, droughts and famines, food price volatility, population growth, and diseases. The role of the agricultural sector shall be presented by giving an overview of the agricultural policies during the Derg regime (1974-1991) and under EPRDF's¹³ rule (apart from 1991). The consecutive subsection will deal with Ethiopia's pastoralism and the transformation of the food aid system in Ethiopia, away from a year to year ex-post emergency appeal system to a multi-year social protection scheme. Ethiopia's Food Security Programme (FSP) - of which the PSNP is one component - will be introduced by highlighting the main characteristics, goals and the design of the PSNP and the Household Asset Building Programme (HABP) – the second component of the FSP.

Chapter 4 will first address the implementation challenges the PSNP has been confronted with, including issues related to payment modalities (e.g. types of payments, timeliness of payments, etc.), the graduation and coordination process, the targeting process, the PW component, and accountability and transparency. Afterward, the impacts of the PSNP on food security, assets, and perceived welfare of beneficiary households will be addressed.

The last chapter will summarize the main findings of the work and draw general conclusions on future challenges of the PSNP in Ethiopia.

¹³ The full name is 'Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front'

2. Conceptual framework

2.1. Food security and nutrition

Food security is a dynamic concept, which has continuously integrated new dimensions and levels of analysis over the years (Clay 2002; Ecker & Beisinger 2012; Frankenberger 1992; Maxwell & Smith 1992; Pinstrup-Anderson 2008). In the context of the global food crisis in the first half of the 1970s, discussions primarily focused on the supply-side of food on a national and international level, including concerns on production, trade, and price stability of basic foodstuff (Clay 2002; Maxwell & Smith 1992). The assumption of that time was that food-supply deficits were directly related to a decline in the nutritional status¹⁴ of a given population (Frankenberger 1992). However, despite significant technical innovations and productivity gains in the course of the green revolution, increased food availability did not automatically translate into significant reductions in the levels of malnutrition (Clay 2002).¹⁵

In addition, researchers – in the context of another food crisis that struck Africa in the mid 1980s - began to realize that food availability was not necessarily a guarantee for food security, but rather a question of the accessibility to food, i.e. the ability of households and individuals to access food (Frankenberger 1992). Consequently, the international debate shifted from the national and international, to the household and individual level of food security, discussing behavioral patterns of households and aspects of vulnerability¹⁶ to food insecurity (Clay 2002; Ecker & Breisinger 2012).

In his influential work named '*Poverty and Famines*', Amartya Sen (1981) highlighted the importance of the demand-side of food security by putting into question the direct relationship between food availability and starvation. He argued that food unavailability is neither necessary nor sufficient to create hunger and that

¹⁴ The nutritional status is compounded by "*The physiological state of an individual that results from the relationship between nutrient intake and requirements and from the body's ability to digest, absorb and use these nutrients*" (FAO 2000, 26).

¹⁵ Malnutrition refers to "*an abnormal physiological condition caused by deficiencies, excesses or imbalances in energy, protein and/or other nutrients*" (FAO 2000, 26).

¹⁶ "*Vulnerability can be defined as the probability that individuals, households, or communities will be in poverty in the future*" (Barrientos 2010, 6).

the latter was predominantly determined by a household's inability to establish entitlements to enough food (Maxwell & Smith 1992). According to his theory, in a private ownership market economy, households obtain various legal means to acquire food which are compounded of 'trade-based entitlements' (purchasing food), 'production-based entitlements' (producing food), 'own- labor entitlements' (work for food) and 'inheritance and transfer entitlements' (food received by others). In this sense, starvation has to be seen as a result of one or more entitlement failures that are not necessarily lying only in failing to produce food (Sen 1981).

Other crucial aspects which were brought up until the mid-90s were, *inter alia*, the temporal dimension of food security, distinguishing between *chronic* and *transitory* food insecurity¹⁷, and concerns about food composition, nutrient requirements and food preferences¹⁸ (Clay 2002; Maxwell & Smith 1992).

In the context of global food price volatility and growing awareness of the consequences of climate change, particularly with regard to developing countries, the post-2000 food security agenda has shifted its focus increasingly towards strategies to integrate fragmented interventions and policies provided by various policy sectors and agencies into a more systematic and coherent food security framework (CFS 2012).

2.1.1. The right to adequate food

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) - adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations in 1948 – anchored the right to food as part of a broader set of economic, social and cultural rights (Article 22-27). Article 25.1 of the declaration states that:

“Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control” (UDHR 1948).

¹⁷ *Transitory* food insecurity describes periodic food insecurity, while *chronic* food insecurity refers to a long-term lack of access to sufficient food (Pinstrup-Anderson 2008)

¹⁸ For further discussions on food composition, nutrient requirements and preferences, see CFS (2012), FAO (2000), Maxwell & Smith (1992)

In the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) of 1966, and entering into force in 1976, state parties reaffirmed their commitment to the progressive realization of the right to adequate food in further recognition of the “*fundamental right of everyone to be free from hunger*” (ICESCR 1966, Article 11. 2), through means of improved production, conservation and distribution of food (Article 11. 2a) and ensuring an equitable distribution of world food supplies (Article 11. 2b). To the present (June 2012), the Covenant has been ratified by 160 countries (HLPE 2012).

Together with the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), which was also adopted in 1966, the UDHR and the ICESCR constitute the International Bill of Human Rights. Other conventions that followed focused on more specific rights-based topics, *inter alia*, the ‘International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women’ (CEDAW, adopted in 1979), the ‘International Convention on the Rights of the Child’ (CRC, 1989) or the ‘International Convention on the Right of Persons with Disabilities’ (CRPD, 2006) (HLPE 2012, Annex A1).

At the World Food Summit held in Rome in 1996, heads of states and their representatives set forth the Rome Declaration on World Food Security and the World Food Summit Plan of Action. The former document contains seven broad commitments for the promotion of food security, while the latter sets out specific objectives and practical actions for the implementation of those commitments. One explicit objective is to halve the number of undernourished people between 1990 and 2015 (FAO 1996).

In the context of the summit a new broad definition of food security has been adopted, which was meant to reflect the shift in food policy at that time:

“Food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical [social]¹⁹ and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life.”²⁰

Three years later in 1999, the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR)²¹ adopted the General Comment Nr.12 on the right to adequate food,

¹⁹ The component of ‘social access’ has been added to the definition of food security five years later at the World Food Summit of 2001 (Clay 2002)

²⁰ World Food Summit Plan of Action: <http://www.fao.org/docrep/003/w3613e/w3613e00.htm>

which provided *“the most comprehensive and authoritative interpretation of the normative content of the right to adequate food”* (HLPE 2012, 27).

In 2005, the FAO published its ‘Voluntary Guidelines’ (VGRtF)²² in order to provide states with additional practical guidance for the realization of the commitments made at the preceding World Food Summits. The guidelines advocate for putting the right to adequate food at the center of national food security policies, programmes, strategies and legislation. Furthermore, human rights principles (*inter alia* empowerment, non-discrimination, participation, transparency, accountability) should guide all activities designed to improve food security (CFS 2012).

The World Food Summit of 2009 was held in recognition that *“The effects of longstanding underinvestment in food security, agriculture, and rural development have recently been further exacerbated by food, financial and economic crisis”* (FAO 2009, Article 2). In the context of these concerns, participants of the Summit adopted the ‘5 Rome Principles for Sustainable Global Food Security’, which call for investments in ‘country-owned plans’ (principle 1), strengthened ‘strategic coordination on a national, regional and global level’ (principle 2), striving a comprehensive ‘twin-track approach’²³ to food security (principle 3), ensuring a ‘strong role for the multilateral system’ (principle 4), and ensuring a ‘sustained and substantial commitment by all partners’ and the further promotion of ‘multi- year plans and programmes’ (principle 5) (CFS 2012).

Another important topic at the Summit has been the reform process of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS), which is an intergovernmental body established in 1974 as part of the UN-system with the objective of developing a global strategic framework for food security and to support, advise and coordinate countries in their efforts to promote the afore-mentioned objective.²⁴ As part of this reform process, the High-Level Panel of Experts (HLPE) has been established in 2010, in order to *“ensure the regular inclusion of advice based on scientific evidence and knowledge”* (FAO 2009, Article 15). The HLPE provides members with assessments

²¹ the body mandated to monitor state compliance with the ICESCR

²² The full title of publication: ‘Voluntary Guidelines to Support the Progressive Realization of the Right to Adequate Food in the Context of National Food Security’,
<http://www.fao.org/docrep/009/y7937e/y7937e00.htm>

²³ The twin- track approach to food security consists of a combination of direct and more immediate actions to tackle hunger and longer-term actions to eliminate the root causes of poverty, including the progressive realization to the right to adequate food (CFS 2012)

²⁴ CFS Homepage: <http://www.fao.org/cfs/cfs-home/cfs-about/en/>

and analyses of the current state of food security and identifies emerging issues and key focal areas for the future.²⁵

A more recent proposal of HLPE has been the establishment of a ‘food security floor’ – a similar concept to the ‘social protection floor’ of the ILO²⁶ - in order to “*support countries fulfill their responsibility to deliver on the right to adequate food*”, by implementing “*a minimum set of interventions that would ensure food security for all*” (HLPE 2012, 58).

2.1.2. Dimensions of food security

Considering the definition of food security adopted at the World Food Summit in 1996, four particular dimensions can be identified: availability, access, utilization and stability. Food security is realized, if all these four dimensions are fulfilled at the same time.

2.1.2.1. Availability

The availability dimension addresses the supply side of food security, thus, referring to the amount of food that is physically available in a population during a certain period of time (Pangaribowo *et al.* 2013). Depending on the level of analysis, food availability can be determined:

- on a *macro*- or national-level, considering, *inter alia*, domestic agricultural production, import capacities, food stocks and food aid using e.g. the Food Production Index, the Livestock Production Index, or the ratio of total exports to food imports (Pangaribowo *et al.* 2013);
- on a *micro*-level, using quantitative indicators such as food availability per person or the average dietary energy supply adequacy (dietary energy supply as percentage of dietary energy requirement), or qualitative indicators like the share of dietary energy derived from cereals, roots and tubers (the higher the share, the less the total nutritional value), per capita availability of fruits and

²⁵ HLPE Homepage: <http://www.fao.org/cfs/cfs-hlpe/about-the-hlpe/en/>

²⁶ The ‘social protection floor’ will be further discussed in Chapter 2.2.1.2.

vegetables, or protein availability (FAO, IFAD and WFP 2013; Maxwell & Smith 1992).

2.1.2.2. Access

The access dimension to food security embraces the ability of households or individuals to access food from the market or from other sources (e.g. gifts or transfers) (Webb *et al.* 2006, 1405). According to the definition of food security adopted at the World Food Summit in 1996, access to food is determined by a physical and an economic component. Indicators for the physical component are related to the availability and quality of infrastructure, i.e. roads, railways, ports or communication networks as well as the accessibility of publicly provided services like health, education and social safety nets (FAO, IFAD and WFP, 2013; Pangaribowo *et al.* 2013). The economic component, on the other hand, refers to “*any acquisition pattern or entitlement through which people procure their food*” (FAO 1999, Article 13). An important factor hereby is the (real) income of people, and, in case of subsistence farm households, the assets necessary to produce sufficient food for consumption, such as land, labor, water, seeds or fertilizer (Ecker & Breisinger 2012).

From a macro-perspective, indicators of macro-economic profiles of countries can be considered as components of the access dimension. These include, *inter alia*, agricultural import tariffs, the inflation and exchange rate, and the food price index, all of which intend to capture the effects, evolution and mechanisms behind food price formation (Pangaribowo *et al.* 2013).

2.1.2.3. Utilization

The utilization dimension of food security is concerned with the questions of ‘how much’, ‘what’ and ‘how’ people eat (Clay 2002). This third dimension basically embraces concerns about the diversity and nutritional value of food being consumed and in how far the micronutrients are being absorbed by the body.²⁷ Important factors hereby include, for example, how food is being stored, prepared and cooked,

²⁷ The aspect of absorption is relevant, in so far, that micronutrient intake does not necessarily result in micronutrient absorption, for example, due to illness (Pangaribowo *et al.* 2013).

the intra-household distribution of food, education and information about health and nutrition, and health and hygiene conditions (Clay 2002; Ecker & Breisinger 2012; Maxwell & Smith 1992).

Regarding its measurement, malnutrition is commonly assessed through anthropometric indicators, including wasting (being too thin for one's height; as a result of short-term inadequacy of food, an illness or an infection), stunting (being too short for one's age; *inter alia* caused by prolonged inadequacy of food intake) and underweight (being too thin for one's age) (FAO, IFAD and WFP, 2013).

According to Barrett (2010), the first three dimensions of food security are inherently hierarchical, in so far that food availability is a necessary but not sufficient condition to ensure access, and access, on the other hand, is necessary but not sufficient for effective utilization.

2.1.2.4. Stability

Stability is a relevant factor for all other dimensions of food security mentioned above. It encompasses considerations about the vulnerability to certain types of risks (which might occur in the future), thus, recognizing the temporal dimension of food security (Pangaribowo *et al.* 2013). Sources of risks on a macro-level can be, for example, natural disasters (e.g. floods and droughts), macroeconomic shocks (e.g. global food price spikes) health-related shocks (diseases, epidemics) or political instability (e.g. civil conflict) (Ecker & Breisinger 2012). On a micro-level, i.e. individual or household-level risks may include, among others, un- or underemployment, illness or death (Maxwell & Smith 1992).

Indicators that measure stability include, *inter alia*, the area equipped for irrigation (as a measure of the extent of exposure to climatic shocks), the share of food imports in total merchandise exports (capturing the capacity of a state to generate foreign exchange reserves through exports), as well as indicators impacting stability more directly, e.g. variability in production and supply of food, or swings in food and input prices (FAO 2013).

2.1.3. Malnutrition

Malnutrition is a consequence of insufficient, excessive or imbalanced dietary energy and/or nutrient intake, resulting in either undernourishment or overnourishment (FAO 2000). The latter is a well-known phenomenon in developed countries²⁸, and manifests itself in overweight and obesity. Undernourishment, on the other hand, is more prevalent in developing countries and affecting particularly poor and vulnerable groups in society (FAO 2000).

Hereby, a distinction can be made between insufficient dietary intake of macronutrients, the energy-providing food components like carbohydrates, fats and proteins and insufficient dietary intake of micronutrients, including vitamins and minerals which are essentially needed for the growth and development for the body (FAO 2000). Micronutrient deficiencies are more common among women of reproductive age, children and people with compromised immune systems (e.g. due to AIDS), including iron deficiency anaemia, iodine deficiency, vitamin A or Vitamin C deficiencies, or calcium deficiencies (FAO 2000).

Concerning the causes of undernutrition, Pangaribowo *et al.* (2013), in referring to the conceptual framework of undernourishment established by UNICEF, distinguish between immediate, underlying and basic causes (See Figure 6 below).

²⁸ The issue of obesity in developing countries hasn't received much attention in the literature due to the more compelling problem of undernourishment in these regions (FAO 2000)

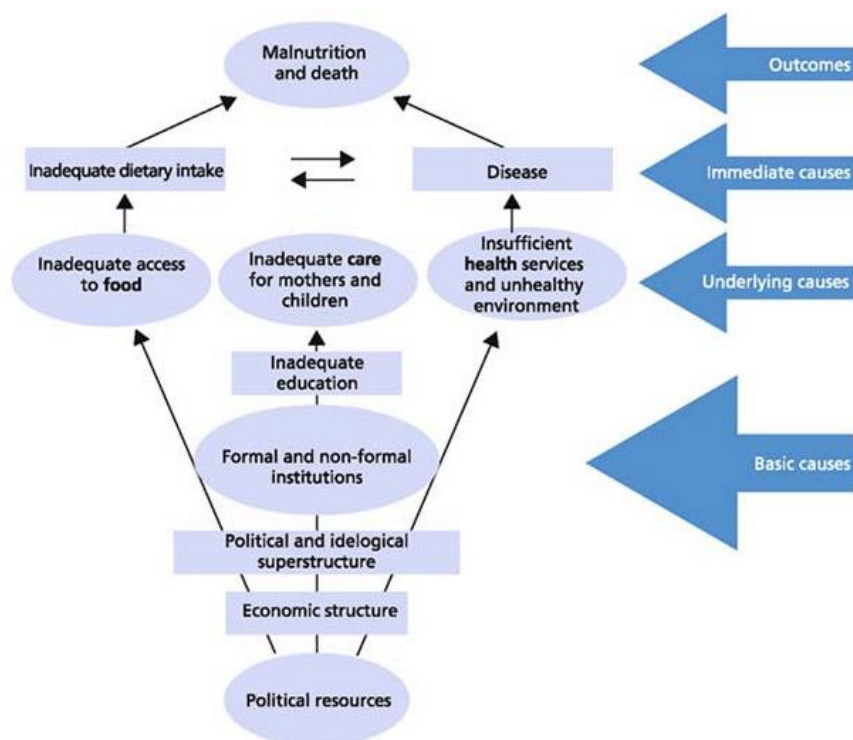


Figure 6: A conceptual framework of undernutrition, Source: FAO

The immediate causes of malnutrition are a combination or interrelation of inadequate dietary intake and the health status of an individual (Maxwell & Smith 1992). Insufficient adequacy in dietary food intake has potentially severe impacts on the health-status of household members in the short and in the long run, having also an impact on the economic performance and living conditions over the life-cycle. It hampers the human capital formation of children i.e. their cognitive and physiological development, resulting in lower schooling performance and lower income generation potential. Furthermore, it increases the susceptibility to disability, morbidity and mortality of affected people, thus resulting in lower labor productivity (Ecker & Breisinger 2012; FAO 2000; FAO 2013; Schiff & Valdés 1990).²⁹

Consequently, individuals are determined to meet a certain minimum threshold of food intake in terms of sufficient quantity and quality. While, for example, the FAO numbers the minimum dietary energy requirements of a person at 1819 kilocalories per day (FAO, IFAD and WFP, 2013), the establishment of such a threshold applicable for men, women and children alike is problematic (Barrett 2002). Considerations of individual variations in macro and micronutrient

²⁹ From a life-cycle perspective, adequate nutrition during the time window of 1,000 days from a woman's pregnancy until the 2nd year of her child has been recognized to be the highly important for the proper cognitive and physiological development a child (UNICEF 2013)

requirements - depending, *inter alia*, on genetics, the activity levels and the health status of an individual - have to be taken into account (Barrett 2002).

Pangaribowo *et al.* (2013) mention three additional factors as underlying causes of malnutrition, namely, the level of households food insecurity (determined by inadequate availability and access to food), inadequate care (regarding child feeding and health seeking behaviors, the support received by mothers during times of pregnancy and lactation, and the mothers' autonomy in household decision making) and an unhealthy environment (including unhygienic water and sanitation, or the lack of appropriate health services).

Finally, the basic or structural causes of malnutrition are compounded by the socio-economic and political environment in which individuals or households are living in. Macroeconomic stability, economic growth and its distribution, public spending, and governance and quality of institutions are all the relevant factors contributing to the promotion of food security (Ecker & Briesinger 2012; Pangaribowo *et al.* 2013).

2.1.4. Household food security

2.1.4.1. Intra-household issues

The question of whether or not an individual has access to adequate food is closely related to behavioral aspects of intra-household food distribution, i.e. the role of preferences, gender, age, endowments, household-level resources, prices and labor market opportunities in the distribution of resources among household members (Strauss & Beegle 1996).

In general, two main approaches can be distinguished, i.e. the unitary and the collective models approach. In the unitary models - used in most economic models of household behavior – households are seen as:

“[...] a collection of individuals who behave as if they agree on how best to combine time, goods bought in the market, and goods produced at home to produce commodities that maximize some common welfare index” (Quisumbing & Smith 2007, 1).

There are several assumptions grounded in this model, including that:

“(a) household members share a common set of preferences in resource allocation; (b) household income and food resources are pooled and allocated to maximise collective welfare [...]; (c) households with similar endowments respond similarly but independently to price, income and other exogenous changes” (Maxwell & Smith 1992, 19).

It seems to be a reasonable assumption, as Strauss and Beegle (1996) note, that household members have similar preferences regarding the allocation of resources, as well as, for example, the existence of one member within a household dictating or enforcing allocations. However, it has been put into question whether preferences of all household members in all situations and at all times are identical and that in intra-household decision-making processes may not be prone to conflict (Maxwell & Smith 1992; Quisumbing & Smith 2007; Strauss & Beegle 1996).

In contrast, the collective approach allows for different preferences of household members and does not assume that resources are pooled. An important assumption regarding the collective approach is that household resource allocation is always Pareto efficient³⁰. Gender relations, as one example, are however, shaped by ideological, religious, ethnic, economic and social norms that may affect the distribution of food within a household in favor of one group, e.g. male rather than female household members or *vice versa* (Quisumbing & Smith 2007).

Other factors contributing to intra-household differences might be the birth order of children (e.g. the first-born child receiving more resources than later-born children), the relationship to the household head, or age (e.g. elderly household members being more susceptible to illnesses and dependent on other household members) (Quisumbing & Smith 2007).

2.1.4.2. Poverty and livelihood security

It has become a widely accepted fact that poverty and vulnerability are strongly correlated with restricted access to food and malnutrition (Ecker 2012; FAO 1996; FAO 2013; Schiff & Valdés 1990). According to Maxwell & Smith (1992)

³⁰‘Pareto efficient’ describes a state, in which the welfare of one individual cannot be increased without reducing the welfare of any other individual (Quisumbing & Smith 2007).

vulnerability on a household-level is determined by the risk of entitlement failure and the extent to which buffers (e.g. assets, savings) are available. The extent of exhaustion of these buffers is further determined by the frequency, intensity, and duration of exposure to previous crisis.

Citing Oshaug (1985), Maxwell & Smith (1992) distinguish between three types of households: ‘enduring households’, which are able to maintain household food security on a continuous basis, ‘resilient’ households’, which experience transitory food insecurity but are able to recover quickly, and ‘fragile households’, which become increasingly insecure in response to shocks.

Regarding the complex set of livelihood strategies of poor people, Maxwell & Smith (1992) point out that food security is an important, but not necessarily a predominant objective in consideration of a broader focus on household livelihood security. Thus, in respect to their short and longer-term subsistence, poor people may prefer to decrease their food consumption in order to avoid long-term losses in other dimensions of their welfare-level, e.g. their income-level or level of assets and livestock.

Figure 7 demonstrates the various components that are included in the concept of livelihood security. Economic security and nutritional security – the latter being determined by food and health security – are among the principal factors that determine household livelihood security. Other aspects include access to basic needs such as education opportunities, health facilities, potable water, participation within the community and housing (Frankenberger & McCaston 1998).

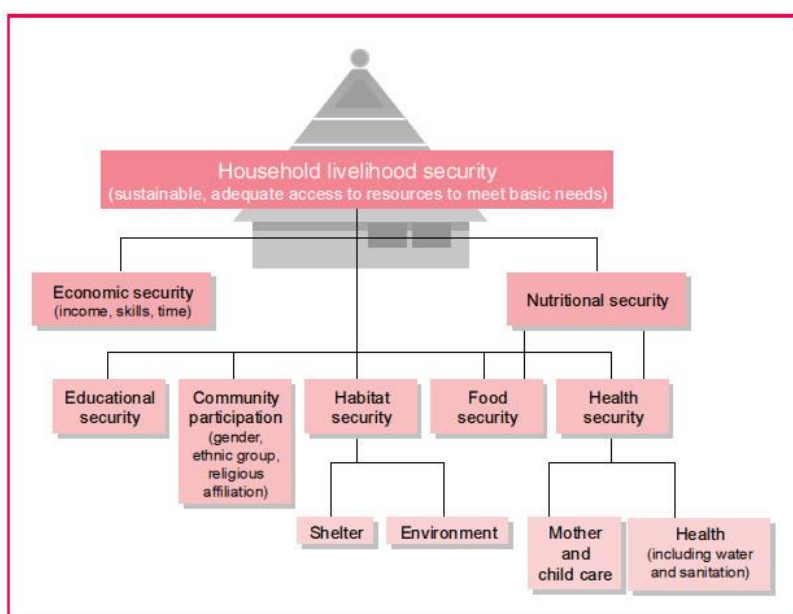


Figure 7: Components of household livelihood security
Source: Frankenberger & McCaston (1998)

An important implication of food security is, thus that *“food cannot be seen as a unique and objectively defined need at a particular point in time, independently of people’s other priorities at that point in time and their inter-temporal decision framework”* (Maxwell & Smith 1992, 31).

2.1.5. Agriculture and growth

In early classical theory, the agricultural sector was seen as a sector that only passively contributed to development, and its importance within the overall economy was expected to decline as development advanced (Diao *et al.* 2007; Christiaensen *et al.* 2010). In the late 1960s and early 1970s, due to technological advances and productivity gains in the course of the green revolution, this view changed, and the agricultural sector revealed its potential as a growth sector (Diao *et al.* 2007). After a decade of structural adjustment policies, the 1990s were marked by a paradigm shift away from fostering economic growth per se, towards a stronger focus on poverty reduction – as reflected, *inter alia*, by the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and a focus on governance, institutions and decentralization (Christiaensen *et al.* 2010). Furthermore, the so-called triple f-crisis³¹ of recent years brought agriculture back on the development agenda, both as a guarantor against future potential food crisis and as an engine of future growth (EPRI 2011).

So under which circumstances does growth contribute to poverty reduction? Christiaensen *et al.* (2010) refer to four components which determine a sector’s poverty reduction potential:

“[...] the direct growth component from the sector itself; the indirect growth component arising from spillover effects of growth in one sector on another; the participation component, reflecting the responsiveness of overall poverty to the sector of origin of GDP growth; and the relative size of the sector in the economy” (Christiaensen *et al.* 2010, 4).

Given the fact that the agricultural sector is - either directly or indirectly - engaging more than half of the labor force in developing countries and accounts for

³¹ The triple f-crisis refers to the food, fuel and financial crisis

large shares of national income and exports (Diao *et al.* 2007), there is a strong argument in favor of agriculture as an engine of growth, particularly favoring the poorest strata of a population (FAO, IFAD and WFP, 2012).

According to calculations of the FAO, in the case of Sub-Saharan Africa, a given rate of GDP growth due to agricultural growth reduces poverty eleven times more than does the same dose of GDP growth due to non-agricultural growth (FAO, IFAD and WFP, 2012).

The re-discovery of agriculture as a growth sector is also related to the linkages of agricultural growth to the rest of the economy. Agricultural output is, for example, sold predominantly in domestic markets and the input used in agricultural production is therefore less import intensive than in industrial production (Diao *et al.* 2007). Furthermore, growth in the agricultural sector which is supplemented by investments in transport and infrastructure – particularly roads – may potentially contribute to lower food prices for consumers and input prices for producers, thus, making food, health and education services more accessible for the poor (Ecker & Breisinger 2012).

So while there is relatively broad consensus that agricultural growth has an important role in promoting food security and reducing poverty, the overall growth effects of the agricultural sector in comparison to non-agricultural sectors remains controversial (Christiaensen *et al.* 2010; Diao *et al.* 2007; Ecker & Breisinger 2012). Furthermore, the ability of the agricultural sector to generate growth varies across and within countries, as well as across different subsectors (Diao *et al.* 2007).

2.1.6. Trends in measuring food security

The measurement of food security is not an easy task. Just like the concept itself has been gaining complexity over the course of time, so has the set of indicators used for its measurement (Barrett 2002). Apparently, many conventional indicators focusing on food production, food availability or even income and food consumption reflect only a relatively small aspect of the broad notion food security discussed above, with each measure capturing and neglecting different phenomena intrinsic to the concept (Maxwell & Smith 1992; Barrett 2010).

The FAO Prevalence of Undernourishment indicator (PoU), for example, seeks to provide information about the proportion of the population which is at risk of insufficient caloric consumption, considering mean dietary energy supply as a proxy for food energy consumption. As a result, the indicator doesn't take into account the need for dietary diversity i.e. micronutrient requirements, which are inherent to the concept of food security (Pangaribowo *et al.* 2013).

While the measurement of food availability on a national level – as the first generation conceptualization of food security (Webb *et al.* 2006) – is associated with relatively low costs with regard to data generation (and thus can be done on a frequent basis), the shift towards assessing household (and individual-level) food insecurity - through e.g. the implementation of consumption and expenditure surveys - is much more costlier with regard to material and human resources, but also with regard to a coherent operationalization of this indicators across countries and institutions (Barrett 2010).

In practice, many agencies targeting food security interventions have been confronted with the problem of how to assess needs of households and differentiate between the food-secure and the food-insecure, between those who face immediate hunger and those who are not (Webb *et al.* 2006).

Webb *et al.* (2006) describes the shift from analysing macro-supply (including considerations on domestic supply, natural disasters, price effects and global food balance sheets) to households-level issues as one of the three main conceptual developments of food security measurement. Concerning the other two, he refers to a) a shift from a focus on objective to subjective measures, and b) a growing emphasis on fundamental measurement in contrast to derived measurement³². With regard to the latter, he addresses the problematic nature of using proxy measures like food consumption or income for the measurement of household food security. He argues that the presumably close relationship of these derived measures with food insecurity has to be questioned, as there is no real empirical evidence of their association to the construct of interest. Regarding the shift from objective to subjective measures, in citing Pradhan & Ravallion (1998), he distinguishes between the 'objective quantitative school' focusing on "*measures based on poverty lines, expressed as monetary measure of individual economic welfare [...], for which nutritional*

³² "Whereas fundamental measurement "presupposes no others", derived measurement is a calculation that assumes a "known empirical relationship" with an established measure" (Webb *et al.* 2006, 1406).

requirements are met or not met at given prices” (Webb *et al.* 2006, 1405), and the ‘subjective qualitative school’, putting its focus on individual experiences and personal interpretations of food insecurity. The former approach has been criticized for being too theoretical and too far away from the *de facto* reality of extreme poverty, while the latter could provide information that – based on cultural and personal values - reflects the individual’s or household’s sense of deprivation, which might or might not coincide with external or absolute standards (Webb *et al.* 2006).

2.1.7. Global food price spikes

In consideration of global food price developments of the past fifty years, the recent food price spikes of 2008 and 2011 have marked the most dramatic increase in food prices since the mid-1970s. For more than 20 years - from the mid-80s to the early 2000s - international food price levels have maintained relatively stable, until in 2003 they started to rise, first slowly, then more rapidly, until peaking in 2008 and again three years later in 2011 at an even higher level. In 2008 however, these price spikes were generally more concentrated on grain crops, while apart from 2010, prices of other agricultural products like sugar, edible oils, beverages, animal products and other raw materials such as cotton started to increase too (IBRD & WB 2012). Figure 8 below provides an overview of the food price levels from 1961 to 2013.³³

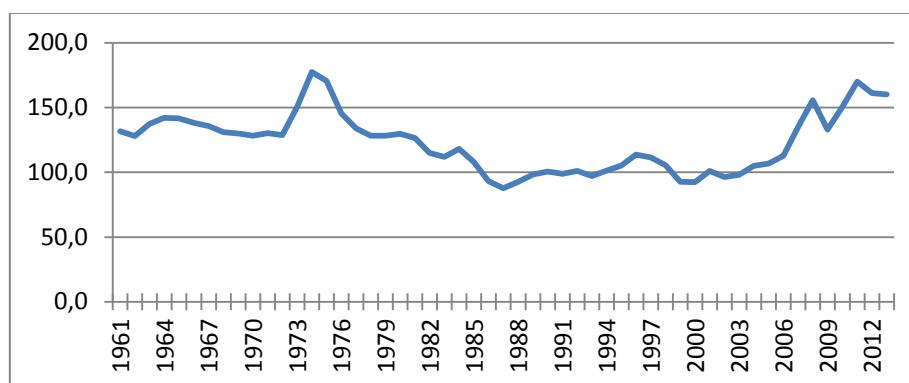


Figure 8: FAO Food Price Index (adjusted for inflation), by year 1961-2013, Index 2002-2004=100
Graphic prepared by author, Data source: FAO

³³ These estimates are derived from the FAO's Food Price Index (FPI), which consists of five commodity group indices, weighted with the average export shares of each of the groups for 2002-2004 (<http://www.fao.org/worldfoodsituation/foodpricesindex/en/>)

These recent upward-trends in levels of food prices have fuelled discussions about the causes of global food price volatility and their consequences for countries (considering a macro perspective) and households (considering a micro perspective). Much of the progress that has been accomplished regarding poverty and hunger reduction in developing countries has been reversed, and it is estimated that the food price spike of 2008 kept or pushed 105 million into poverty, while the 2011 price spike affected 48.6 million people in the short run (IBRD & WB 2012).

There is broad consensus about several factors that have triggered the recent food crisis, including poor wheat harvests in Australia and the Ukraine, rising oil and fertilizer prices, low cereal stocks, policies that promote the use of biofuels, increased food commodity speculation, trade policies related to export band and restrictions, and the depreciation of the US dollar (Ecker & Breisinger 2012; FAO 2011; IBRD & WB 2012). Other long-term dynamics that are referred to are increasing incidences of extreme weather events (potentially causing production losses) and the increasing food demand through changing dietary patterns and growing populations, particularly in emerging economies like China and India (Ecker & Breisinger 2012; FAO 2011).

Concerning the macroeconomic impacts of high food prices, these depend, broadly speaking, on whether a country is importing or exporting the food item affected by increased international prices. A country which exports rice or cereals, for example, will generally benefit from rising international prices, while importing countries will benefit from decreasing prices (IBRD & WB 2012).

On a household level, poor households will be affected most by rising (or declining) food prices, as they usually have to spend a high share of their income on food items. The higher the share of income spent on food, the more vulnerable household will be when faced with rising food prices (IBRD & WB 2012). Figure 9 demonstrates the vulnerability of countries to food price spikes, by correlating the net cereal imports as a share of consumption to the food share of household expenditure.

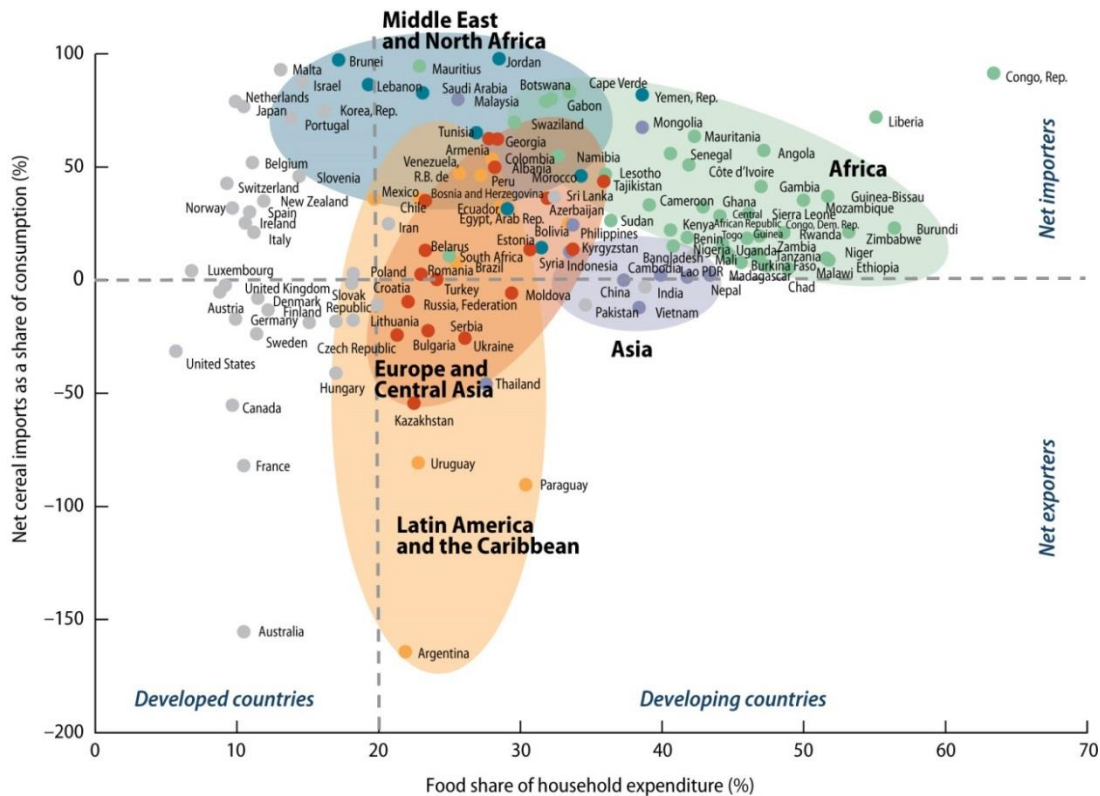


Figure 9: Vulnerability of countries to global food price shocks, Source: IBRD & WB (2012)

An important distinction hereby has to be made between net buyers and net sellers of food. Net sellers are those households whose total value of produced food exceeds the total amount of food required for consumption. In the case of net buyers, the contrary is the case. In urban contexts, nearly all dwellers are net food buyers, while in rural contexts the share of net sellers is higher, although, for example, small-scale farmers might also be net buyers of food as their production is not enough to feed the whole household (FAO 2011). The concept of net food buyers and sellers is also applicable on a macro-level, distinguishing between net food importing and net food exporting countries.

International food prices do not automatically translate into higher food prices within countries, but are being transmitted, as neither farmers nor consumers are linked directly to the world market. The degree to which international food prices are being transmitted to domestic food prices for consumers varies among regions and is *inter alia* determined by trade policies, exchange rates, a country's self sufficiency in terms of food production and transportation costs (FAO 2011). Furthermore, world food prices are usually transmitted with a time lag of several months. This lag can be explained by the time needed for the harvest of primary products, the shipping and final processing of food items before reaching the consumers (FAO 2013).

2.2. Social protection for food security

2.2.1. Definition and approaches

There is broad consensus today on the importance of social protection for the promotion of poverty reduction and food security, particularly in the context of developing countries (CFS 2012; FAO, IFAD and WFP 2012). However, similarly to the concept of food security, concepts and practical definitions of social protection remain open to different interpretations about its function and scope.

“Social Protection describes all public and private initiatives that provide income or consumption transfers to the poor, protect the vulnerable against livelihood risks, and enhance the social status and rights of the excluded and marginalized; with the overall objective of reducing the economic and social vulnerability of poor, vulnerable and marginalized groups” (Devereux & Sabates-Wheeler, 2004, 9).

As this definition demonstrates, social protection is concerned with providing short-term assistance, as well as protecting and promoting the livelihood of the poor and vulnerable in the long-run – including legal measures to improve the *status quo* of disadvantaged groups in society. Concerning the different stakeholders involved, these can be either from the public, private and voluntary sector, or from so-called ‘informal’ networks (Barrientos 2007). In addition, there can also be combinations of forms i.e. public-private partnerships in the provision of social services or informal support delivered through formal systems (remittances provided by money-transfer companies) (Gentilini and Omamo 2011). For the purpose of this study however, the focus will be on the public provision of social protection.

Several international development agencies have adopted their own concept of social protection, including, among others, the World Bank’s Social Risk Management Framework and the ILO’s Social Protection Floor Initiative, two reasonably different approaches, which shall be briefly introduced subsequently

2.2.1.1. The World Bank's Social Risk Management Framework

(R. Holzmann and S. Jørgensen 2000)

The Social Risk Management Framework (SRMF) sees social protection as “public interventions to (i) assist individuals, households and communities better manage risk, and (ii) provide support to the critically poor”(p.3). Simultaneously, the framework emphasizes the importance of market-based and informal arrangements of risk management. The strategies in order to deal with the risks faced by households have a hierarchical structure, in which *prevention* (i.e. ex-ante interventions) shall be preferred to *mitigation* (ex-ante and ex-post), which in turn should be prioritized to *coping* (ex-post). The role of the government includes, *inter alia*, to provide for “sound macroeconomic policies, sound financial markets, enforcement of property rights, respect for basic labor rights, and growth-oriented policies” (p.20).

With its mere attention to economic risks, aspects like social inclusion, cohesion or solidarity are being seen only as positive externalities of well designed risk management, not as intrinsic objectives themselves. Thus, one central aspect of criticism of the SRMF is its limited conceptualization to economic risks and vulnerabilities, leaving aside aspects of social vulnerabilities e.g. households or individuals being confronted with discrimination or social exclusion. Furthermore, the SRMF encourages a merely residual role for the state (Devereux & Sabates-Wheeler 2004).

2.2.1.2. The ILO's Social Protection Floor Initiative

(ILO 2011)

The Social Protection Floor Initiative promoted by the ILO advocates for a shift from a traditionally needs-based approach to social protection, to a rights-based, universal approach, which shall be “anchored in shared principles of social justice and in the universal right of everyone to social security and to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of themselves and their families” (p. 9). In accordance with the overall objectives of ILO³⁴, the framework puts a strong emphasis on the linkages of social protection and decent work, arguing that no one should live below a

³⁴ <http://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/mission-and-objectives/lang--en/index.htm>

certain income level and have access to basic social services to enhance decent work opportunities. The aim of unlocking the productive capacities of people can be achieved through the coordinated efforts of countries in implementing policies that enhance employability, reduce informality and precariousness and promoting entrepreneurship. *“While adopted as a global concept, existing social protection floors have been nationally shaped within a framework of country-specific institutional structures, economic constraints, political dynamics and social aspirations”* (p. 11). As such, existing country-led social protection programmes like the Universal Child Allowance launched in Argentina, the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme or the Bolsa Família programme in in Brasil are part of their national social protection floor.

Besides these conceptual divergences among the World Bank and the ILO, the scope of social protection also differs within the context of developed and developing countries. While in developed countries, social protection is primarily concerned with income maintenance, thus, protecting the living standard for citizens primarily through social insurance schemes³⁵, in developing countries, its primary objective is to enable households the consumption of basic needs – particularly food (Slater 2008). Other objectives include the facilitation of investments in human and other productive assets and strengthening the agency of those in poverty (Barrientos 2010; Barrientos & Hulme 2009). As such, social protection can establish a bridge between short-term (promote and protect consumption) and long-term interventions (income generation, human capital formation) for food security (FAO, IFAD and WFP 2012). Function, scope and scale of these interventions will differ from country to country, depending on the national context.

Concerning targeting criteria of social protection interventions, one can distinguish between a ‘universalist’ and a ‘targeted’ programme approach. While in practice, both approaches are targeted to some degree, universal targeting refers the provision of transfers to a broader social category within society (e.g. the elderly or children), while the other focuses on more narrowly defined target groups, e.g. based on income criteria (Slater 2008). The discussion on which of the two approaches is

³⁵ Social insurance is provided through contributory schemes and involves protection against a broad range of contingencies to households and individuals such as maternity, old age, unemployment, sickness, or production losses (Barrientos 2010)

more appropriate in the context of developing countries - where resources are mostly constraint and poverty rates high - has been heavily disputed, however, as Gentilini and Omamo (2011) note: “[i]t is important to strike a balance between ensuring that benefits reach vulnerable populations, and avoiding artificial boundaries among and within almost equally vulnerable communities” (p.14).

2.2.2. Instruments of social assistance

In the context of developing countries, instruments of social assistance – compounded of non-contributory tax-, or donor-financed transfers – are intended to protect chronically poor and/or food insecure households from the worst effects of deprivation (Barrientos 2010; Slater 2008). Instruments include, *inter alia*, child allowances, social pensions, disability grants, food vouchers, input subsidies, school feeding programmes, or food-for-work programmes (Barrientos & Hulme 2009). Prominent examples include Mexico’s *Oportunidades* programme, providing income support to about 6.5 million households in 2012³⁶ or India’s National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme which guarantees employment for 100 days of work per rural households per year in PW programmes (Barrientos 2010, 10pp.).

Social assistance, in form of cash or in-kind transfer programmes, can be either conditional or unconditional. In the case of the latter, recipient households must commit themselves to undertake certain actions mostly related to the promotion of education, health and/or nutrition, including, for example, to enroll children in school (and maintain an adequate attendance level), attend basic medical services, vaccinate the household’s children, or receive nutrition education (FAO, IFAD and WFP 2012; HLPE 2012). In exchange, households receive support, mostly in form of a cash grant, sometimes in form of in-kind transfers such as nutritional supplements (HLPE 2012).

In contrast, unconditional transfer programmes are primarily focused to ensure the consumption of beneficiaries (Slater 2008). While conditional cash transfers (CCTs) are predominant in countries in Latin America and South-East Asia, unconditional cash transfers are more popular in Africa. This is partly due to the fact that particularly in the context Sub-Saharan Africa many countries face severe capacity constraints regarding the provision of social services including, for example,

³⁶ http://www.oportunidades.gob.mx/Portal/wb/Web/design_and_operation

the health and education sector. Under these circumstances it would seem questionable to raise the demand-side for social services - through the implementation of conditionalities - that are inappropriately available (Slater 2008).

3. Food insecurity in Ethiopia

3.1. Sources of food insecurity

Devereux (2000) refers to two different groups of analysts of food insecurity in Ethiopia: the 'physical ecology cluster', who focus on population growth, soil fertility and drought, and the 'political economy cluster', focusing on government policies, markets, and institutions. For a holistic analysis of food insecurity, neither of the two approaches is sufficient in itself (Devereux 2000). In order to be able to properly assess food security, a more holistic approach is needed, which encompasses both dimensions.

The following chapter – without claiming to capture the whole spectrum of causal factors - will address some of the main constraints of food insecurity, with particular attention given to physiological and ecological determinants.

3.1.1. Poverty

Poverty and food insecurity are two different concepts, with their correlation varying significantly among countries, depending in each case on the specific national context. However, in the case of Ethiopia, the overlap of the two concepts is greater than in other countries (Devereux 2000). This strong correlation is reflected by the Ethiopian government's calculation of the national poverty line, which is based on a 'basic needs method', compounding costs of a bundle of food, supplying a predefined level of minimum caloric requirements at 2,200 kilocalories (GoE 2012a).

Statistics on national poverty trends in Ethiopia indicate that there has been a substantial reduction in poverty over the last fifteen to twenty years. The countries

Human Development Index (HDI) increased from 0.275 in 2000 to 0.396 in 2012, although is still ranking among those countries with the lowest HDI throughout the world (number 173 out of 186 countries)³⁷. The Gross National Income (GNI) per capita (based on purchasing power parity) increased from 540 Dollar in 2004 to 1,110 Dollar in 2012³⁸, while income inequality of the country (as measured by the Gini-Coefficient) has been at 29.8 per cent - with 37.1 per cent in urban areas and 27.4 per cent in rural areas in 2010/11 (GoE 2012a).

The results from the Household Consumption and Expenditure Surveys (HCE) conducted in the country in 1995/96, 1999/00, 2004/05 and 2010/11 (see Table 1 below), show that the proportion of people living below the nationally defined poverty line (i.e. headcount index) has decreased from 47.5 per cent to 30.4 per cent in rural areas and from 33.2 per cent to 25.7 per cent in the urban centers during the period of 1995/96 to 2010/11. The depth of poverty (i.e. poverty gap index³⁹) stood at 7.8 per cent in 2010/11 nationwide, with 8 per cent in rural areas and 6.9 per cent in the urban centers. The poverty severity index⁴⁰ - while substantially declining during the period of 1999/00 until 2004/05 on a national level – increased in rural (17 per cent) and urban areas (5.1 per cent) from 2004/05 to 2010/11. For the context of rural Ethiopia, these data suggest that while the proportion of people below the poverty line and the average gap that separates the poor from the poverty line have declined in the past two decades, there has only been poor improvement in the distribution of income among the rural poor, particularly since 2004/05 (GoE 2012a).

³⁷ <http://hdr.undp.org/en/countries/profiles/ETH>

³⁸ <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GNP.PCAP.PP.CD/countries/ET?display=graph>

³⁹ The poverty gap index “captures the mean aggregate income or consumption shortfall relative to the poverty line across the whole population” (GoE 2012a).

⁴⁰ The poverty severity index considers the distance separating the poor from the poverty line (i.e. the poverty gap index) and the inequality among the poor, thus, putting more weight on households further away from the poverty line (GoE 2012a).

| | Poverty indices over time | | | | Change (%) | |
|------------------------|---------------------------|---------|---------|---------|----------------------|----------------------|
| | 1995/96 | 1999/00 | 2004/05 | 2010/11 | 2004/05 over 1999/00 | 2010/11 over 2004/05 |
| National | | | | | | |
| Head count index | 0.455 | 0.442 | 0.387 | 0.296 | -12.4 | -23.5 |
| Poverty gap index | 0.129 | 0.119 | 0.083 | 0.078 | -30 | -5.5 |
| Poverty severity index | 0.051 | 0.045 | 0.027 | 0.031 | -39.8 | 14.4 |
| Rural | | | | | | |
| Head count index | 0.475 | 0.454 | 0.393 | 0.304 | -13.4 | -22.7 |
| Poverty gap index | 0.134 | 0.122 | 0.085 | 0.080 | -30.8 | -5.5 |
| Poverty severity index | 0.053 | 0.046 | 0.027 | 0.032 | -40.6 | 17.0 |
| Urban | | | | | | |
| Head count index | 0.332 | 0.369 | 0.351 | 0.257 | -4.7 | -26.9 |
| Poverty gap index | 0.099 | 0.101 | 0.077 | 0.069 | -23.6 | -10.1 |
| Poverty severity index | 0.041 | 0.039 | 0.026 | 0.027 | -33.5 | 5.1 |

Table 1: Trends of national and rural/urban poverty, Source: GoE (2012a)

3.1.2. Droughts and Famine

Ethiopia has a long history of droughts and famines⁴¹ (Balcha 2001; von Braun & Olofinbiyi 2007). The country is characterized by a tropical monsoon climate with topographic-induced variations, and as rainfalls are highly erratic, the country is usually at high risk for droughts as well as intra-seasonal dry spells (von Braun & Olofinbiyi 2007).

Furthermore, the Horn of Africa has been identified as one of the regions being most affected by climate change, with alternative models of global warming predicting an increase in mean temperature of 1 to 3° Celsius by 2030 (Devereux 2000).

Webb and von Braun (1994) identify over 40 periods of famine-related food crisis in Ethiopia since 250 B.C. (and until 1994), with some lasting for a year or two, and others lasting for more than a decade. Geographically, more than half of these events took place in two broad zones (See Figure 10), namely the central and northeastern highlands (including parts of today's Oromiya, Afar, Amhara and Tigray) and the southern crescent of low-lying agro-pastoral lands (ranging from today's Somali land in the east, through south Oromiya and SNNP region in the southwest) (Webb & von Braun 1994). Figure 10 still includes the northern region of Eritrea (which became an independent country in 1993) and includes pre-1989

⁴¹ Webb and von Braun (1994) define famines as “a catastrophic disruption of society as manifested in a cumulative failure of production, distribution, and consumption systems”, manifesting itself in form of extreme, geographically concentrated shortfalls in food consumption, massive social disruption and long-term resource depletion (Webb & von Braun 1994, 11pp.).

administrative boundaries. Figure 11 demonstrates a physical map of Ethiopia, revealing the strong correlation between altitude and the risk of droughts of regions.

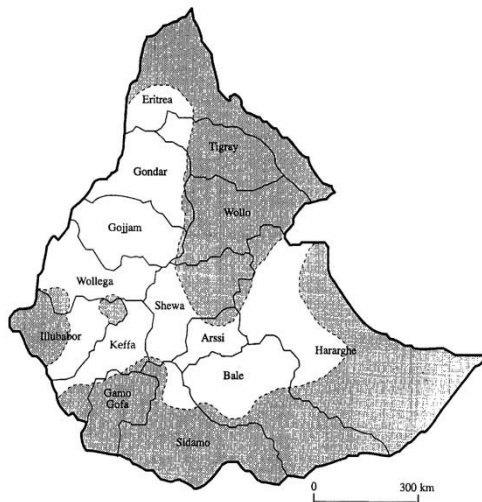


Figure 10: Map of Ethiopia indicating historically famine-prone areas (pre-1989 administrative boundaries)
Source: Webb & von Braun (1994)

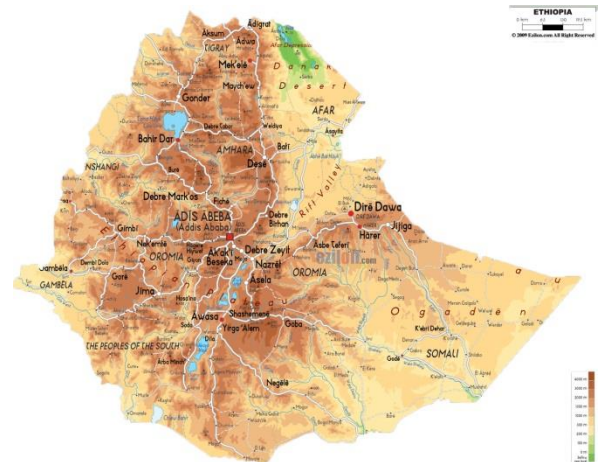


Figure 11: Physical map of Ethiopia
Source: Ezilon Maps

Together with the high population concentration and the resulting pressure on the natural resource base (in the highlands), the poverty of soils and vegetation and the local characteristics of rainfall are considered the major reasons for high prevalence of famines (in the southern low-lands) (Webb & von Braun 1994).

In 1983 to 1985, Ethiopia experienced one of its biggest famines in history caused by a series of rain failures, resulting in the excessive loss of livestock and the death of more than one million people. Other famines struck the country in 1987/8, 1990/2, and 1993/4 in northern Ethiopia, with some of them aggravated by the war with Eritrea during this period, undermining food production and appropriate responses to famines (Devereux 2000).

More recently, Ethiopia experienced a major famine in 2002 with around 15 million people directly affected, despite good harvests in the two preceding years and historically low grain prices. However, food production was low during 2002 and food aid failed to flow from food surplus to deficit areas of the country (von Braun & Olofinbiyi 2007).

The latest famine in the region has occurred in the year 2011, affecting the countries of Somalia, Kenya, Ethiopia and Djibouti, this time, due to prolonged

drought and increasing food prices. By September 2011, around 13 million people were in need of humanitarian assistance.⁴²

3.1.3. Food price volatility

In recent years, Ethiopia has experienced an unprecedented inflation of food prices, particularly concerning cereal prices, which have been among the highest in Sub-Saharan Africa. Rising food prices hit especially poor people, because they generally have to spend a higher share of their income on food items. Rising food prices therefore decreases their real income substantially, often with negative consequences for their food and nutritional status (Hadji & Gelaw 2012).

Food prices increased sharply from 2006 until 2008, by 15.1 per cent (2006), 28 per cent (2007), and 57.4 per cent (2008) respectively (Hadji & Gelaw 2012). Furthermore, general inflation reached a record high at 91.7 per cent in July 2008, and while food prices started slowly declining apart from mid-2008, inflation kept running at a high level - on average more than 20 per cent annually until 2012 (Loening *et al.* 2009; World Bank 2014).

Figure 12 below provides an overview of consumer prices in Ethiopia, showing that while food prices increased relatively slow in the eight years from 1998-2006, they increased sharply afterwards, doubling within only 18 months (Devereux *et al.* 2008).

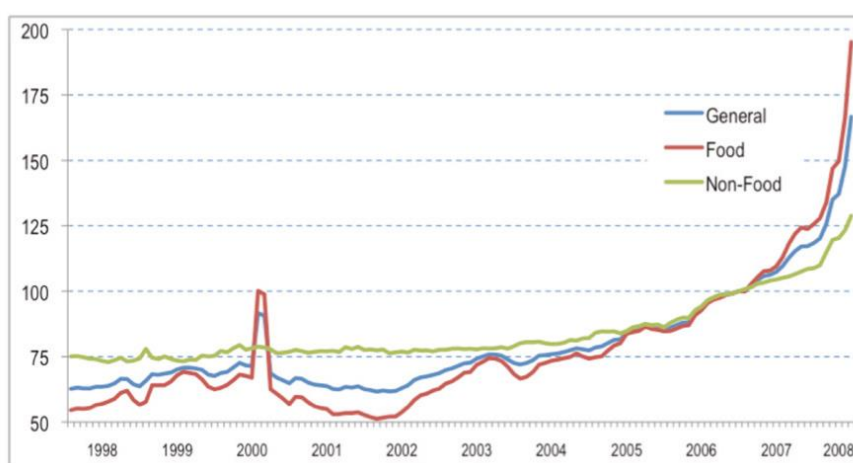


Figure 12: Consumer Price Index (CPI) in Ethiopia, 1998-2008, Source: Devereux *et al.* (2008)

In general, there is little consensus on the causes of high domestic food prices in Ethiopia, and empirical evidence on the importance of various factors contributing

⁴² <http://www.unicefusa.org/work/emergencies/horn-of-africa/>

to increased food prices – be they structural, external, or domestic – is rather low. In the past, food price inflation was associated with high variations in agricultural outputs – mainly caused by droughts – and more recently, high rates of economic growth. Furthermore, the influence of world food prices on domestic markets in Ethiopia was believed to be rather marginal, due to the relatively small amount of food imports of the country (constituting 5 per cent of agricultural GDP) and the limited role of the private sector, particularly in formal grain imports (Loening *et al.* 2009). However, the empirical study of Loening *et al.* (2009) reveals contrary findings, stating that: *“growth of food prices is determined in the external sector. In other words, the exchange rate and international prices explain a large fraction of Ethiopia’s inflation”* (p.39).

Thus, after the experiences of 2008, broad consensus has emerged about the close correlation between rising global food prices and increases in domestic food prices (Devereux *et al.* 2008; Loening *et al.* 2009).

While the debate on the causes for the hike in global food prices is still ongoing, there is relative broad consensus on the future strategy to avoid such price-related shocks: governments should strive to build up effective safety nets within a broader social protection system in order to protect the poor and vulnerable from such (price related) shocks (FAO 2011; IBRD and World Bank 2012).

3.1.4. Land pressure

Ethiopia is the second most populous country in Africa with an estimated population of 94.1 million people in 2013. Given an annual population growth of 2.7 per cent, the population is expected to double to 187.5 million until the year 2050.⁴³ In recognition of this high rate of population growth, many observers argue that a ‘Malthusian crisis’⁴⁴ is likely to threaten the country (Devereux 2000).

In accordance to the Malthusian population model, population growth in Ethiopia is indeed associated with high pressure on the natural resource base and increasingly small plots available for rural farmers, particularly in the northeastern

⁴³http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/publications/pdf/trends/WPP2012_Wallchart.pdf

⁴⁴ Malthus’ assumption was that population growth - increasing at a geometrical rate – would at one point exceed food production, which is on an inelastic function of the given natural resource endowments (Balcha 2001).

highland areas where population density is the highest in the country and most of the agricultural production takes place (Devereux 2000). According to Befekadu and Berhanu (2000) the population of Ethiopia increased from 23.5 million in 1960/61 to 48.7 million in 1989/90, while the landholdings per capita decreased from 0.28 hectare to 0.1 hectare during the same period of time, leading, *inter alia*, to a decline in food output from 240 kilogram to 142 kilogram per capita.

Furthermore, smaller farm sizes can be associated with smaller allocation of non-cereal crops, usually providing an important source for dietary diversity and also additional income (Befekadu & Berhanu 2000). Farm sizes that are insufficient to meet subsistence needs - even at good rainfalls years - are often referred to as 'starvation plots' in the literature, usually compounding less than 0.5 hectares (Devereux 2000; Gebreselassie 2006).

Another important aspect that has been exacerbated by high population growth - and more indirectly through land policies and political factors - is land degradation, which potentially leads to a deterioration of food production (Blacha 2001). Soil erosion caused by rainwater constitutes another important factor of land degradation, causing a loss of an average of 42 tons per hectare per year on arable land and an additional reduction of 4 millimeters in soil depth per year (Von Braun & Olofinbiyi 2007). Von Braun & Olofinbiyi (2007) prospectively estimated that per capita income losses caused by soil erosion in the highland will be as high as 30 per cent until 2010.

3.1.5. Diseases

Diseases in general, although in most cases considered an idiosyncratic risk, have the potential of an immense spillover effect which can affect whole communities and regions (World Bank 2005). In the context of rural livelihoods, the availability of an active and healthy labor force within households is crucial for preparation and planting of fields, as well as, for example, the provision of additional income through off-farm employment. As such, these members of households provide means for the acquisition of own-produced and market-purchased food for the rest of the

household. HIV/AIDS for example - which has caused millions of deaths in Africa⁴⁵ during the last decades - particularly affects the economically active parts of society, which has negative consequences for the productive capacities – thus, the food security - of a country, and can impose heavy financial burdens on households (in considering treatments costs or funeral expenses). Furthermore, the lack of available health services in rural areas impedes quick recovery of sick household members, thus, extending the time in which households have to compensate for their (chronically or transitory) labor-constraint members (Devereux 2000; Alemu & Bezabih 2008).

In the context of Ethiopia, HIV/AIDS constitutes a major risk, particularly in urban areas. In 2001, about 6.4 per cent (approx. 2 million people) of the adult population nationwide (between 15-49 years) have been exposed to this disease, and 17 per cent of the population in urban areas between 25-29 years. In the same year, 160,000 people died from the disease in Ethiopia and cumulative deaths have led to around one million orphans (World Bank 2005).

However, more recent evidence suggests that – through the implementation of Ethiopia's Health Sector Development Program (HSDP) - there have been significant improvements in the coverage of primary health facilities and the provision of basic preventive and curative health services aimed at reversing the spread of communicable disease such as HIV/Aids, tuberculosis and malaria (GoE 2012b). According to more recent statistics of 2012, the prevalence rate of HIV/AIDS declined to 1.3 per cent (between 540,000 – 660,000 people) among adults (14-49 years), with deaths caused by AIDS estimated between 40,000-56,000 people⁴⁶.

⁴⁵ An estimated 76 per cent of all deaths caused by HIV/AIDS globally have occurred in Africa (Alemu & Bezabih 2008)

⁴⁶ <http://www.unaids.org/en/regionscountries/countries/ethiopia/>

3.2. The role of the agricultural sector

“The agricultural sector remains our Achilles heel and source of vulnerability. ... Nonetheless, we remain convinced that agricultural based development remains the only source of hope for Ethiopia.”

(Meles Zenawi, former Prime Minister of Ethiopia, April 2000⁴⁷)

The agricultural sector in Ethiopia accounts for 40 per cent of the national Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and around 90 per cent of total exports. In terms of employment, the sector provides income and a basic livelihood for around 90 per cent of the poor in the country, most of them small-scale farmers (Diao 2010). Furthermore, these farmers account for almost 90 per cent of the total agricultural output (Devereux 2000). Considering the high dependence on rain-fed agriculture of small-scale farmers and their huge contribution to the overall economy, real GDP growth has been marked by extreme variability over the last decades. Figure 13 below provides an overview of the variability of agricultural performance during the 1980s and 1990s showing the close relationship of agriculture and growth in Ethiopia (Devereux 2000).

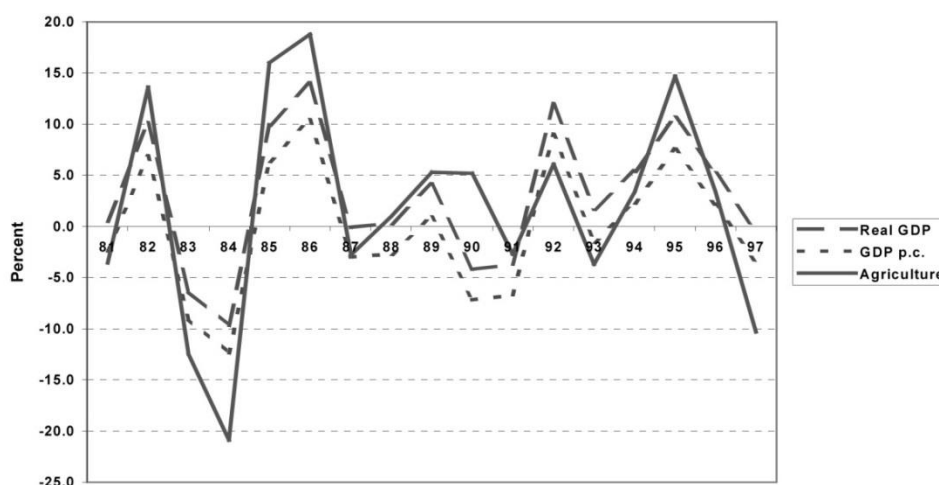


Figure 13: GDP and agricultural growth rates in Ethiopia, by year 1981-1997, Source: Devereux (2000)

Regarding the type of food production, more than 11 million farmers are engaging in cereal production. Cereals are the predominant form of staple food for most Ethiopians accounting for approximately 62 per cent of average dietary intake and 45 per cent of food expenditure of an average Ethiopian household. Total cereal

⁴⁷ Devereux 2000, p.4

production increased from 4.8 million tons in 2003/4 to 13.6 million tons in 2007/8, with around 8.8 million hectares of land being used for cereal production only. Among all types of cereals, *teff* is the staple crop preferred by most Ethiopians, occupying around 30 per cent of the total land used for cereal production. Other cereals produced include maize (occupying 20 per cent of total cereal land) sorghum (18 per cent), wheat (16 per cent) and barley (12 per cent) (Diao 2010).

Given the importance for the economic development of the country, agricultural policy has always been a highly strategic and contested policy field. The subsequent chapters will give an overview of the political regimes in power in Ethiopia during the last fifty years and their agricultural policy. Subsequently, the concept of Agricultural Development Led Industrialization (ADLI) will be addressed, which shaped Ethiopia's agricultural development strategy apart from the 1990s. Lastly, Ethiopia's Poverty Reduction Strategies will be briefly discussed, again, particularly in view of their agricultural policies.

3.2.1. The Derg (1974-1991)

The overthrow of Emperor Haile Selassie by the socialist military Derg regime (under the leadership of Colonel Mengistu) in 1974 marked the end of the primarily feudal agricultural system of the country. The Derg was characterized by a Marxist egalitarian ideology and perceived unequal landholdings and exploitative labor relations among Ethiopians as the root cause of persistent vulnerability to famine and high levels of poverty (Devereux *et al.* 2005; Devereux & Guenther 2009). The regime initiated a wide-ranging nationalization process, including the industrial and service sector, financial institutions and manufacturing factories. In the field of agriculture, the regime implemented a radical agrarian transformation process that declared all rural farmland in highland Ethiopia property of the state which subsequently was redistributed to the rural population based on considerations of soil quality and family size (Devereux *et al.* 2005; Diao 2010). The politics of land distribution were *“implemented as a mechanism not just for breaking the power of the landlords, but also for eradicating historically entrenched inequalities in control over land, with the aim of achieving sustainable increases in agricultural productivity and rural incomes”*

(Devereux *et al.* 2005, 121). Land was, thus, perceived as a form of safety net for the rural population (Devereux & Guenther 2009).

However, combined with several other anti-market and state-controlled agrarian policies (including the establishment of large-scale state farms, villagisation and forced re-settlement, and the prohibition of hiring farm-laborers), the reforms under the Derg ultimately failed to create the intended growth and enhance the productivity of the cultivated land. After years of brutal political repression, civil conflict and disastrous economic outcomes, the Derg regime collapsed in 1991 – with its land redistribution policy as the only lasting impact on Ethiopian agriculture (Devereux & Guenther 2009; Diao 2010).

3.2.2. Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF)

After the Derg was overthrown, the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) took over government after a transition period from 1991 to 1994. Prime Minister Meles Zenawi at that time assured that equality in land ownership will be maintained as part of EPRDF's policy. His argument was that in case land would become a tradable commodity, many rural poor might be forced to sell their land in case of drought, as many of these people might have no other assets to exchange food for. As a consequence, vast numbers of rural landless people would migrate to the urban centers – particularly to Addis Ababa – where chances of formal employment would be low and living conditions precarious – besides the potential threat of political and social unrest. Furthermore, he believed that the commercialization of land would inevitably lead to a concentration of land ownership to a small minority, thus reviving quasi-feudal labor relations in agriculture – an idea which he refused (Devereux *et al.* 2005; Devereux & Guenther 2009).

The non-transferability of land-rights remains an intensively debated issue among researchers. While one side refers to the productivity-enhancing and income-raising potential of a pro-poor land redistribution policy, the other side contests that poor households with inadequate access to productive assets (e.g. landholdings being too small) might not be able to accumulate sufficient other assets to overcome poverty. Furthermore, in case of repeated shocks such as droughts, poor households might be forced to repeatedly sell non-land assets for food, thus, becoming

chronically dependent on external support in form of, for example, food aid (Devereux 2000; Devereux *et al.* 2005; Gebreselassie 2006).

Despite the ideological similarity with the Derg regime in this particular regard, the EPRDF government in general has been more pro-western, market-oriented and democratic than its predecessors (Devereux & Guenther 2009).

3.2.3. The Agriculture Development-Led Industrialization

The Agriculture Development Led Industrialization (ADLI) is an important development strategy that has been put forward by the transition government in 1993 and has been inherited in EPRDF's policies. It is a strategic document that describes the role of agriculture for Ethiopia's development process, arguing that investments in agriculture serve as an engine for economic growth and as a means of providing national and household food security. The main goal of the strategy is to increase the productivity of small-scale farmers (i.e. increased yield output per hectare) through the use of modern technologies and the dissemination of information on agricultural practices, in order to generate savings and increase domestic demand for the non-agricultural sectors (Dercon & Zeitlin 2009; Devereux 2000; Diao 2010).

In order to achieve these objectives, the strategy mentions a set of policies that are supposed to be implemented in a sequenced manner: 1) improving agricultural technologies (e.g. seeds), 2) expanding irrigation, infrastructure and the use of modern inputs (e.g. fertilizers and pesticides), and 3) expanding employment opportunities in the non-agricultural sectors. The agricultural sector was thus perceived as the major catalyst for the structural transformation of the economy (Dercon & Zeitlin 2009).

Consistent with the strategy of ADLI, the government implemented the Participatory Demonstration and Training Extension System (PADETES) in 1995, which provided farmers with packages of fertilizer and improved seeds, facilitated access to credits and information on how to improve agricultural practices and on input use (Diao 2010). While the extension programme reached out to 2.8 million farmers in 1999 and production increases were reported among beneficiaries, the access to fertilizers was undermined in subsequent years as fertilizer subsidies were cut and retail prices were liberalized – leading to an increase in fertilizer prices

(Devereux 2000). Despite of fragmented progress in raising productivity, overall, agricultural output in the country remained stagnant and fell behind population growth at that time (Diao 2010).

3.2.4. Ethiopia's Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers

Ethiopia's Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP) constitutes the third Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP), implemented by the government of Ethiopia for a period of five years from 2010/11 to 2014/15. The predecessors of that document were the 'Sustainable Development and Poverty Reduction Programme (SDPRP), covering the period of 2002/3-2004/5, and the 'Plan for Accelerated and Sustained Development to End Poverty (PASDEP) for the period of 2004/5-2009/10.

While the three documents have in common the principal goals of reducing poverty and promoting food security, rural development, and human development, the strategy for the achievement of these goals has been continuously modified (Devereux & Guenther 2009; Diao 2010). According to Devereux & Guenther (2009), one of the most striking changes from the first to the second PRSP has been a push towards large-scale agricultural commercialization, which – in contrast to the ADLI's focus on small-scale famers as drivers of growth – puts a strong focus on promoting the expansion of export crops. *"In contrast to the preoccupation of earlier policies with achieving food production self-sufficiency, there is a strong emphasis [in PASDEP; author's note] on marketing of produce, with farmers exhorted to aim higher than mere subsistence"* (Devereux & Guenther 2009, 7). At least from a point of view of rhetoric, the government – through the PSNPs - stays committed to its ADLI strategy.

Other important objectives concerning rural development, which have been included the PASDEP and also the current GTP are a shift to production of cash crops, taking in account the different agro-ecological zones of the country and encouraging the private sector to increase its share of investments in agriculture. In regard to other sectors, the GTP puts its focus on the provision of social development (including the expansion and quality enhancement in the health and education sector) and infrastructure development. In case of the latter, the government has planned, *inter alia*, to build 71,522 kilometer of all-weather roads in woredas, build 2,400

kilometers of national railway network, quintuple the countries' electricity generation capacity⁴⁸.

3.3. Pastoralism

Pastoralism is considered as one of the three major livelihood systems in Ethiopia - besides urban and agricultural livelihood systems (Bevan & Pankhurst 2008). Slightly more than half the land in Ethiopia (52-60 per cent) is pastoralist habitat -located in the arid or semi-arid lowlands of the country. The major pastoralist communities of the countries are the Somali (comprising around 50 per cent of the pastoral population), the Afar (around 30 per cent) and the Oromos (around 10 per cent). Further pastoralists are found in South Omo zone of the Southern Nations, Nationalities and People's (SNNPR) regional state (around 7 per cent) and in areas of Tigray, Benishangul and Gambella Region (around 1 per cent). The total number of the pastoralist population is estimated at around 7 million (Bevan & Pankhurst 2008; Devereux 2000; Lautze *et al.* 2003).

As the most important source of livelihood, pastoralists depend on their livestock for a wide range of activities, including transportation, trade, production and consumption. Typical types of livestock include cattle, sheep, goats, equines and camels (Lautze *et al.* 2003).

It has been recognized that pastoral poverty is generally more severe than in other livelihood systems. Furthermore, pastoralism as a livelihood system has been confronted with an increasing number of challenges, including the continuing decimation of livestock herds particularly due to droughts since the 1970s, although it is not possible to accurately assess the numbers of livestock mortality due to the absence of systematic data collection in pastoral areas (Lautze *et al.* 2003). Another factor that has contributed to a deterioration of this livelihood form has been the alienation of fertile land from pastoralists - including land with access to water sources, which has been vital for dry season grazing - by both public and private hand for different purposes (including agricultural production and ranch farms, the establishment of wild parks or reserves, etc.) with the eviction or threat of

⁴⁸ this objective shall be achieved through the construction of Africa's largest hydroelectric power plant referred to as the 'Millennium Dam' or 'Renaissance Dam'

displacement, often with little or no compensation. As a consequence, pastoralists were pushed to more arid and unfertile lands, exacerbating resource-conflicts among groups and land degradation (due to a higher exploitation of marginal lands). Additionally, the difficult accessibility of pastoral land (many living close to borders with other countries) have made the provision of public services or for example food aid a difficult task (Bevan & Pankhurst 2008).

Confronted with these multiple pressures, many pastoralists have become sedentary and engaging in agriculture. Besides shifting from pastoralist to sedendarized livelihood systems, coping strategies of pastoralists have also included a switch to salt mining and trade activities, which has the advantage of not being dependent on rainfall variability, and stress migration to other parts of Ethiopia or to countries of the Middle East (Bevan & Pankhurst 2008; Devereux 2000).

3.4. Ethiopia's food aid system

Ethiopia has been structurally food deficient at least since the 1980s and is the world's most food aid dependent country (Devereux 2000; Gebreselassie 2006; Wiseman *et al.* 2010). The annual amount of food aid deliveries to the country between 1980 and 1995 varied from 200,000 to 1,200,000 metric tons (Devereux 2000) and averaged 795 metric tons per year for the period of 1990 to 1999 – which constitutes about 10% of the total domestic grain production (Gebreselassie 2006). While food aid usually is provided in contexts of transitory food insecurity, in the case of Ethiopia it has become an institutionalized feature in response to chronic food insecurity (Devereux 2000; Gebreselassie 2006). Figure 14 below provides an overview of how much of food aid the country has received in comparison to other Sub-Saharan African countries from the period of 1990 to 2002:

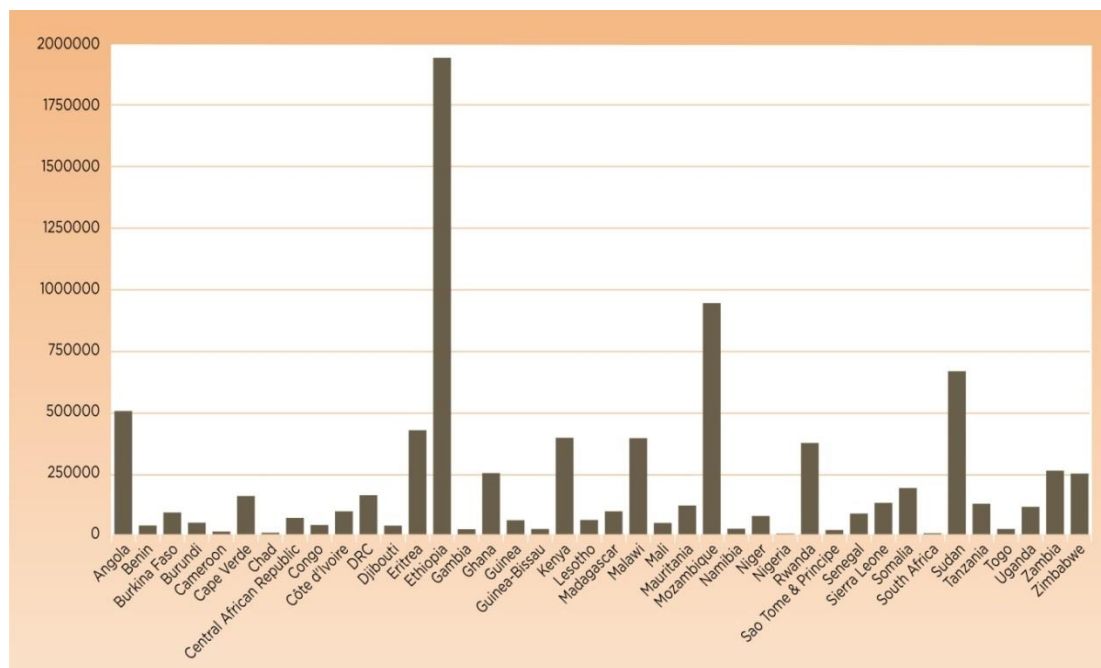


Figure 14: Food Aid Shipments to Countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, Total Cereals (MT/year) from 1990 to 2002, Source: Wiseman et al. (2010)

The number of people in need of food aid varied significantly over the years, primarily when comparing years of drought with years of 'regular' rainfall. Additionally, there has been a general increase of geographic areas affected by droughts. While the drought of 1984 affected only 8% of the total number of woredas in Ethiopia (currently 525 woredas), this share increased in the successive droughts of 1994, 2000 and 2003-4 by 49%, 39% and 53% respectively. Regarding the number of people in need of food aid, the proportion of food insecure people rose from 5% in the 1970s to over 20% in 2003 (Gebreselassie 2006). These trends clearly indicate that the country's ability to withstand these climatic shocks has decreased over the past decades.

Besides the high volatility of annual rainfall causing these droughts, there are several other, long-term factors that lead to these high numbers of food insecure people, including high rates of population growth, diminishing landholdings, and a lack of technical innovation in agriculture. All these factors contribute to a declining productivity of households, which in case of repeated shocks results in the loss of assets.

Concerns were raised about the emergency appeal system's ability to prevent people from sliding into poverty. While since 1980s food aid has saved millions of lives in Ethiopia, there has been growing consensus over time that it failed to address

the underlying causes of food insecurity, i.e. prevent asset and livestock depletion thus deteriorating rural livelihoods (Wiseman *et al.* 2010).

3.5. Ethiopia's Food Security Programme

The food crisis which struck Ethiopia during the period of 2002-03 due to continued poor rainfall left an unprecedented number of 14 million Ethiopians in need of emergency support (Devereux & Guenther 2009; theIDLgroup 2008; Wiseman *et al.* 2010). In response to these events and in growing recognition of the need to move beyond the traditional emergency appeal system, the Government of Ethiopia - under the auspices of then-Prime Minister Meles Zenawi – launched the 'New Coalition for Food Security', a partnership between the government of Ethiopia, UN agencies, the donor community (including, *inter alia*, the EU, US, and the World Bank) and international NGOs (Bishop & Hilhorst 2010).

The New Coalition proposed the creation of a Food Security Programme (FSP) comprising three elements: a) the resettlement of households from the most vulnerable highland communities to more productive land, b) a safety net for the chronically food insecure population, and c) support economic growth of food insecure households through the provision of agricultural and financial services (Devereux & Guenther 2009; Wiseman *et al.* 2010). While several donors advocated for the safety net component, many of them were skeptical about the resettlement plans mainly advocated by the Ethiopian government (theIDLgroup 2008). At the end of negotiations, however, all three elements were included in the FSP, including the 'Productive Safety Net Programme' (PSNP), 'Other Food Security Programmes' (which has been renamed to 'Household Asset Building Programme') and the 'Voluntary Resettlement Programme' (VRP).

3.5.1. The Productive Safety Net Programme

There are several principles of the PSNP, which – after several months of discussions - have been agreed upon by the coalition partners of the 'New Coalition for Food Security' in the course of the programme design period from late 2003 to the end of 2004. First, safety net transfers need to be provided in a predictable, reliable,

and timely manner, so that food insecure households are able to avoid negative coping strategies such as selling off tools and assets, or removing children from school. Furthermore, as most food insecure households in Ethiopia live off subsistence agriculture, support should be synchronized with agricultural cycles, i.e. help should be provided according to the 'lean season', when food needs are greatest. Another important principle was the gradual shift from food to cash-based transfers. Providing food insecure people with cash instead of food was believed to create additional benefits for participants and the local economy by providing more flexibility to households and cash being less disruptive to local grain markets and stimulating the local economies. Further at discussion was the developmental impact of the transfers made, emphasizing the need to make transfers conditional on work requirements for households with able-bodied members, integrating PW activities into local development planning, and to assure the quality of PW projects by providing proper resources to non-labor costs of the projects. Additionally, the PSNP should be established as a government-led programme in which government structures and staff should be used for all activities related to the programme. Last, the commitment was made for long-term funding of the programme in order to safeguard predictability of transfers made to households. In February 2005 and after several months of negotiations, the PSNP was launched at national scale - despite skepticism from a range of donors concerning the rapid scaling-up of the programme (Wiseman *et al.* 2010).

To date, the PSNP is Africa's second largest social protection scheme delivering cash or food transfers to 7.6 million food insecure Ethiopians each year (Wiseman *et al.* 2010). The programme links a PW component, for those able to perform labor-intensive, community-based activities, with an unconditional DS component, for those with no labor and no other means of support, e.g. lactating or pregnant women, widows, elderly people and handicapped people (GoE 2006). Most of the PSNP beneficiaries (around 80-90 per cent), however, are eligible for PW (theIDLgroup 2008).

Concerning the institutional coordination of the programme, the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MoARD) has the responsibility for the overall coordination and management of the PSNP. The Federal Food Security Coordination Directorate (FSCD) reports directly to MoARD and is, *inter alia*, responsible for the

allocation of PSNP resources to the regions and their proper utilization. The Ministry of Finance and Economic Development (MoFED) disburses the resources in line with requests submitted by the FSCD.

The PSNP is being implemented only in rural areas of the country, covering chronically food insecure households in chronically food insecure woredas. Chronically food insecure woredas are identified as having received significant amounts of food aid during the last consequent three years. Chronically food insecure households are eligible for the programme if they are a) living within a woreda identified as being chronically food insecure, and b) being assessed by a mix of administrative guidelines and community knowledge to have faced continuous food shortages (i.e. three months or more per year) in the last three years (GoE 2006). The programme has been implemented in 7 out of 10 regions and in 290 of over 500 woredas (theIDLgroup 2008; Wiseman *et al.* 2010).

The objectives of the PSNP are threefold, namely to smooth food consumption among chronically food insecure households, to protect assets at a households-level, and to build assets at the community-level (Devereux & Guenther 2009). Thus, the programme follows a twin-track approach to food security by addressing immediate needs while at the same time

“[...] (i) supporting the rural transformation process, (ii) preventing long-term consequences of short-term consumption shortages, (iii) encouraging households to engage in in production and investment, and (iv) promoting market development by increasing household purchasing power” (GoE 2006, 1).

In case of PW – the ‘productive’ component of the PSNP - beneficiaries can participate in labor-based activities for up to five days a month and six months a year per household member, receiving little less than the minimum average wage of 10 Birr in 2010 (approximately 0.7 USD) or 3kg of grain per person per day (Bishop & Hilhorst 2010; Wiseman *et al.* 2010). All activities carried out in the context of the PW component have to be in line with regional development strategies (i.e. the woreda development plans), and with support of the community in selecting, planning, monitoring and evaluating the projects. Such activities include, *inter alia*, conservation measures for improved land productivity, e.g. hill side terracing, the construction of rural feeder roads, measures to improve access to drinking and irrigation water through small dams, wells, or water canals, building latrines, or

repairing classrooms and health facilities (GoE 2006). Importantly, in order to not distort the labor market, activities in times of relative labor shortage shall be scaled down (GoE 2006). Regarding the DS component, beneficiaries are entitled to receive 50 Birr (approximately 3.5 USD) or 15kg of grain per person per month for six months per year (theIDLgroup 2008; Wiseman *et al.* 2010).

The intention of the Government of Ethiopia was to lift beneficiaries out of the programme within 5 years, a relatively short-time frame. However, it has been recognized that graduation is a long-term process which cannot be achieved solely by providing cash or food transfers through the PSNP. Thus, the programme has to be complemented with other food security interventions - such as the Household Asset Building Programme (HABP) - in order to provide additional income sources for households (Devereux & Guenther 2009; GoE 2006). Furthermore, there will be households, particularly among those receiving direct support (DS) that will probably never be able to graduate (GoE 2006).

3.5.2. The Household Asset Building Programme

The Household Asset Building Programme (HABP) – initially referred to as the ‘Other Food Security Program’ (OFSP) - is a complementary initiative to the PSNP, with the intended goal of supporting chronically food insecure households (in chronically food insecure woredas) to increase their level of income and assets through the provision of input packages for agricultural and non-agricultural activities (Devereux & Guenther 2009; Berhane *et al.* 2013). Measures hereby include access to credit (provided by microfinance institutions and Rural Saving and Credit Cooperatives), the acquisition of livestock, tools, seeds or fertilizers, as well as assistance with irrigation schemes, soil conservation and improvements in pasture land (Berhane *et al.* 2013). Conceptually, the programme is meant to reinforce the provisions made by the PSNP, thus, contributing to the overall goals of graduation of food insecure households to food security (Devereux & Guenther 2009).

In the light of several problems faced by the ‘Other Food Security Programme’ in the first years after implementation - including slow take-up, skewed availability of certain extension packages, and poor targeting (better-off households preferred to poorer households) - the government of Ethiopia, in collaboration with development

partners and donors, redesigned the programme by providing it with more fiscal resources, more staff for advisory services and guidelines for clarifying inclusion criteria (Berhane *et al.* 2013).

3.5.3. The Voluntary Resettlement Programme

The Voluntary Resettlement Programme (VRP) is another component of the FSP, with the objective of reallocating a total amount of 440,000 households or 2.2 million people from vulnerable parts of highlands of the country to areas where land is more abundant and fertile. In these more fertile areas, people are expected to experience less food insecurity through potentially higher agricultural productivity and less vulnerability. Settlers are supposed to be provided with two hectares of arable land and other basic equipment necessary for building up their new livelihood, including some livestock, seeds, tools and food rations for the first eight months (Devereux & Guenther 2009).

This component of the FSP, however, is controversial, and donors have refused to support the VRP. This skepticism is grounded, among others, in experiences with the National Resettlement Programme under the Derg regime during the 1980s. Hereby, hundreds of thousands of Ethiopians were resettled by force from north to south Ethiopia – a measure that was perceived as a political strategy rather than in the interest of the resettled – causing hardship and death for many (Devereux 2000).

4. Analysis of the Productive Safety Net Programme

The following chapter will assess the impacts of the Productive Safety Net Programme on the food security, asset-, and perceived welfare-status of beneficiary households (compared to non-beneficiaries) on the one hand, and address several implementation challenges and programme bottlenecks experienced since its implementation in 2005 on the other hand. Most of the data used for the purpose of this analysis derives from analytical and descriptive reports from two different sets of surveys.

The first set, referred to as the 'Food Security Surveys'⁴⁹ (FSS), has been conducted by members of the Central Statistical Agency of Ethiopia - for the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) and the Ethiopian Development Research Institute (EDRI). The FSSs have been implemented in four main regions of the PSNP, namely Tigray, Amhara, Oromiya and Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Region (SNNPR) in the years of 2006, 2008, and 2010 – all three of them implemented almost at the same period of time, around the months of June and August⁵⁰. A mixed methods approach has been applied, using four types of quantitative surveys⁵¹ and two types of qualitative surveys⁵². Most of the quantitative data at the household level has been longitudinal, with almost the same households⁵³ surveyed three times in succession, thus, allowing to better assess changes of household's food security over time, as well as the overall performance of the programme. Concerning the sampling size, the household surveys covered 68 randomly selected woredas⁵⁴ identified as chronically food insecure (from a list of 153 chronically food insecure woredas in total). Within these woredas, two kebeeles in Amhara, Oromiya and SNNPR and three kebeeles in Tigray were randomly selected with active Productive Safety Net programs – each kebeele including 15 beneficiary

⁴⁹ See, *inter alia*, Berhane *et al.* (2011) and (2013); Coll-Black *et al.* (2011); Gilligan *et al.* (2009a) and (2009b)

⁵⁰ The first survey has been conducted from June to August 2006, the second from June to July 2008, and the third from July to August 2010 (Berhane *et al.* 2013)

⁵¹ Including a woreda level quantitative capacity survey, a quantitative community survey, a community price questionnaire, and a household survey (Berhane *et al.* 2013)

⁵² Including key informant interviews at all administrative levels and focus group discussions at the kebeele level (Berhane *et al.* 2013)

⁵³ There has been an attrition rate of 3 per cent over the five years (2006-2010) of collecting the panel data (Berhane *et al.* 2013)

⁵⁴ 18 woredas in Amahara, 19 in Oromiya, 19 in SNNPR, and 12 in Tigray (Berhane *et al.* 2013)

and 10 non-beneficiary households. In total, 3,366 households were participating in all of the three subsequent surveys (Berhane *et al.* 2013).

The second set of surveys has been prepared, implemented and analysed by staff from the Institute of Development Studies (ODI), the Overseas Development Institute (ODI), the IDLgroup UK, A-Z Consult and Indak International. Three teams were sent in the field in 2006, with each of them focusing on different aspects of the PSNP. The first team assessing trends in PSNP transfers (see Devereux *et al.* 2006), the second team focusing on aspects of targeting (see Sharp *et al.* 2006) and the third team focusing on policy, programme and institutional linkages of the PSNP (see Slater *et al.* 2006). While the first team was collecting primarily quantitative data through household surveys, community questionnaires and market surveys, the latter two teams were primarily using qualitative methods of data collection (i.e. key informant interviews at all levels and focus group discussions).

In some occasions, when referring to panel data from the household surveys from Devereux *et al.* (2006) and (2008) will be shortly described at the 'IDS/Indak study'. The household surveys have included 960 households in eight woredas in Tigray, Amhara, Oromiya and SNNPR (identical to the regions of the FSSs). In 2008, a second round of data collection has been conducted in the same regions, with a slightly modified design compared to 2006 (see Devereux *et al.* 2008).

4.1. Implementation challenges

In the last chapter the social, economic, political and historical context of food insecurity in Ethiopia has been discussed, as well as the agricultural and food aid policy which have led to the development of the PSNP.

This chapter will focus on the impact of the PSNP against its major objectives since its inception in 2005 and the major implementation challenges related to them. The analysis provided in this chapter is mainly based on the three major impact assessments that have been made during the years, including the longitudinal study by Devereux *et al.* (2006) and (2008), and a report from the latest FSS conducted in 2010 by Berhane *et al.* (2013). The latter additionally also compiles findings from the two preceding FSS from 2006 and 2008, thus, allowing to assess changes (e.g. on a household level) over time.

4.1.1. PSNP transfers

A core function of the PSNP is to provide timely and predictable transfers to beneficiary households, including a transfer amount that is sufficient to provide support to the whole family included in the programme. Much of the evidence provided by the IDS/Indak and the FSS surveys reveal, however, that there have been significant differences in the amount of transfers received - among regions as well as among PW and DS beneficiaries. While in SNNPR payment rates correspond to the amount of transfers households have been entitled to, this is not the case in Amhara, Oromiya and Tigray, where households receive only a partial share of this amount. Furthermore, widespread delays of payments have undermined the predictability of transfers, and differences in the value of transfers provided (either in form of food, cash or a combination of the two) have reversed the intended objective of shifting towards a purely cash-based safety net programme.

With regard the size of the cash transfer, the wage rate in 2005 has been set at 6 Birr or an equivalent of 3 kg of grain per day in all regions, for both PW and DS beneficiaries⁵⁵. For reasons of increased food price inflation in 2007 and, subsequently in 2008, the wage rate has been increased to 8 Birr in 2008 and 10 Birr in 2009 (Wiseman *et al.* 2010). Furthermore, DS and PW beneficiaries within a community are meant to receive the same type of transfer (either in form of cash, food, or a combination of both) at the same time (Devereux *et al.* 2008).

The amount of transfers a PSNP household is entitled to receive, depends on the number of household members. In case of PW beneficiaries, for each household member the number of days required to participate in PW activities are a minimum of five days, thus, a household with three members is required to work for 15 days a month in order to receive the PSNP transfer, which – considering the 2009 wage rate of 10 Birr - then would be 150 Birr per months. However, this working contribution cannot be done simultaneously, but per day only one person/household can participate in public works. For a four-person household, the rate would be at 200 Birr and so on. Concerning households that are labor-constrained, a so-called ‘working cap’ has been introduced, meaning that one person has to work not more than 20 days per months, while still receiving the full amount of transfers for the

⁵⁵ the “size of cash transfers” and “wage rate” are considered as synonyms

whole family. Experience from the first year of PSNP has shown that in larger households with only one or two abled-bodied household members - in some cases - these had to work full-time on PW in order to receive the payments for the household, which has been perceived as undesirable by programme planners, thus, introducing the working cap of 20 days (Devereux *et al.* 2008).

Figure 15 and 16 below demonstrate that there have been significant fluctuations recorded over time and throughout the regions – and among PW and DS beneficiaries⁵⁶. Corresponding to the general increase in wage rates over time, all regions experienced a significant increase in the value of transfers from the period of 2006 until 2009, followed by a significant decrease in value in 2010 (except for Amhara, where wages – both for PW and DS - peaked slightly earlier and then declined until 2010). While the literature provides no real explanation for the more recent decline of transfer levels, Berhane *et al.* (2013) note that it might be related to delayed payments for 2010 or due to the fact, that, while food prices continued to rise in 2010, they increased at a slower rate than in 2008. Devereux *et al.* (2008) note that - according to the IDS/Indak study of 2008 – the highest delays of transfers have been recorded in SNNPR, although these problems have remained in most regions. When asked about the timeliness of payments, 32 per cent of households reported that they received payments on time, every month. On the other hand, 56 per cent stated they experienced one or more delays of PSNP transfers.

Concerning DS payments, these have been generally lower than PW payments, although the relative difference from PW to DS payments varied across regions. For example, while in 2010, DS beneficiaries in Oromiya received almost the same amount as PW participants (97 per cent of the amount of PW payments), this share was significantly lower in Amhara (45 per cent) and in Tigray (50 per cent).

⁵⁶ Note, that the estimates shown in Figure 15 and 16 compound payment rates only for the first five months for each year, given the timing of the FSS (conducted between June and August). This implies that payment rates of PW and DS for a whole year are usually higher, although the month included here generally represent the time in the year were most of PW are undertaken and thus, the greatest share of payments should have been disbursed (Berhane *et al.* 2013).

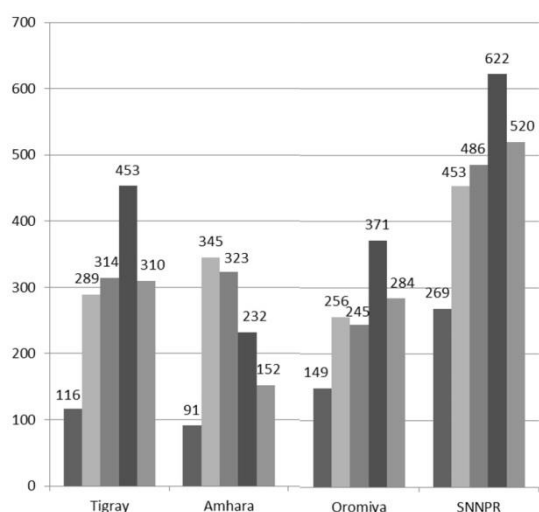


Figure 15: Average payments to households with DS participants between mid-January and mid-June, 2006-2010, in Birr; Source: Berhane et al. 2013

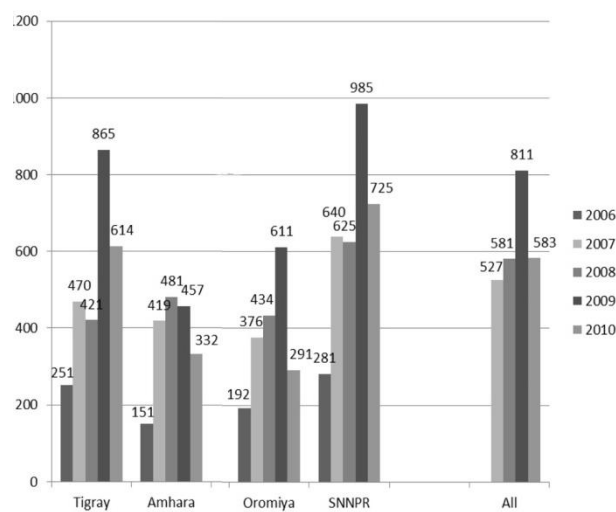


Figure 16: Average payments to households with PW participants between mid-January and mid-June, 2006-2010, in Birr; Source: Berhane et al. 2013

While the figures above are able to highlight regional differences of the average payment rate to households over time, they give no information about whether or not households have received the amount of payments which they are entitled to, according to the programme design (as this varies in each case, depending on the households size). Based on calculations provided by Berhane *et al.* (2013) for the year 2009⁵⁷, in all four regions where the FSS has been conducted, there is a tendency that smaller households (of 2-3 household members) are more likely to receive the full payment entitlement, compared to larger households (e.g. 8-9 household members). Based on a wage rate of 10 Birr per day, a three-person household is usually entitled to 900 Birr per year (10 (Birr/day) x 15 (days per months) x 6 (months/year) = 900 Birr). A four-person household would be entitled to 1200 Birr, a five-person household to 1500 Birr, and so on. Figure 17 and 18 below show the amount of transfers received by households in Oromomiya and SNNPR, disaggregated by household size (3-9 household members). It shows that in Oromiya, the payment level (for each household size) is less than 50 per cent the rate that households would be entitled to. In case of SNNPR, on the other hand, the payment rate for an average three-person household even exceeds the entitlement rate, while a nine-person household receives approximately 80 per cent of its entitlements. Interestingly in the case of Amhara, payments rates seem to be almost equal -

⁵⁷ For 2009, data on payments received by households are available for each months of the year (Berhane *et al.* 20013)

independent of the household size - between 600 and 900 Birr per year. For Tigray, the payment levels are between those of Oromiya and SNNPR.

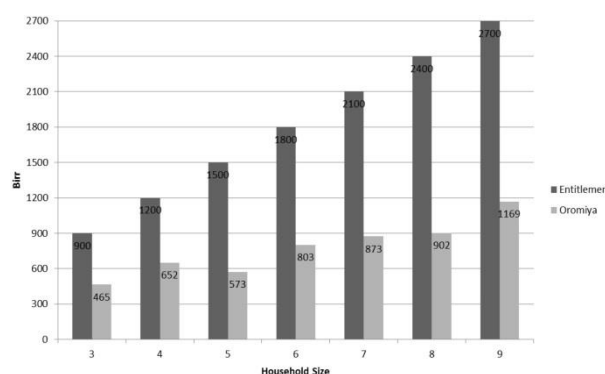


Figure 17: Comparison of payment entitlement and actual payment rate, by household size, Oromiya
Source: Berhane et al. (2013)

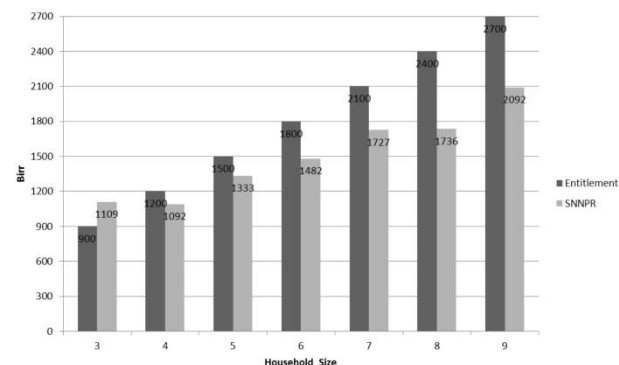


Figure 28: Comparison of payment entitlement and actual payment rate, by household size, SNNPR
Source: Berhane et al. (2013)

These figures reveal that the actual amount of payments received - relative to payment entitlements of households - varies significantly among regions, suggesting that payment modalities are primarily decided upon by the regions themselves, rather than according to the rate decided on a federal level (concerning observed forms of transfer dilution, see Chapter 4.1.2, p.67).

Regarding the gender dimension of payments Devereux *et al.* (2006) note that for the first year after implementation of the programme, male-headed households received on average more transfers than female-headed households, in terms of cereal received (292 kg for male-headed households and 217kg for female-headed households) and in terms of cash received (417.2 Birr for male-headed households and 287.5 Birr for female-headed households). However, when looking at the per capita distribution of transfers, female-headed households received on average more cereals (4-5 kg more) and more cash transfers (6-7 Birr more) per year than the male-headed households. Considering the value of transfers beneficiaries are entitled to receive according to the programme manual for 2006 (5 days of work per month, at a rate of 6 Birr per day, for 6 months a year = 180 Birr⁵⁸), female-headed households were closer to the amount entitled to than male-headed households (169.6 Birr and 155.2 Birr respectively⁵⁹). One possible explanation for this trend is

⁵⁸ Calculations are based on the 2006 wage rate of 6 Birr per day

⁵⁹ The cash value of food transfers is calculated based on cereal prices at 1.7 Birr per kilogram (Devereux & Sabates-Wheeler 2012)

the size of households, as male-headed households on average are larger than female-headed households (Devereux *et al.* 2006).

In the subsequent chapter we will focus on the discussion on food versus cash-based transfers, which has been a prominent issue in the discourse on implementation challenges of the PSNP.

4.1.1.1. Cash vs. food

Beneficiaries of the PSNP can receive transfers either in form of cash, in form of food, or a combination of both. In case of the latter, households receive food for some months of the year and cash for the rest of the months, rather than a combination of food and cash in one particular month (Devereux *et al.* 2006).

One of the objectives of the PSNP has been to promote a gradual shift from food-based to cash-based transfers. According to the PSNP implementation manual (PIM), the disbursement of transfers in form of cash should - in an initial phase - be limited to woredas where:

- *“Food is available for purchases in the local market (or traders, service cooperatives can be relied on to bring food in if people have cash to buy it);*
- *The local market will not be unduly distorted by the influx of cash, or the effects would be less detrimental than influx of food; and*
- *The woreda administration has the required support systems in place (for transferring/depositing funds, accounting and auditing)” (GoE 2006, 45).*

Those ‘high capacity’ woredas, which seemed to fulfill these prerequisites mentioned above, were selected for cash-transfers while in ‘low capacity’ woredas beneficiaries received food transfers. However, it has been the intention of the government substitute food transfers with cash transfers in all regions by continuously strengthening administrative capacities and local markets of low capacity woredas (Sabates-Wheeler & Devereux 2010).

In practice, this shift has been confronted with several challenges, particularly related to the inconsistency of the value of cash transfers (compared to food transfers). Thus, there is reasonable evidence that the objective of uniform transfer disbursements in form of cash are far from being reached. To the contrary, according to Sabates-Wheeler & Devereux (2010), the share of beneficiaries receiving ‘food

only' transfers has increased from 2006 to 2008 from 19 per cent to 26 per cent respectively. The use of 'cash only', or a combination of food and cash transfers, on the other hand, has decreased from 81 per cent to 74 per cent for the same period. This trend towards food transfers gets even more striking with reference to beneficiaries' preferences. While in 2006, 36 per cent of the households surveyed stated they would prefer a combination of food and cash, and 9 per cent of households would prefer 'cash only', these numbers decreased to 13 per cent and 3 per cent in 2008. Thus, an overwhelming majority of 84 per cent of households in 2008 responded that they prefer 'food only' (Sabates-Wheeler & Devereux 2010).

This trend of preferring food to cash transfers – particularly by DS recipients – is further underpinned by focus group discussions of the FSS. Among 40 focus group discussions, 17 groups agreed that they would prefer pure food transfers, while 15 groups said they would like to receive a mix of food and cash transfers. Only 5 groups preferred 'cash only', and 3 groups couldn't agree on one particular payment type. When further asked for the reasons of their preference for food instead of cash, the two main arguments among participants was the differential value of cash- compared to food transfers and the lack of available food in the local markets (Berhane *et al.* 2013).

The former argument was further investigated by Sabates-Wheeler & Devereux (2010) – based on the households surveys conducted in 2006 and 2008 by the IDS/ODI/IDLgroup UK team. In 2005, the wage rate for PSNP participants was set at 6 Birr per day, which was equivalent to the price of 3 kilograms of staple cereal at that time. However, the authors note that concerns of inter- and intra- regional differences of price levels, as well as seasonal price fluctuations (which are predictable to a certain degree, besides fluctuations on the international markets) were not properly addressed in the formulation of the programme design. Figure 19 below provides an overview of the seasonal differences of the value a PSNP transfer of 6 Birr across regions, for the period of mid-2005 to mid-2006. The figure reveals that in Oromiya, and particularly in SNNPR, the amount of staple food that could be purchased for 6 Birr was far more than in the case of Amhara and Tigray (Sabates-Wheeler & Devereux 2010).

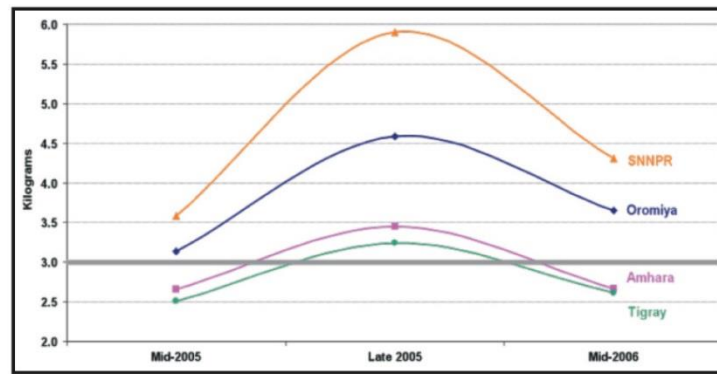


Figure 19: Value of PSNP transfers in staple food by region, 2005/06 (kg for 6 Birr)
Source: Sabates-Wheeler & Devereux (2010)

Additionally rising food prices during 2008 led to a situation in which the market value of food transfers has been three times higher than the actual value of cash transfers. As a consequence, at the start of the PSNP implementation phase in 2008, the wage rate was raised from 6 Birr to 8 Birr (while prices for staple food since 2005 have tripled). However, the inflexibility of cash transfers to adjust to volatile food prices in the context of an inflationary environment seems to be speaking in favor of food transfers – making preferences expressed by most beneficiaries more reasonable (Sabates-Wheeler & Devereux 2010).

4.1.2. Graduation and integration

Graduation to food security itself is not among the main objectives of the PSNP, instead, its role is to contribute to the graduation process through an integrated set of interventions under the corporate structure of the Food Security Programme (FSP), or as Wiseman *et al.* (2010) note: “[t]he PSNP is designed to serve as the first rung of a ladder out of food insecurity and poverty.”(p.98) With regard graduation, the second component of the FSP, namely the HABP, plays a somehow more important role providing households with input packages, credits and technical advise in order to increase their asset level and further create incentives for investments. But it is the complementarity of these two programmes which is indispensable if the objective of pushing millions of households out of food insecurity within a timeframe of only a few years is to be achieved.

The initial objective of the government was to graduate over five million beneficiaries until 2009, an overly ambitious goal that has - by far - not been met. The

new objective of the Ethiopian government is much less ambitious aiming at graduating all beneficiaries of the PSNP within the next years (current phase of the PSNP is running until the end of 2014). However, even this goal seems rather unlikely to be achieved and further raises questions concerning the sustainability of graduation, particularly in the context of recurrent droughts and rising food prices in Ethiopia, which might force even graduated households to adopt coping strategies that are detrimental to their long-term welfare. Nonetheless, the programme has experienced several improvements regarding graduation, including, inter alia, an increased coverage of PSNP households receiving services provided through the HABP and a refined set of graduation criteria for improved harmonization of procedures among regions.

According to the Graduation Guidance Note published by the Ethiopian Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, households can graduate from the PSNP when – in absence of PSNP transfers– they are able to meet the food needs of all household members for 12 months and are capable of withstanding modest shocks. This state is referred to as ‘food sufficiency’, and is only the first level of graduation. The second level of graduation - from the FSP – requires households to obtain food security on a (relatively) sustainable basis (GoE 2007).

“Graduation from the PSNP is a long term process that will not be possible if only PSNP resources are available. It requires the same households interventions from Other Food Security Programme (OFSP) [today referred to as Households Asset Building Programme (HABP); author’s note] consisting of household packages and credit. Other development programmes also contribute to this process.” (GoE 2007, 2)

Figure 20 below visualizes the process of graduation to food security. The primary objective for the ultra poor and chronically food insecure – besides smoothing consumption through PSNP transfers - is to prevent asset depletion, promote financial literacy, and provide them with financial products tailored towards their needs. The creation of community assets (e.g. all-weather roads, improved access to water, etc.) through the PW component of the PSNP and the newly integrated Complementary Community Investment programme (CCI) shall further contribute to food security on a community level. In order to increase on-farm productivity, accumulate assets, and diversify incomes through additional off-farm activities, other

instruments –provided by the HABP and other food security interventions - come into play. These include the provision of business plans, market advice, revolving credits, and other extension services (e.g. agricultural input packages) tailored at the households.

As the economic base of the food insecure households gets stronger, they may reach the first threshold for graduation, depicted as the first red line in Figure 20 – graduation from the PSNP. Further access to services and credits provided by the FSP will strengthen the resilience of households to shocks, and a solid base of income will allow households to accumulate assets over time. At a certain point, when households are able to provide for themselves on a sustainable basis, they will graduate from the FSP (Berhane *et al.* 2013).

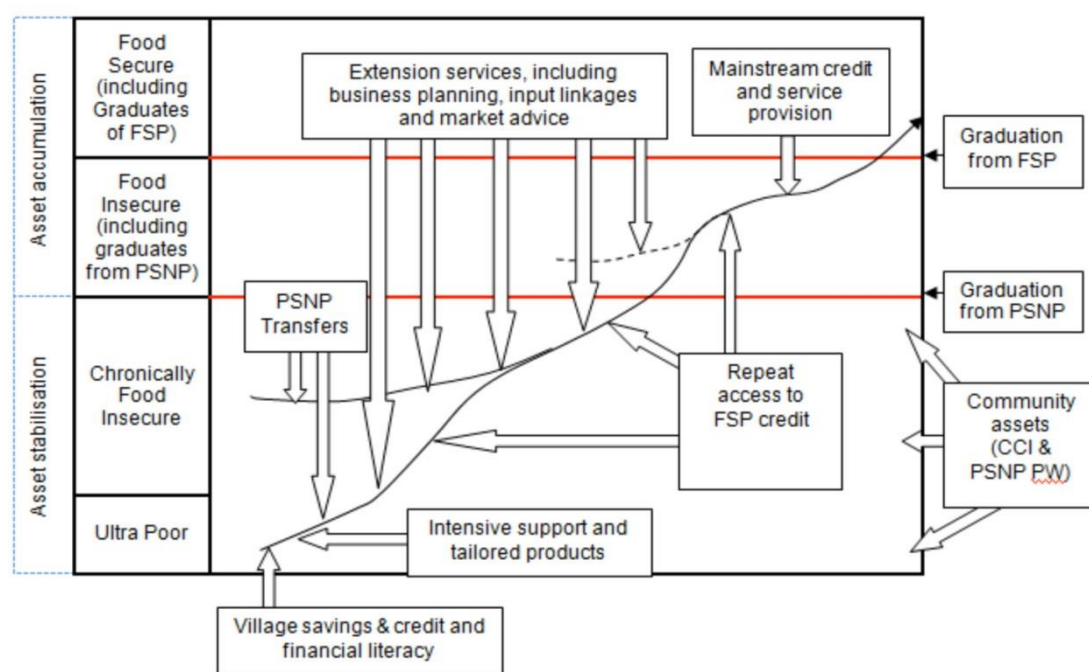


Figure 20: The graduation process; Source: Sabates-Wheeler & Devereux (2010)

The linkage of the PSNP and HABP - formerly referred to as Other Food Security Programme (OFSP) – is an important aspect in consideration of graduation. In 2006, the government started targeting OFSP credits and packages specifically to PSNP participants, with the intention to cover 30 per cent of PSNP households with the OFSP for the duration of three years. However, after the first years of implementation, coverage rates kept being low for reasons of low implementation capacities (particularly concerning the availability of trained development agents at the kebele level) and little knowledge of operational functions of the OFSP (i.e. the non-existence of guidelines of how to manage credits). As a result, low coverage was

further accompanied by marginal repayment rates for credits and low refinancing rates (i.e. the provision of a second and third credit). In recent years, however, the HABP expanded its implementation capacities – including a reform aiming to provide at least three development agents with a diploma in each kebee in the country – and an expansion of the scope of financial and planning support for non-farm activities⁶⁰, which seems particularly relevant for young Ethiopians without land today (Wiseman *et al.* 2010).

Concerning the establishment of concrete criteria for the graduation of the PSNP, these have been refined in 2007 through the integration of the Graduation Guidance Note in the programme design. Importantly, only PSNP beneficiaries who have received HABP credits or packages shall be assessed to determine possible graduation. This implies that, according to the programme design, PSNP participants who have only benefited from PSNP transfers so far are not considered as possible graduands. While benchmarks for graduation should ultimately be decided upon by the regions themselves - more specifically by the Woreda Food Security Task Force (WFSTF) - it is the total value of assets owned by each household that determines whether a household is food sufficient, i.e. eligible for graduation, or not. In case a household's value of assets equals or exceeds the regional benchmarks for graduation, the household stays in the programme for one more year before graduating (GoE 2007). Alternatively, households have the possibility to either leave the programme without being considered food sufficient for personal reasons⁶¹, or self-graduate when food sufficient (graduate before an actual assessment by the CFSTF has been made) (Sandford *et al.* 2010).

It has been estimated that between 2007 and 2009, 280,000 individuals have officially graduated from the PSNP (Wiseman *et al.* 2010), while according to the community survey of the FSS 2010, key informants that were asked to estimate the number of households that have graduated in their kebees from September 2008 until mid- 2010, nearly half responded that no graduation has taken place at all, and

⁶⁰ In the initial years of the OFSP, support was primarily focused on agricultural activities (Wiseman *et al.* 2010).

⁶¹ This sort of graduation has been documented in woredas in Amhara and Tigray; reasons that were mentioned by participants included: “a desire not to be ‘dependent’, the potential to earn better income through other sources, a belief that time might be better spent working on a household's own land rather than participating in public works” (Sandford *et al.* 2010, 36).

around one-third said that graduation has been less than 5 per cent (Berhane *et al.* 2013).

According to a household survey conducted in Tigray and Oromiya⁶² by Sabates-Wheeler *et al.* (2012), there is a broad perception among graduands of the FSP that the PSNP programme has supported their graduation (92.9 per cent in Tigray and 69.6 per cent in Oromiya) and has helped to provide some sustainable improvements in their food security situation. However, great concern has been expressed regarding the future ability to withstand more severe shocks (particularly droughts), and many felt they had graduated too early. Regarding current beneficiaries of the PSNP, 38.9 per cent of female-headed households and 16.4 per cent of male-headed households expressed that they have 'no confidence at all' meeting the graduation criteria for the PSNP and only 14 per cent of female respondents and 29 per cent of male respondents felt confident to graduate in the future. Disaggregated by regions, the number of PSNP participants having 'no confidence at all' for graduation has been particularly high in Tigray (34.2 per cent), compared to a relatively smaller number in case of Oromiya (8.2 per cent) (Sabates-Wheeler *et al.* 2012).

4.1.3. Targeting

The targeting process for the PSNP has been one of the main challenges of programme implementers, particularly given the high number of people in Ethiopia which are expected to be chronically food insecure and their regional dispersion. While initial estimates on the number of chronically food insecure people ranged from 2.6 to 26 million, the government – given limited resources and implementation capacities - ultimately decided to use the average number of people receiving food aid during the last five years (apart from 2000 until the start of PSNP in 2005) in order to determine the scale of the programme which were around five million people. Concerning the inclusion of regions and woredas, those that have historically received food aid in the last five years were included (Wiseman *et al.* 2010). Figure

⁶² Including 20 focus group discussions with current FSP beneficiaries and graduated households, and 300 household surveys from 8 communities in 5 woredas in Oromiya and Tigray (Sabates-Wheeler *et al.* 2012).

21 below provides an overview of the woredas that were proposed for initial targeting.

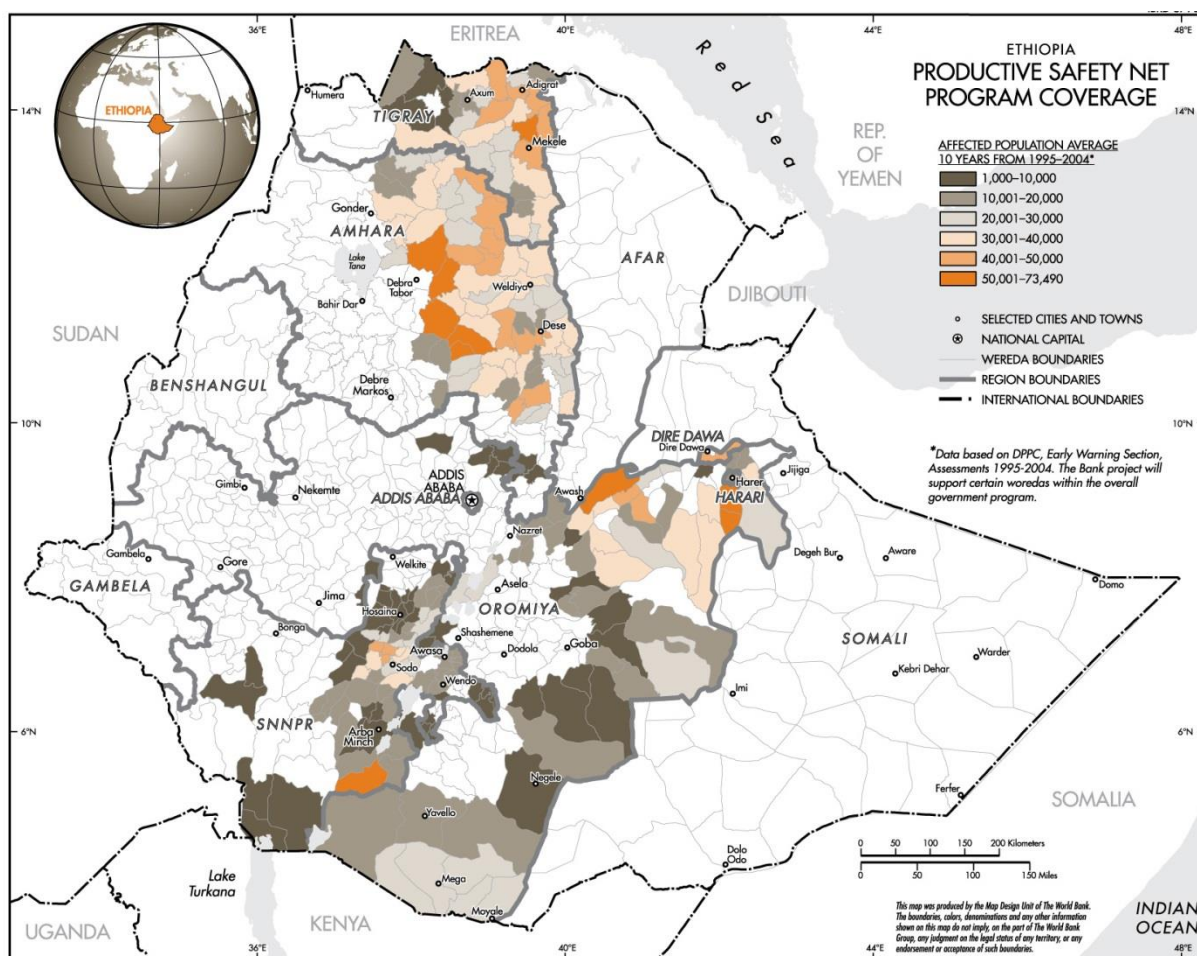


Figure 21: Woredas proposed for PSNP targeting in 2004, Source: Wiseman et al. (2010)

Despite its rapid implementation in 2005 along with several challenges that have been encountered particularly in the first years of implementation, much of the evidence suggests that the targeting performance has improved in many aspects apart from 2006, including, *inter alia*, the community involvement and transparency of the targeting process, the understanding of targeting criteria among officials and the population. However, several challenges have remained, including regional disparities in the targeting performance, relative overemphasizing of the PW component compared to the DS component. This also includes the geographic targeting process based on received food aid, which continues to exclude many woredas which might also contain food-insecure households eligible for the PNSP.

The four central administrative bodies that are included in the targeting process are the 'Woreda Food Security Task Force' (WFSTF), the Kebeele Council, the

‘Kebeele Food Security Task Force’ (KFSTF), and the ‘Community Food Security Task Force’ (CFSTF). The CFSTF as the lowest entity is responsible for the identification of participants (according to the guidelines prepared by the WFSTF) and the assessment of eligible households for either PW or DS. In the PIM it has been envisaged, that assessments conducted by the CFSTF take place every six months⁶³, in order to identify households that a) have become eligible for the PSNP (due to severe loss of assets or income sources), b) are considered ‘food sufficient’, thus have become eligible for graduation, and c) have already graduated from the PSNP but have to be retargeted (for the same reasons as newly targeted household). The KFSTF establishes the CFSTF and takes care of proper training and knowledge of each CFSTF regarding the selection procedures of the programme. The Kebeele Council’s main function is to serve as a contact point for residents of the kebeele - in order for them to address claims and appeals e.g. concerning unfair targeting procedures. The WSTFs are responsible for fine- tuning the criteria for beneficiary selection and to finally approve the list of participants received by the Kebeele Councils (GoE 2006).

In general, the targeting process of the PSNP is compounded of an administrative- and a community-based targeting mechanism, based on the guidelines provided by the WFSTF and the community-based assessment. The PIM sets out the basic criteria for the identification of households that are eligible for the PSNP. The first criterion for inclusion is that households must be members of the community. Further, households must be chronically food insecure – defined by having experienced at least three months of food gaps in the last three years, and having received food assistance prior to the PSNP. Additionally, households which have experienced severe losses of assets and without any family support or other means of social protection shall also be included. After the first round of household selection, another set of indicators has to be examined by the CFSTF in order to refine the selection of eligible households. These indicators include a) the status of household assets, including, *inter alia*, land holdings, the quality of land, and food stock, b) the income sources from non-agricultural activities and alternative employments, and c) the support from relatives (in form of, for example, remittances) or communities (GoE 2006).

⁶³ In practice, the frequency of these assessments has been varied between 6-12 months, depending *inter alia* on the capacities of the regions (Berhane *et al.* 2013).

If a household has been identified as eligible for the PSNP, the households will be either included in the PW component (in case there are sufficient household members capable of participating in PW⁶⁴) or in the DS component (in case the household is labor constraint and cannot contribute to PW). Pregnant (after the 4th month) and lactating women (until 10 months after the birth of their child) have the possibility to switch from the PW to the DS component in case there are no other household members available that can compensate for their labor contribution. In general, with each able-bodied household member the working requirement for the household is increased by five days, up to an agreed labor cap of 20 days (Berhane *et al.* 2013).

Concerning access to the DS component, it has been envisaged at the beginning of the PSNP, that no more than 20 per cent of the total number of programme beneficiaries should be included in this component. According to the FFS, Tigray has the highest share of DS beneficiaries of around 20 per cent (from 2007-2010), while all other regions never even surpassed the 15 per cent threshold. SNNPR, together with Oromiya have the lowest rates, at around 8 per cent, while in Amhara it is slightly higher at 10 per cent (Berhane *et al.* 2013).

The targeting design of the PSNP – according to Sharp *et al.* (2006) – builds in many aspects on the preceding targeting mechanisms used for emergency aid and food-for-works programmes during the last decades, including the key role for community representatives in the identification process, the use of asset and livelihood criteria for the selection process of households, and the division of beneficiaries according to their ability to work (i.e. the division between PW and DS beneficiaries). This meant that among local tiers of government and within the community a vast experience with similar targeting processes existed. However, it seems likely that some of the weaknesses and problems associated with the prior system might have also persisted in the PSNP. These include

“a tendency to spread or dilute transfers; the variation in effectiveness of community targeting in different contexts and locations; and the difficulty of standardising or comparing the selection and needs assessment criteria in a system which based in effect on relative wealth-ranking within communities. The programme’s focus on public works also risks repeating relief experience in which labour-poor households

⁶⁴ PW participants include able-bodied men and women over the age of 16 (Berhane *et al.* 2013)

have been relatively disadvantaged and there have been pressures to minimise the number of non-working (DS) beneficiaries“ (Slater *et al.* 2006).

The ‘tendency to spread or dilute transfers’ refers to a practice which has been reported during 2006 in many regions of the country, particularly in SNNPR. In order to reach as many households as possible with the budget available for a region, local officials included only some of the household members of a family on the beneficiary list, thus reducing the amount of transfers the family would have been entitled to according to the PIM. For example, a PSNP household with six household members would usually be entitled to 300 Birr at a 2010 wage rate (that is 6 family members x 10 Birr x 5 working days = 300Birr). However, when officially including only 3 household members in the PSNP, the transfer would be reduced to 150 Birr (3 x 10 x 5 = 150). Besides this practice of cutting the family size of beneficiary households, another form of dilution has been identified, namely the rotation of beneficiary lists (i.e. shifting different households in and out of the programme, thus allowing more households to benefit from transfers) These practices were perceived as harmful to the intended objectives of the PSNP, as smaller amounts received by households would reduce the impact of the transfers and the household’s prospect of future graduation (Sharp *et al.* 2006). Thus, local governments and FSTFs were instructed to implement ‘Full Family Targeting’ (FFT) in order to and maximize impacts of the PSNP. More recent evidence confirmed that FFT has been adopted in most regions (Berhane *et al.* 2013; Devereux *et al.* 2008).

Concerning regional differences of criteria for the selection of beneficiary households, several cases in 2006 have been reported, where wealthier households were preferably targeted compared to poorer households – particularly in Amhara and Tigary – for several reasons, including to maximize graduation potential of beneficiaries (so as to exaggerate programme results) and the assumption of local governments that many of the poorest households will be targeted for resettlement (Devereux *et al.* 2008).

Furthermore, a community survey conducted in the course of the FSS 2006 revealed that - among local officials - there has been a lack of understanding of

targeting guidelines and differences in the perception of which criteria are most important⁶⁵ (Coll-Black *et al.* 2011; Berhane *et al.* 2013).

More recent evidence from the IDS/Indak study of 2008 and the FSS of 2008 and 2010 have revealed, however, that the understanding of the targeting criteria among local officials and the population has improved significantly since 2006, *inter alia*, due to the large-scale distribution of targeting guidelines (e.g. 8,000 revised PIM distributed at the *kushet*⁶⁶ level in Tigray) and other reforms aimed at enhancing the transparency of the targeting process at a local level (See Chapter 4.1.6).

In terms of household perception of targeting criteria for PW⁶⁷, in all four regions being surveyed in 2008, two out of three respondents in Tigray and Oromiya and around three out of four respondents in Amhara and SNNPR believed that poverty is one of the main reasons for inclusion. Slightly more than half of respondents in Amhara and SNNPR and slightly less than half of the respondents in Tigray and Oromiya said that small (or no) landholdings is another important targeting criteria. Other criteria that were considered important in 2008 in all four regions were 'people with no cattle' (from 15.4 per cent in Oromiya to 30.2 per cent in Amhara) and 'people being affected by drought' (from 19.1 per cent in Tigray to 28.2 per cent in Oromiya). Interestingly, in SNNPR a comparatively high number of respondents believed that PW and DS beneficiaries were selected randomly, by 8 and 6.6 per cent respectively. In the case of direct support in general, there was an increasing perception from 2006 to 2008 that old age, disability, and being heavily affected by droughts are the primary selection criteria (Coll-Black *et al.* 2011).

According to these figures, most people included in the household survey perceive that, in general, poor and deprived households, rather than better-off and

⁶⁵ Local officials were asked to list five criteria - in order of priority - which for them make residents eligible for programme inclusion (disaggregated by public works and direct support beneficiaries). In the case of public works, interestingly, only 9 per cent of respondents ranked food insecurity as the highest priority and only 5.7 per cent mentioned it at all among their top five priorities. In contrast, 53 per cent of the respondents saw poverty as the most important inclusion criteria (Coll-Black *et al.* 2011). One explanation for the strong focus on might be the relative difficulty of determining the severity food insecurity among households. However, "*if poverty and food insecurity are highly correlated, then the emphasis on poverty in the selection criteria may adequately capture food insecurity as well.*" (Coll-Black *et al.* 2011, 4) In the case of the DS component, 'being old and having no support' and 'being disabled and without work' were the highest prioritized targeting criteria, with 56 per cent and 30 per cent respectively (Coll-Black *et al.* 2011).

⁶⁶ *Kushet* refers to the community level (Sharp *et al.* 2006)

⁶⁷ The data for household's perception on criteria for public works and direct support selection is provided by the quantitative household surveys of the FSS in 2006 and 2008

wealthier households are being included in the PSNP, which can be seen as an indicator that the targeting process – apart from 2006 – has been relatively fair.

4.1.4. Public works

According to the Public Works Review of 2008, the overall quality of PW has improved since 2006, as well as the inclusion of the community in the planning process. However, some technical and operational problems, particularly regarding the construction of roads and the provision of water-supply and small-scale irrigation projects remain. Concerns have also been raised about the sustainability of these types of projects. The maintenance of pre-existing infrastructure, for example of roads, has primarily not been envisaged by the PSNP design, however, PW activities have been increasingly focusing on maintaining and rebuilding, instead of creating new assets. This problem has been addressed by providing additional training to development agents at the kebee level in order to better identify needs for maintenance and reconstruction projects within kebeelles (Wiseman *et al.* 2010).

The PW component of the PSNP is generally meant to provide employment to chronically food insecure households, while simultaneously creating assets on a community level. These assets have the function of supporting households to graduate out of food insecurity by increasing agricultural productivity and strengthening the local economy. Activities are supposed to be labor-intensive, in order to promote employment for as many people in need as possible, adapted to local needs and planned with active participation of the community, integrated into regional development plan, environmentally sound and gender sensitive (GoE 2006).

Concerning the types of works undertaken, a large part is focusing on natural resource management projects like soil conservation or hillside terracing, as these are usually more labor-intensive and can potentially reverse land degradation (Wiseman *et al.* 2010). Other activities include, *inter alia*, the rehabilitation and construction of roads, bridges, and small dams. Each of these activities needs to be supervised and requires different levels of technical support, depending on the complexity and necessary know-how of each specific project (GoE 2006).

Two major problems that have been encountered (particularly in the context of food-for-work programmes, but also more recently in the context of PW projects)

have been the lack of funding for non-labor costs of projects on the one hand (for example building material), reflected by a poor quality and limited impact of projects, and poor technical input on the other hand. In the latter case, the PSNP programme design instructs implementing agencies of PW projects to assign supervisors that - at least weekly basis - visit working sites and give input and advise to the local project manager. The supervisor is the person ultimately responsible for the technical and managerial performance of the project (Wiseman *et al.* 2010). In order to improve the performance of PW projects, Regional Public Works Focal Units (RPWFU) have been established in all regions of the country. The primary objective of the RPWFUs is to provide technical support to woredas and support the coordination and implementation of PW projects. According to key informant interviews and focus group discussions of the FSS, there have been variations in the establishment of RPWFUs across regions and concerns have been expressed about the limited resources of the RPWFUs, particularly in regard to insufficient numbers of staff, limited operational budget and shortages of vehicles to visit and oversee the PW sites (Berhane *et al.* 2013).

Another important discussion in the initial phase of the PSNP was whether PW should be allowed on private land or not. According to the PIM, the PSNP supports activities on private land only in two cases: 1) PW will be undertaken on land owned by female-headed households with no labor and 2) PW are integral to overall watershed management plans (GoE 2006). According to the household survey of the FSS in 2010, it has been primarily wealthier households reporting that PW were undertaken on their land, particularly in the case of Amhara and SNNPR, and to a smaller extend in the case of Tigray and Oromiya. However, in all four regions, the poorest households have benefited the least (Berhane *et al.* 2013).

Furthermore, in key informant interviews at different administrative levels and the household surveys, different views were expressed about the role of local communities in the planning process of PW activities. On a kebee level, most members of the FSTF confirmed that the planning process is primarily locally driven – by the community. In contrast, one development agent from Gurade kebee in SNNPR gave the following response:

„The kebele FSTF develops a detailed implementation plan based on the indicative plan sent from the woreda. The kebele FSTF makes minor adjustments to this. It can increase

the volume of public works but cannot reduce the number of proposed works. Also, it can substitute one activity with a similar and locally relevant activity, such as constructing a soil bund rather than a stone bund. However, the kebele FSTF does not have the mandate to make major modifications to the plan sent from the woreda. Public works planning is not participatory, because the main activities and the amount of work to be done is fixed by woreda officials” (Berhane et al. 2013, 116pp).

This response provides a rather distinct picture of the planning process of PW activities, suggesting that the woreda level has more decisive power over the planning process of PW projects than the kebeelee administration, the CFSTF, and the community itself. However, according to the household surveys of the FSS, the integration of the community has seemed to improve significantly during the period of 2006 to 2010. While in 2006, only around 10 per cent of households confirmed that they have been included in the selection of PW projects, this number increased to around 30 per cent in 2010 (Berhane *et al.* 2013).

4.1.5. Governance challenges

Slater *et al.* (2006) identified several major challenges on the effective implementation of policies and programmes in the context of Ethiopia, including *inter alia*:

- Woreda level capacities
- The quality of planning processes
- Understanding of programme implementation at woreda level
- The functioning of horizontal institutional linkages, and
- The timing of planning and budget flows

Many of these challenges derived from the decision made by the government to use existing government channels and structures for the planning, implementation and monitoring of the PSNP. According to the assessments and evaluations made, constraints on local capacities remain a challenge in most regions. However, since the programme implementation, some progress has been achieved: At a woreda level, low capacities were – according to Slater *et al.* (2006) - in most cases associated with a shortage of human resources, technical skills, rapid staff turnover, the additional

work load created by the PSNP and the need for additional resources required for effective operation. Concerning the turnover of woreda level staff – which has been observed particularly in Oromiya and SNNPR – many office heads were in post for less than a year, in many cases only for a few months, and – according to statements of some office heads - were more occupied with events related to political meetings and mobilizations than with their official tasks. Staff shortages and an increased workload were another compelling issue within most woreda offices visited by the survey team. The number of staff responsible for appraisal, implementation and evaluation of the PSNP has been perceived as insufficient in most woreda offices, with many officials claiming their responsibilities for the PSNP created much additional workload, although staff shortages existed even before the PSNP (Slater *et al.* 2006). In response to these shortfalls, the government (in 2006) contracted an additional forty specialists in the field of communications, procurement and social issues on a federal level, and 760 accountants and cashiers for the woreda level. Furthermore, technical assistance at the federal level has been supported by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) and the European Commission (EC), while at the woreda level trainings were provided *inter alia* in the fields of participatory watershed management, financial management, and general project guidelines and procedures (World Bank 2010). In some cases, NGOs or donor agencies have filled the existing capacity gap at the woreda level, including, for example, CARE (in Chiro), REST (in Kilte Awlalo) or the World Food Programme (WFP), providing technical assistance in SNNPR (Slater *et al.* 2006). *“What remains unclear, however, is the extent to which implementing partner NGOs in the PSNP are strengthening the capacity of woredas or drawing PSNP resources that could be used to build capacity away from the woredas”* (Slater *et al.* 2006, 20).

In regard to the quality of the planning processes, Slater *et al.* (2006) emphasize that the PSNP- PW planning process is *“arguably one of the most systematically participatory that has been seen in government programmes in Ethiopia.”* (p.22) However, in many cases there is insufficient technical support for the various PW undertaken – particularly due to inadequate numbers of qualified staff and resources - which ultimately constraints outcomes. The understanding of programme implementation at woreda level - despite extensive trainings and

mentoring provided - has been limited in most cases, particularly referring to the issues of graduation.

Concerning the horizontal institutional linkages of the PSNP, Slater *et al.* (2006) note that, while most government officials at the woreda level were well aware of the roles and responsibilities for horizontal linkages, many were lacking an understanding of *how* to carry out their roles, particularly in regard to getting the WFSTFs fulfilling their coordinative tasks. These were in many cases not functioning effectively, requiring too much time for decision-making processes. As a result, many regions adopted alternative or additional committees in order to better support and coordinate public works undertaken.

In regard to the planning and budgeting process, the government is responsible for preparing annual programme and budget plan including all regions, also those covered by NGOs and the World Food Programme (WFP) (Wiseman *et al.* 2010). On a woreda level, it has been observed that the PSNP planning cycle differs from the usual planning cycle of woredas, thus creating potential challenges in the alignment of PSNP with the overall woreda development plans (Slater *et al.* 2006). According to the PIM, the PSNP planning cycle starts in September, with unveiling the number of expected beneficiaries. During September and October, local level planning of public works projects will be undertaken while simultaneously finalizing the list of beneficiaries to match the budget. In November and December, the identified projects will be appraised by technical advisers, procurement plans will be prepared and site staff will be trained. In January, public works will begin (GoE 2006).

In contrast, the usual planning and budgeting cycle of woredas starts during this particular time where public works are being implemented, with the ultimate deadline for the new financial year in the beginning of July. This overlap of budget planning processes has created a heavy workload for woreda officials for effective planning and coordination, as budget plans for the PSNP have to be settled two months in advance (in November) of the initial start of woreda budgeting process (in January) (Sharp *et al.* 2006). On a federal level, the responsibility for financial management in 2006 has been shifted from the Food Security Coordination Bureau (FSCB) - which is responsible for the overall coordination of the PSNP - to the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development (MOFED) due to delayed payments to

woredas and weak financial reporting during the first year after implementation (Wiseman *et al.* 2010).

4.1.6. Accountability and transparency

“Any public works program implemented through different tiers of administration with specific targeting criteria, involving millions of beneficiaries and a large volume of resources requires strong checks and balances to protect against manipulation for personal ends or special interest. The same is true for the PSNP.” (Wiseman *et al.* 2010, 86)

The PSNP has been confronted with several challenges regarding the establishment of accountability and transparency mechanisms. The short time in which the PSNP has been implemented on a national scale, the radical shift from an rather unaccountable system of annual emergency response to a safety net system in which the government has been accountable for the timely and predicable delivery of transfers, and the use of largely decentralized and under-resourced government structures have been among the main challenges programme planners were confronted with. However, much of the evidence suggests that there have been significant improvements after the first year of programme implementation, particularly regarding the participation of the community in the planning process and the accountability and transparency of the targeting process (Wiseman *et al.* 2010).

In 2007, Kebele Appeal Committees (KAC) were established within PSNP woredas in order to separate the grievance procedures from the targeting process. Their task is to listen to the appeals and complaints of local residents and respond to them within a month of time. In case the grievance cannot be resolved independently, the KAC will forward the appeal to the kebee council, and then if necessary, to the woreda council. In most cases, KACs consist of, *inter alia*, elderly representatives, religious leaders, women representatives, school teachers, health extension workers, development agents, and kebee administrators. The size and composition of these KACs varies from kebee to kebee usually compounding of three to seven members. Evidence from the FSS 2010 indicates that, in each kebee covered by the

study where a KAC has been established (eight out of ten), at least one woman is represented as a member (Berhane *et al.* 2013; Wiseman *et al.* 2010).

According to fifty group focus discussions conducted through the FSS in 2010, the main cause for appeals and complaints has been exclusion of the programme by non-beneficiaries. Berhane *et al.* (2013) contend that there has been strong sentiment about exclusion of the programme among non-beneficiaries, which has eventually emerged due to a misunderstanding of the difference between the PSNP and the former emergency responses. Other important issues that were raised through appeals were the delay of PSNP payments (particularly in Oromiya and SNNPR) and partial family targeting, which was applied in almost all regions during an initial phase of the programme, but has more recently been substituted by full family targeting (FFT) in most woredas included in the study. According to the FSS household survey, an average of 30.4 per cent of households perceived the PSNP selection process as unfair, 9.9 per cent lodged a complaint and 3.1 per cent who lodged a complaint also received a response (Berhane *et al.* 2013).

Regarding the access to information about the PSNP, several steps have been taken in recent years in order to enhance transparency in the selection of beneficiaries (e.g. public posting of beneficiary lists, list of appeal and appeal resolutions), PSNP financing (e.g. publishing of woreda-to-woreda resource allocation plans), and the provision of information material and guidelines (e.g. distribution of newsletters and rolling out of posters). Additionally, PSNP client cards have been distributed among beneficiaries in order increase awareness of people's entitlements and the grievance process⁶⁸. However, the degree to which these measures are being applied vary across regions and in many cases they have been driven by donors rather than responsible government agencies (Wiseman *et al.* 2010).

⁶⁸ According to the household survey of the FSS in 2010, 43.6 per cent of households reported having received a client card (Berhane *et al.* 2013)

4.2. Impacts on food security and vulnerability

4.2.1. Food security

The PSNP – as one component of the FSP – aims to smooth consumption and prevent asset depletion of food insecure households, by providing beneficiaries with transfers in form of either cash or food, or, a combination of both. Evidence on the impacts of the PSNP on beneficiaries for the period of 2006-2010 on food security and asset development (including livestock) show generally mixed results, which – besides some of the implementation challenges mentioned in the preceding chapter (e.g. low payment levels and delays in payment) - is strongly related to the sharp increases in food prices apart from 2008. Concerning the caloric availability and consumption of beneficiary households, no clear improvements have been found over time, although the impact of the PSNP has generally been higher among households that have received additional services through the HABP (compared to households receiving only PSNP transfers). In regard to the type of transfers, households that have received a combination of food and cash seemed to have experienced less food shortages compared to households that received other payment types (of which ‘cash only’ had the least impact). The annual food gap has decreased among PSNP households, while for non-PSNP households a slight increase has been reported. During 2008, when the food gap for non-PSNP beneficiaries increased significantly, PSNP beneficiaries experienced a comparatively small increase in the food gap – an indicator that transfers provided through PW and DS have smoothened beneficiaries consumption needs during times of rising food prices. The number of households that have reported adopting some kind of coping strategies seemed to be equally high among PSNP and non-PSNP households. However, there was a difference discernible with regard the type of coping strategies used: non-PSNP households tended to use coping strategies with more severe, negative long-term impacts than PSNP-households, e.g. sending children to work or selling assets and livestock. PSNP households in contrast were able adopt coping strategies that were easier reversible, such as reducing the number of meals or cut spending on non-food items.

Devereux *et al.* (2008) note that food aid and cash transfers tend to be used differently among recipients, with food transfers being mostly consumed by households, while cash transfers are generally used for a broader set of purposes, including non-food needs like clothes or health costs. According to the 2006 and 2008 household surveys conducted by the IDS/Indak team, a vast majority of beneficiaries receiving 'food only' or a combination of cash and food, reported that they consume all of the food (87.6 per cent of households in 2006 and 73.3 per cent in 2008), while a significant minority of beneficiaries said that they sold at least some of the food and ate the rest (9.7 per cent in 2006 and 18.4 per cent in 2008).

In general, DS beneficiaries (which are on average the poorest households⁶⁹) were more likely to consume all the food received than PW participants (by 86.1 per cent compared to 70.6 per cent respectively in 2008). In case of cash transfers, most of the households (PW and DS combined) spent the greatest share of their additional income on staple food (80.1 per cent of households in 2006 and 84 per cent in 2008). Other expenses that represented a smaller share of expenses included groceries (e.g. salt), clothes, taxes, social obligations, or other food items (e.g. meat). When asked about specific investments made with PSNP transfers, 28 per cent of cash recipients in 2008 stated that they use some of the money to invest in the education of their children (63 Birr on average). Another 12 per cent stated that they used some of the money for health-related expenses (101 Birr on average). Concerning investments in productive assets, 13 per cent used transfers to buy seeds (68 Birr), 10 per cent bought livestock (226 Birr), and 6 per cent said that they used the money to buy fertilizer (10 Birr) (Devereux *et al.* 2008). Thus, cash transfers were primarily used for immediate food consumption needs (i.e. buying staple food), but had also incentive effects for investments in human capital and productive assets.

Gilligan *et al.* (2008) - using data from the 2006 FSS - assess the impact of PSNP transfers on several food security indicators, including the shortfall in caloric availability (i.e. caloric intake that is less than 1,800 kilocalories per day per capita in

⁶⁹ Most studies on the PSNP confirm that DS is generally well targeted, including primarily labor-constrained, female-headed, and elderly households (Berhane *et al.* 2013; Devereux *et al.* 2008; Gilligan 2009a)

the last seven days), daily per capita caloric acquisition, changes in the months of food insecurity (2004-2006⁷⁰), and changes in the square of the food gap (2004-2006)⁷¹. His findings suggest that, for the first group of PW participants (households receiving *any* transfers), there is no statistically significant impact on any of the food security indicators. Impacts slightly augment for the second group (those beneficiaries receiving at least 90 Birr), most markedly concerning the likelihood that household's have low caloric intake, and to a smaller extent, although statistically insignificant, the daily caloric intake per capita. For the last group (beneficiaries receiving any transfer *combined with access to the OFSP/HABP*), there have been statistically significant improvements in the caloric availability per capita, which has been 10 per cent higher than for the comparison group, and an increase in food security of 0.36 months. No evidence of improvements has been found for the treatment group in the availability of 1,800 kilocalories per person per day (Gilligan *et al.* 2008).

In general, these findings suggest that – for the first year after PSNP implementation- most impact has been achieved for the third group of treatment households, while for the first two groups, receiving only PSNP transfers, where positive impacts were achieved, they were statistically insignificant.

For the subsequent FSSs in 2008 and 2010, impact assessments regarding to food consumption and availability were difficult to interpret, as the findings showed no clear pattern of improvement for any of the treatment groups, despite using a broad range of different model specifications. The causes of this problem remain unclear, however, they are expected to be related to delays in payments of the PSNP in the three months prior to the surveys⁷² (Berhane *et al.* 2011).

Table 2 below shows the share of households which have experienced at least one food shortage in the year of 2005/06 and 2007/08, disaggregated by regions,

⁷⁰ Households were asked to also mention the number of months in which they have encountered no problems meeting their food needs for the time two years prior to the survey (July 2003- June 2004) in order to assess changes made by households

⁷¹ The study further disaggregates three types of PSNP participants (excluding DS beneficiaries). First, PSNP beneficiaries receiving *any* transfers during June 2005 and May 2006, second, beneficiaries receiving *at least 90 Birr per person* per months (or food equivalent in 90 Birr), and third, beneficiaries receiving any transfers *combined with access to the OFSP/HABP* (having received at least one support package or any service of the OFSP/HABP during the preceding 12 months). Additionally to the treatment group, there is a comparison group, compounding of households that haven't received any transfers from the PSNP and were not included in the OFSP/HABP (Gilligan *et al.* 2008).

⁷² A strong correlation is expected between the level of payments and indicators of food availability and consumption. For further information see Berhane *et al.* (2011) and Gilligan *et al.* (2009b)

beneficiary status and type of transfers received. Regarding regional disparities, Amhara has witnessed the strongest decrease of food shortages (from 85.4 per cent in 2005/06 to 26.5 per cent in 2007/08), while incidence rates have remained relatively high in Oromiya and SNNPR, at 73.8 per cent and 74.5 per cent in 2007/08 respectively. Strikingly, the incidence of food shortages among households receiving a combination of cash and food has decreased at a rate approximately two times higher than compared to households receiving 'food only', and approximately three times higher than households receiving 'cash only'. With the cash vs. food debate presented in chapter 4a in mind, the evidence provided here further underpins the argument that food transfers, or a combination of food and cash – in the context of Ethiopia's inflationary environment – has higher impacts on food security than cash (Sabates-Wheeler & Devereux 2012).

| Household Category | | 2005/06 | 2007/08 | % change |
|--------------------|-------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|-------------|
| Region | Amhara | 205 (85.4%) | 63 (26.5%) | -69% |
| | Oromiya | 224 (93.3%) | 175 (73.8%) | -22% |
| | SNNPR | 226 (94.2%) | 175 (74.5%) | -23% |
| | Tigray | 167 (69.6%) | 113 (47.3%) | -32% |
| PSNP status | Cash only | 73 (60.8%) | 61 (42.7%) | -16% |
| | Food only | 124 (86.1%) | 93 (50.5%) | -25% |
| | Cash + food | 484 (97.2%) | 237 (65.1%) | -51% |
| | Current PSNP households | 681 (89.7%) | 394 (56.6%) | -42% |
| | Past PSNP households | n/a | 59 (59.0%) | n/a |
| | Non-PSNP households | 141 (71.2%) | 73 (47.7%) | -48% |
| Total | | 822 (85.6%) | 526 (55.4%) | -36% |

Table 2: Households experiencing food shortages in 2005/06 and 2007/08, Source: Devereux et al. (2008)

Another indicator that provides insights to the food security impacts of the PSNP is the food gap, i.e. the number of months that households are struggling to meet their food needs within a period of 12 months. Figure 22 below demonstrates the average months of food gap experienced by households between 2004 and 2010, disaggregated by PW participants, DS beneficiaries, and non-PSNP households. It shows that, on average, the food gap has been at 3.4 months in 2004, slightly declining in 2006, increasing 0.5 months in 2008, and declining to 3.1 months in 2010. The food gap has been generally higher among PSNP beneficiaries (incl. PW and DS beneficiaries) compared to non-PSNP households, with the exception of 2008, where the food gap for non-PSNP households increased sharply by approximately two additional months, while the food gap for PSNP households (PW and DS)

remained at a constant level (slightly increasing in case of PW participants and slightly declining in case of DS beneficiaries).

One assumption that can be derived in this regard is that the PSNP had a ‘stabilizing effect’ on the food gap for PW and DS beneficiaries during the period of 2008, while non- PSNP households were more fully exposed to external shocks (in the context of 2008, the food price crisis). Throughout the whole period of 2004-2010, the food gap has increased slightly (from 2.8 to 3 months) among non-PSNP households, while it has decreased by PW participants (from 3.6 to 3.2 months) and DS beneficiaries (from 3.9 to 3.4 months).

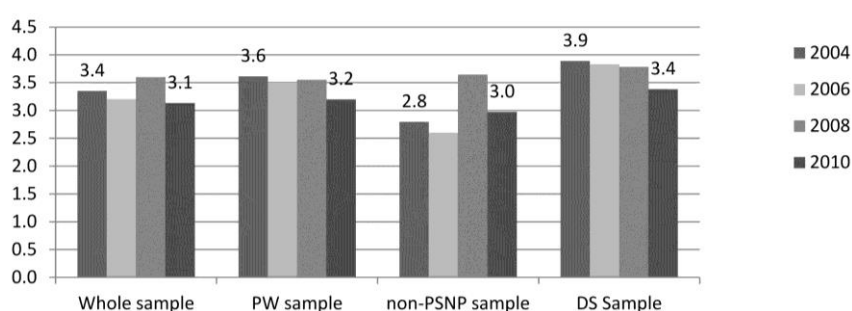


Figure22: Average food gap, by year and beneficiary status; Source: Berhane et al. (2011)

Subsequently, we will look at the different types of coping strategies which households were forced to adopt in order to satisfy their food needs. The sequence of coping strategies follows a similar pattern across most countries faced with famine in Africa and Asia. This pattern has also been observed in Ethiopia. The most widespread types of coping strategies are those that are easily reversible, without long-term consequences, and associated with little costs, like for example cutting back food consumption (e.g. reduce the number of meals per day or eating smaller portions) or non-essential spending (Devereux *et al.* 2008).

According to the IDS/Indak study, around three in four households included in the PSNP in 2008 reported that - at least once in the preceding 12 months - they ate less food or reduced the number of meals per day. For non-PSNP households, these numbers were slightly lower (78.1 and 72.3 per cent for PSNP households; 72.3 and 65.2 per cent for non-PSNP households). The third most often used strategy was to draw back spending on non-food items (with almost the same share of around 31 per cent for PSNP and non-PSNP households). Apart from this first set of strategies - which fall under the first category of easily reversible, low-cost coping strategies - the subsequent coping strategies in the list can be associated with higher long-term impacts. These include the selling of livestock in order to buy food (29.3 per cent for

PSNP households and 33.3 per cent for non-PSNP households), borrowing of cash (21.8 and 23.4 per cent), and migration to find work (12.8 and 10.6 per cent) (Devereux *et al.* 2008).

Other examples of coping strategies include the consumption of productive inputs, such as seed stocks or the consumption of wild animals, plants or unusual foodstuff (e.g. root crops), with the latter often referred to as an important indicator of acute food shortages in the context of Ethiopia. The practice of consuming seeds stocks as a form of coping strategy has – according to the FSS – increased among non-PSNP households, while it has slightly declined among PSNP beneficiaries. Regarding the consumption of wild animals and unusual foodstuff, there are no clear patterns emerging for the period of 2006-2010 (Berhane *et al.* 2013).

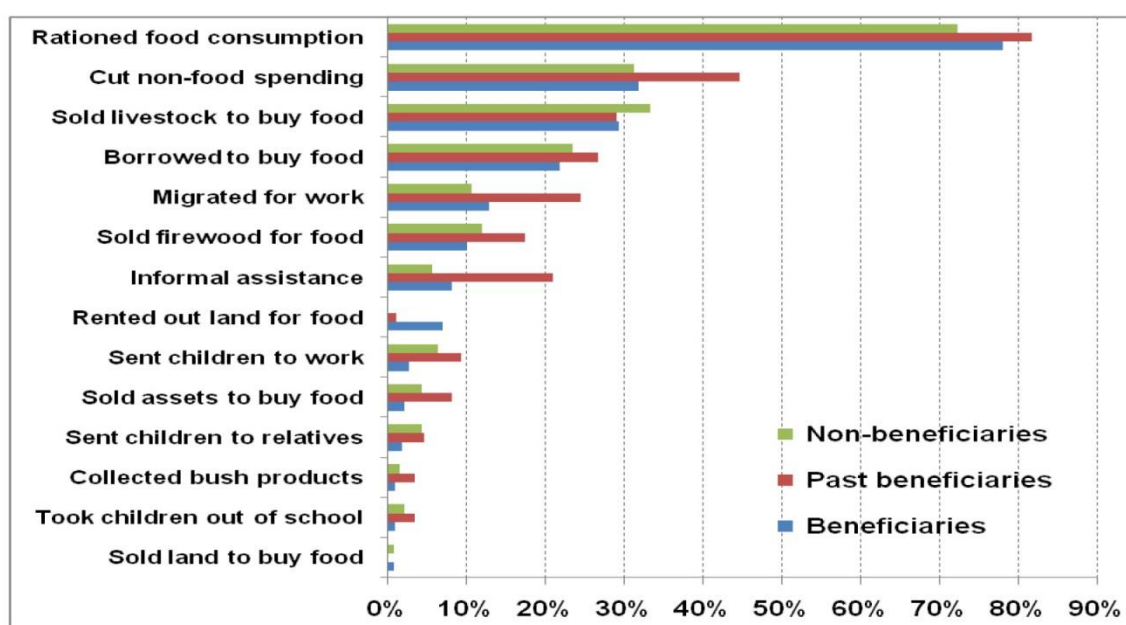


Figure 23: Coping strategies adopted in 2007/08, by beneficiary status; Source: Devereux *et al.* (2008)

Figure 23 above shows a list of the different coping strategies adopted by households, with one additional group, namely ‘past beneficiaries’, referring to households that have been PSNP households during the first survey (of the IDS/Indak study) in 2006, and have been graduands in the second survey in 2008. Among the seven most frequent coping strategies mentioned by households, past beneficiaries showed the greatest incidence numbers compared to the two other groups, except for the category ‘selling livestock to buy food’, which was more often named by non-PSNP households. This implies that many of the past beneficiaries had been confronted with severe hardship after graduating from the PSNP, leading to the conclusion that many of these households might have graduated too early (Devereux *et al.* 2008).

Furthermore, the number of households reporting to have used coping strategies seems to be only slightly lower among non-PSNP households, however, these households showed a stronger tendency towards coping strategies with negative longer-term impacts (e.g. the selling of livestock, sending children to work, selling of assets)

4.2.2. Asset and livestock development

Besides the objective of smoothing consumption, the PSNP aims at stabilizing asset depletion and – through provisions of the HABP - support households accumulate assets in the medium- and long-run. The incidence of weather related shocks and the food price crisis have however put severe constraints on households' ability to stabilize their asset level or even invest in new productive assets (Berhane *et al.* 213). Despite these constraints, evidence suggests that - compared to the first year after implementation with rather inconsiderable results - the impact of the PSNP (particularly in combination with the HABP) on asset accumulation has augmented for the period of 2006-2010 and has prevented beneficiaries from distress sale of assets when compared to non-PSNP households.

For the first year after programme implementation, Gilligan *et al.* (2008) indicate that the value of assets of rural households has increased both for PSNP participants, as well as for non- beneficiaries. However, asset growth has been higher for non-beneficiaries – even when comparing them the PSNP target group with access to the HABP⁷³. Among the beneficiary groups, PSNP participants with access to the HABP experienced the highest growth rates. According Devereux *et al.* (2008), even after deflating 2008 asset holdings by 2006 prices, the total value of assets (including livestock) increased from 846 Birr to 2,317 Birr (274 per cent) for PW participants⁷⁴, from 320 Birr to 644 Birr (201 per cent) for DS beneficiaries, and from 1,471 Birr to 3,639 Birr (247 per cent) for non-beneficiaries. These numbers indicate that the transfers provided by the PSNP and the OFSP/HABP have increased the total value of

⁷³ Gilligan et al. (2008) analyse the difference of the log values of livestock and tools owned by households, distinguishing between beneficiaries receiving *any* transfers, beneficiaries receiving *at least 90 Birr per person per month*, and beneficiaries receiving *any* transfers *combined with access to the HABP*

⁷⁴ Including PSNP participants that have received assets through the OFSP

assets relative to non-beneficiaries. These improvements cannot be primarily attributed to high increases in the mean number of assets possessed by households, but rather due to an increase in the number of households owning productive assets, i.e. poorer households among PSNP beneficiaries have benefited most from the transfers in regard to asset accumulation. Additionally, good harvest years during the period of 2006-2008 seemed to have contributed to these high rates of asset growth (Devereux *et al.* 2008).

According to the FSS, asset development (excluding livestock) shows a high divergence across regions between the period of 2004⁷⁵ and 2010, with the highest absolute value of assets among households coming from Tigray and the lowest in SNNPR. However, Tigray has been the only region where a continuous decline in assets has been observed, falling from 272 Birr in 2004 to 199 Birr in 2010 (marking a decline of 27 per cent). In Oromiya, on the other hand, asset levels – although lower than in Tigray in absolute terms – have increased steadily during the same period of time (around 32 per cent from 2004 to 2010). In Amhara and SNNPR, assets have increased between 2004 and 2006 (although with different pace), temporarily dropping between the period of 2006-2008, and then increasing again between 2008 and 2010 (Berhane *et al.* 2013). In other words, these developments indicate an ‘equalization’ of asset values across regions, with regions of ‘asset-rich’ households (i.e. Tigray) experiencing losses of asset levels, while regions with ‘asset-poorer’ households (i.e. Amhara, Oromiya and SNNPR) experiencing an increase of asset levels. There is no explanation available in the literature on why assets levels in Tigray have decreased compared to the other regions. Comparatively higher increases of food prices or incidences of shocks cannot be considered as principal causes, as these have – in both cases - been higher in other regions than Tigray.

There is a difference discernible when looking at the asset value according to different beneficiary households. The following Figure 24 provides an overview of the value of assets hold by PW participants and non-PW participants. It shows that the average value of assets is smaller among the former group (suggesting that PW participants prior to the beginning of the PSNP have been poorer than non-PW participants), however, even while their level of assets increased at a slower rate, the

⁷⁵In the course of the household survey conducted in 2006, households were ask to give information about their assets levels prior to the start of the PSNP in 2004 and 2005

increase was steady. In case of non- PW participants, a sharp increase in asset levels between 2004 and 2006 was followed by a drastic decline for the subsequent period of 2006-2008. When looking at the difference of asset values between the two groups in 2004, it can be observed that overall PW- participants have benefited more relative to non-PW participants. Accordingly, transfers provided through the PSNP fulfilled their role in preventing asset depletion among beneficiary households.

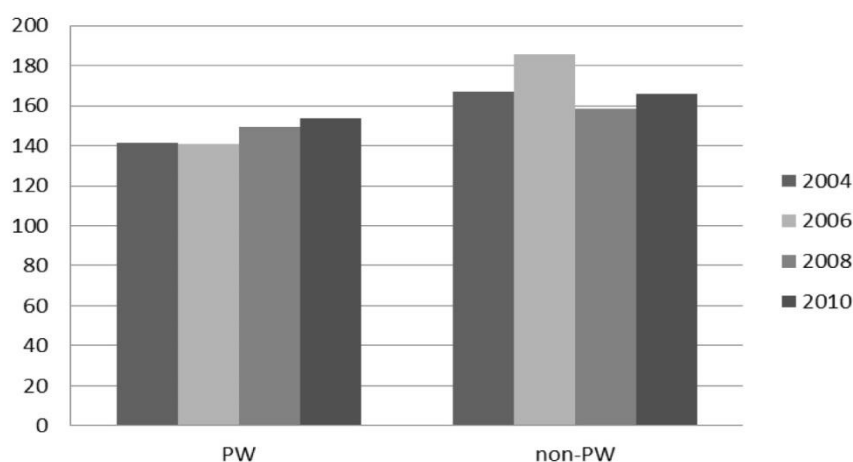


Figure 24: Value of assets owned (Birr), by beneficiary status, Source: Berhane et al. (2013)

4.2.3. Livestock

Concerning the composition of assets, livestock is among the most important assets for most rural Ethiopians. Thus, it is also the objective of the PSNP and the HABP to prevent livestock depletion in times of shocks and promote the accumulation of the same in the medium- and long run. In general, the results on livestock development between PSNP and non-PSNP household are mixed, making it difficult to draw any meaningful conclusions. What can be stated, however, is that non-PSNP households typically possess more livestock than PSNP households, and that changes in the value of livestock (for both, PSNP and non-PSNP participants) over the period of 2004-2010 are marginal. As such, transfers provided to PSNP households seemed to have no significant impact on livestock development.

The importance of livestock for rural Ethiopians becomes obvious when comparing the total value of non-livestock assets⁷⁶ at around 150 Birr (demonstrated

⁷⁶ including hoes, sickles, ploughs, water pumps, etc. (Berhane et al. 2013)

in Figure 22 above) with the results from Devereux *et al.* (2008) mentioned previously, in which the (monetary) value for livestock has been included in total asset value estimates – at 2,317 Birr for PW participants and 3,639 Birr for non-PW participants in 2008.

Gilligan *et al.* (2009b), by using data derived from the FSS, numbers the change in the value of livestock holdings between 2006 and 2008 by 46.2 per cent for PW participants, compared to 21.9 per cent for non-PW participants. In absolute numbers, this marks a change from 3059 to 4885 Birr for the former group and from 4052 to 5790 Birr for the latter group.

Berhane *et al.* (2013) provide a rather contrasting picture of livestock development of the two groups. According to numbers from their report, the total value of livestock –among PW and non-PW participants – decreased slowly for the period of 2004-2010, with particularly severe losses from 2006-2008, followed by a recovery phase from 2008-2009. These sharp declines in the value of livestock during 2006 and 2008 (9.6 per cent for PW participants and 19.6 per cent for non-PW participants) might be explained by the rise in general food prices, thus, forcing many owners to sell off livestock in order to get access to sufficient food. Interestingly, non-PW participants (although faced with a higher decline of livestock value) were able to recover more quickly to the pre-2006 level, compared to PW- participants who seem to recover more slowly. This fact might be an indication that non-PW participants - although more fully exposed to shocks – have been more resilient to the 2008 food price spikes than PW participants (Berhane *et al.* 2013).

It is important to note, that these estimates on the value of livestock holdings are derived from the subjective owner's perception. Gilligan *et al.* (2009b) describes the advantages and disadvantage of this type of measurement as follows:

"An advantage of such an approach is that it accounts for quality differentials within animal types; a further advantage is that it accounts for the possibility that some types of livestock may increase in value more quickly than others. [...] However, in the context of rapidly rising prices, respondents may not be know with a high degree of accuracy how valuable their assets are" (p.18pp.).

An alternative measurement tool for the value of livestock is the Tropical Livestock Unit (TLU) ⁷⁷, with the advantage of reducing measurement errors and better indicating the number of livestock held by households⁷⁸ (Gilligan *et al.* 2009b).

Figure 25 below provides an overview of the development of TLU according to the beneficiary status of households. It can be observed that the average TLU is lower for PW participants than for non-PW participants. Furthermore, the figure provides a contrasting picture of the developments in the value of livestock mentioned above, as here it seems that PW participants experienced a higher loss of livestock than non-PW participants during the period of 2006-2008.

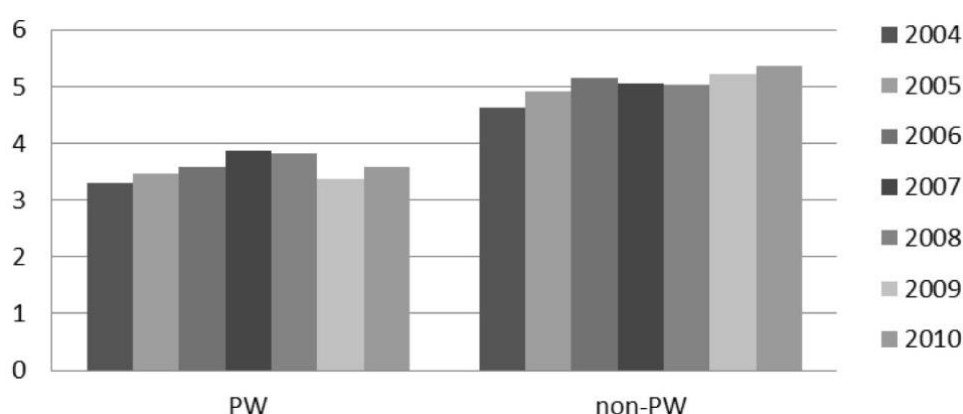


Figure 25: Tropical Livestock Units owned, by beneficiary status, Source: Berhane *et al.* (2011)

As already mentioned earlier, one possible explanation for the decline of livestock value (for both groups; according to Berhance *et al.* 2013) may be related to distress sale of assets due to immediate food needs or other compelling expenses (e.g. medical treatment due to illness). In the course of the household surveys of the FSSs, households were asked whether they have experienced any form of distress sales caused by food needs between 2006 and 2010. Figure 26 below provides an overview of the share of households per region reporting distress sale of assets. On average, the number of households which experienced distress asset sales has declined from approximately 50 per cent in 2006 to around 34 per cent in 2010 for PW participants. In the case of non-PW participants, the number delinked from 44 per cent in 2006 to 28 per cent in 2010 respectively. The higher share of PW households (compared to non-PW households) reporting distress asset sales - as a possible indicator for the

⁷⁷ A TLU equals one for cattle, mules and horses, 1.45 for camels, 0.65 for donkeys, 0.15 for sheep and goats, and 0.005 for poultry (Wiseman *et al.* 2010)

⁷⁸ One disadvantage of the TLU is that the relative value of different species of animals remains unchanged over time (Gilligan *et al.* 2009b)

higher vulnerability of these households - might be a possible factor that contributed to the more pronounced decline of TLUs during the period of 2008 and 2009 – as shown in Figure 25. However, the correlation, in general, seems to be rather weak, as TLUs among PW households improved until 2007 (accompanied by only small changes in distress sales), followed by the downward trend apart from 2008 (accompanied by stronger a reduction of the number of distress sales).

Strikingly, however, non-PW households experienced a stronger decline of distress asset sales during 2006-2008 than did PW households, indicating that the impact of transfers provided through the PW component of the PSNP on the protection of assets was marginal until 2008.

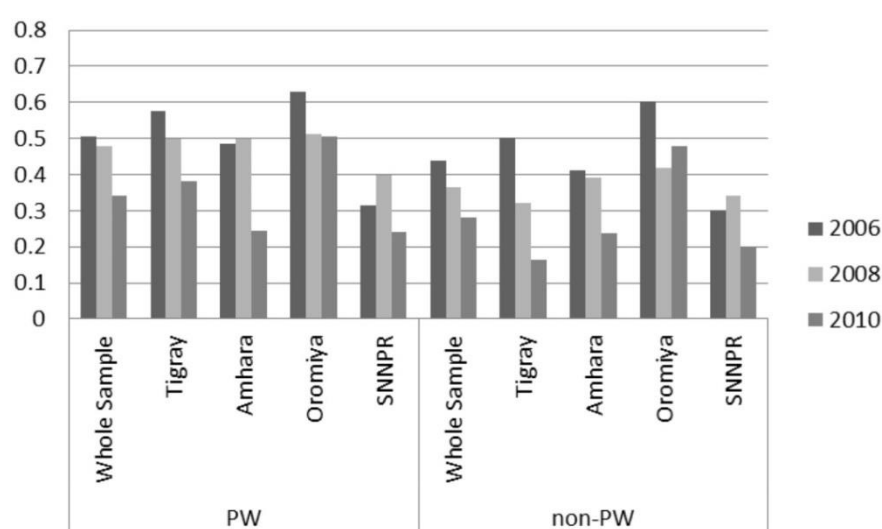


Figure 26: Distress sale of assets (in percentage), by region and beneficiary status
Source: Berhane et al. (2013)

4.2.4. Perceived welfare

In this chapter, some results on the self-perceived welfare (including the perceived food security status and economic welfare) of non-PSNP participants in contrast to PSNP participants shall be highlighted. According to the study from Devereux *et al.* (2008), for the period of 2006-2008, the number of households - among PSNP beneficiaries - reporting that they were 'unable' or 'struggling' to meet the household's food needs increased from 56.9 per cent in 2006 to 63.4 per cent (increase of 7.5 per cent) in 2008 (See Table 3 below). In case of non-PSNP participants, the number increased from 36.5 to 48.4 per cent (increase of 11.9 per cent) in 2008 respectively. Interestingly, the group of past PNSP-beneficiaries (i.e.

PSNP households that have graduated in 2006), were the group with the highest share of households that were 'unable' to meet the household's food needs, rising from 13.7 per cent in 2006 to 47.1 per cent in 2008. This suggests that many of the households which have left the PSNP in 2006 might have graduated in a too early stage. Furthermore, these figures indicate that households receiving PSNP transfers were less likely to perceive their welfare situation as worsening, compared to non-PSNP households.

| Self-assessment | Non-beneficiaries | | | Current beneficiary | | | Past beneficiary | | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|------------|------------|---------------------|------------|------------|------------------|------------|------------|
| | 2008 | 2007 | 2006 | 2008 | 2007 | 2006 | 2008 | 2007 | 2006 |
| Doing well | 23.6 | 19.1 | 21.8 | 16.0 | 12.4 | 12.5 | 16.7 | 14.7 | 14.7 |
| Doing just okay | 28.0 | 42.7 | 41.0 | 20.6 | 33.1 | 30.6 | 17.7 | 34.3 | 34.3 |
| Struggling | 20.4 | 21.7 | 19.2 | 33.3 | 32.0 | 35.9 | 18.6 | 34.3 | 37.3 |
| Unable to meet household needs | 28.0 | 16.6 | 17.3 | 30.1 | 22.5 | 21.0 | 47.1 | 16.7 | 13.7 |
| Total households | 157 | 157 | 156 | 700 | 701 | 699 | 102 | 102 | 102 |

Table 3: Perceived welfare of households (in percentage), 2006-2008, by beneficiary status
Source: Devereux et al. (2008)

These findings are further underpinned by the results from the FSS in 2006 and 2008. While the number of households perceiving their welfare status either as 'destitute' or 'poor' increased among non-PSNP households (from 32.8 per cent to 36.9 per cent), it decreased for PSNP-beneficiaries (from 49.7 per cent to 45.4 per cent) during 2006-2008 (Gilligan *et al.* 2009a). Another interesting finding by Gilligan *et al.* (2009b) - by disaggregating two types of PSNP households based on their variability of transfers⁷⁹ - reveals that, for the period from 2006-2008, a lower variability of transfers was much more likely associated with a positive change in household's perceived welfare status.

More recently, using data from the FSSs of 2008 and 2010, a higher share of households included in the PSNP reported they were 'among the poorest households' in 2010 (approx. 39 per cent) than in 2008 (approx. 33 per cent) (see Figure 27 below). However, the share of households reporting to be the 'poorest in the village' among PSNP participants decreased slightly.

⁷⁹ One group of households receiving at least 900 Birr per year and having experienced low variability of transfers (with a coefficient variation less than 1.5), and the second group of households also receiving 900 Birr but experiencing high variability of transfers (with a coefficient variation higher than 1.5)

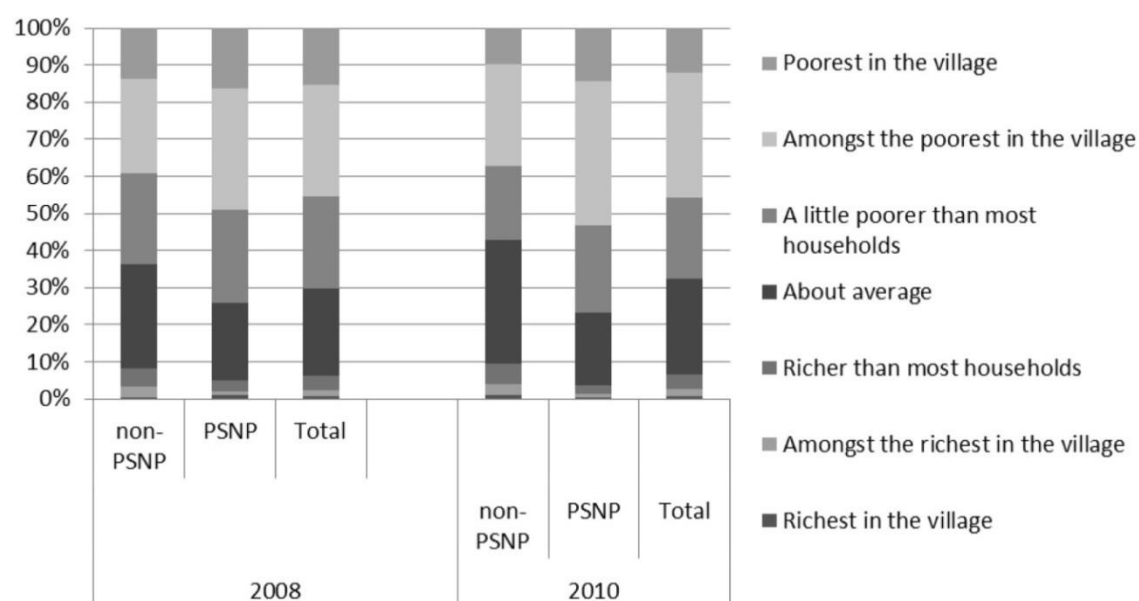


Figure 27: Subjective perception of welfare compared to other households, Source: Berhane et al. (2013)

Figure 28 below can be seen as an indicator that the overall situation for many households has improved since 2008. It shows that, when asked about the perception of their overall economic situation, the share of households from both PSNP and non-PSNP households reporting to be 'much worse now' or 'a little worse now' has declined substantially from 2008 to 2010. However, when comparing the share of households reporting to be 'much better now' or 'a little better now' it seems that the share of PSNP households – compared to non-PSNP households – has declined.

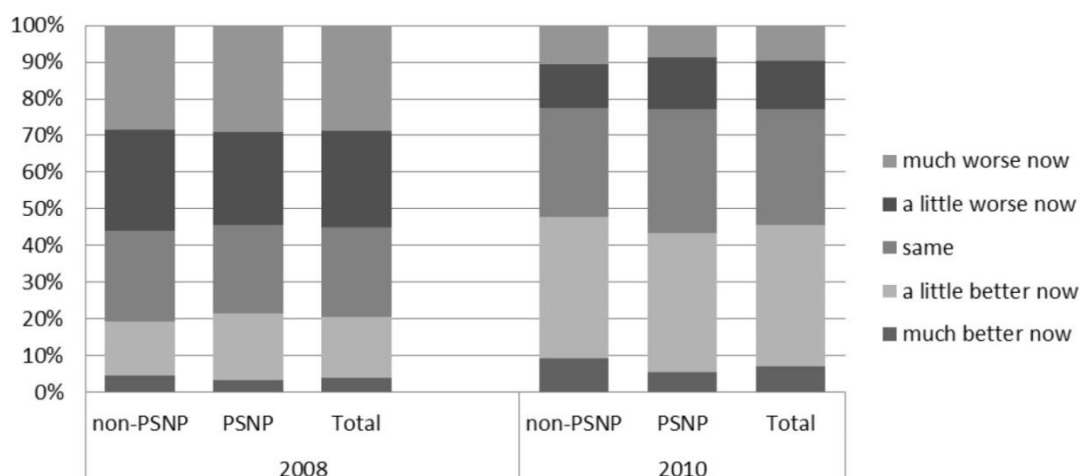


Figure 28: Overall economic situation of households of 2008 and 2010 (per cent of households)
Source: Berhane et al. (2013)

5. Conclusions

The aim of this paper has been to assess the degree to which the PSNP in Ethiopia has been able to reduce food insecurity and vulnerability among beneficiary households and further to identify the challenges and bottlenecks moderating programme performance since its implementation in 2005.

There have been several limitations this study has been confronted with, which shall be briefly addressed here. First, in order to provide the most up-to-date analysis of the PSNP, a considerable amount of evidence has been drawn from the latest reports on the Food Security Survey in Ethiopia conducted in 2010 (see Berhane *et al.* 2013), besides the alternative longitudinal surveys provided by Devereux *et al.* (2006) and (2008), Sharp *et al.* (2006) and Slater *et al.* (2006), which have decidedly enriched the analysis of this work. Second, the majority of the evidence for this study has been restricted to the period of 2006 to 2010, for which longitudinal data has been available. As a consequence, it has not been possible to draw any conclusions about the performance of the PSNP from 2010 onwards and neither on the situation of the rural households prior to the introduction of the PSNP. Furthermore, the surveys have been restricted to the four regions of Tigray, Amhara, Oromiya and SNNPR, while the PSNP has been also implemented in the region of Afar (including approximately 470,000 beneficiaries), Somali (160,000 beneficiaries), Dire Dawa (52,000 beneficiaries) and Harare (16,000 beneficiaries) (Wiseman *et al.* 2010).

In general, evidence on the impacts of the PSNP on food security and vulnerability provide a rather mixed picture. There is no evidence or clear pattern emerging on improvements for PSNP households in terms of caloric availability or consumption, when compared to non-PSNP households. Furthermore, the number of households having experienced at least one food shortage in the preceding twelve months has declined more pronounced among non-PSNP households than among PSNP households. However, concerning the amount of months within a year that households are unable to meet their food requirements – the so-called food gap – there is a tendency that households receiving PSNP transfers have been able to reduce their food gap, while for non-PSNP households the food gap has slightly increased. This suggests that PSNP households have benefited from the transfers provided by the PSNP in terms of food availability, particularly during the months from January to July (as these are usually the months where food gaps occur). In terms

of asset and livestock development, the programmes had, on average, a positive impact on distress-sale of non-livestock assets, however, the programme shows no significant impact on protection of livestock-holdings.

While the average impact of the programme on food security and asset protection seems to be rather limited, findings suggest that the degree to which the PSNP had an impact on households is dependent on several factors, including the type of transfer received through the programme (either 'cash only', 'food only', or a combination of the two), the amount of payments received, the timeliness of payments, and inclusion in the HABP.

Concerning the type of transfers, the idea was to provide food transfers to 'low-capacity' woredas and cash transfers to 'higher-capacity' woredas in an initial stage of the programme, while promoting a gradual shift towards cash-based transfers in the medium-, and long-run (through measures aimed at strengthening lower capacity woredas). The assumption was that cash transfers have several advantages compared to food transfers, i.e. stimulating the local economy, promoting incentives for rural smallholder farmers to make investments in productive assets, and the possibility for beneficiaries to meet non-food consumption needs (e.g. health services, clothes, etc.). The trend of rising global food prices during 2008 however, which led to a drastic increase in domestic food prices in Ethiopia, strongly affected the value of the two forms of transfers – by increasing the value of food transfers compared to cash transfers. While cash transfer payments were increased by around 65 per cent (from 6 to 10 Birr) during 2008 and 2009 as a reaction to the inflation of food prices, evidence suggests that the value of food remained higher throughout the whole period of time. As such, beneficiary households (included in the two surveys) expressed a strong preference for food transfers in 2010. Furthermore, the incidence of food shortages experienced by households receiving either 'food only' or a combination of food and cash has declined at a higher rate than for households receiving 'cash only'.

There has further been strong evidence of a high divergence of payment levels to beneficiary households across regions, as well as among the two targeting groups of the PSNP, namely public works and direct support beneficiaries. Differences in payment levels might correspond to differences in local food price level. However, in the case of direct support beneficiaries – which are usually considered as the poorest

households in the community - significantly lower payment rates are unlikely to provide any significant improvements in terms of food security and resilience.

Widespread delays of payments have been reported among a significant share of beneficiary households across all regions which is, *inter alia*, closely related to low implementation capacities at the local government level. Delays in payments potentially undermine the ability of households to smooth consumption in times of hardship, which is one of the main objectives of the PSNP. However, efforts have been made to reverse this trend by further investing in human resources (including the hiring of nearly 1,000 additional accountants and cashiers at the woreda level) and technical expertise (including the provision of trainings for government employees) in lower tiers of government.

Concerning the HABP which provides, *inter alia*, credits and input packages to rural households, much of the evidence provided by the surveys between 2006 and 2010 suggests that the combination of the PSNP and the HABP had the potentially greatest impacts on the food security status of households. While in 2006, the coverage rate and general understanding of the functioning of the HABP has been low among most households, a reform package - including the employment of three development agents with a diploma for each kebee in the country (in total 14,295 agents in 2009) - led to significant improvements in the transparency and understanding of the programme. There are several indices that the HABP will be further extended in the future.

In regard to the issue of payment types, evidence suggests that cash transfers in the context of the PSNP failed to adjust to rapidly rising food prices on time, thus, undermining the purchasing power of beneficiaries. In a situation like this, incentives for households to switch from food to cash transfers are relatively low. Thus, it seems to be of utmost importance for programme designers to consider options of establishing a more flexible mechanism that ensures adjustment of cash transfers to current food prices e.g. on a monthly basis. Additionally, it seems that there is a great potential for a mixed transfer approach that combines food and cash transfers, which has been the preferred payment type for a significant share of households from the surveys. One scenario could be a switching to food transfers in times of rising food prices, while using cash transfers when prices are stable. However, this would require local governments to have sufficient capacities to handle both types of transfers.

Overall, the PSNP has the potential to contribute to increased food security in rural Ethiopia, however, in order to create an enabling environment for livelihoods, other factors, including broad-based economic growth (which in the case of Ethiopia is inevitably connected to growth in the agricultural sector), the extension and qualitative improvement of health- and education-related services, and the creation of basic infrastructure all play a decisive role in reducing poverty and food insecurity. One of the major challenges for Ethiopia will be to decrease its dependence on food aid and increase productivity in the agricultural sector, particularly of small-scale farmers. The provision of input packages and other services related to agricultural extension seem as a promising approach, however, in order to improve the quality of these services, local governments must be strengthened and also have to be held accountable for their actions.

Concerning the nearer future of the PSNP, it remains unclear what will happen after the current period of the PSNP which ends in 2014. Much will depend on the willingness of donors to continue their long-term commitment for funding the programme. Several successful reforms of the PSNP have been implemented since 2005, aimed, *inter alia*, at enhancing transparency (e.g. concerning targeting and graduation criteria), accountability (e.g. the establishment of independent local appeals committees) and effectiveness of the programme. However, in various cases incentives for reforms have been initially driven by donors rather than the government.

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ABSTRACT (english)

The following diploma thesis analysis the Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP), a development programme aimed at improving food security in rural Ethiopia by providing transfers in form of either cash or food to food insecure households. The programme incorporates two different components, a public works component for those able to perform labor-intensive, community-based activities (e.g. road construction and soil rehabilitation) and a direct support component for those without labor and no other means of support (e.g. disabled persons, per pregnant women, elderly people) . The programme was implemented in 2005 and covers approximately 10% of the total population in the country. The first part of the work will focus on the underlying concepts of food security and social protection. Subsequently, several aspects related to food security in the context of Ethiopia will be introduced, including inter alia Ethiopia's food aid system and agricultural policies. The second part of the work will address the impacts of the programme on food security and vulnerability among beneficiary households by using longitudinal surveys conducted in the country during the period of 2006-2010. The surveys combine a mix-methods approach using several types of quantitative (e.g. households surveys) and qualitative methods (e.g. focus group discussions). The study further aims at identifying implementation challenges the programme has been confronted with. Results show that the PSNP in Ethiopia has a positive impact on the availability of food particularly during the lean season. However, no significant impact could be found in regard to daily consumption of food (measured by a threshold of 1,800 kilocalories per day per person). Among the main challenges of the programme are the limited capacities of local governments in terms of human resources and technical expertise, as well as the implications of rising food prices during 2008.

ABSTRACT (deutsch)

Die vorliegende Diplomarbeit widmet sich der Analyse des sogenannten Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP), einem Entwicklungsprogramm in Äthiopien, das durch die Bereitstellung einer Grundsicherung - in Form von Nahrungsmittel und Geldtransfers - auf die Verbesserung der Ernährungssituation der ländlichen Bevölkerung im Land abzielt. Das Programm vereint zwei unterschiedliche Komponenten, einerseits ein staatliches Beschäftigungsprogramm, in dem arbeitsfähige Personen an öffentlichen Projekten innerhalb ihrer Gemeinde (u.a. im Bereich des Straßenbaus oder Erosionsschutzes) teilnehmen und andererseits eine bedingungslose, i.e. nicht an Konditionen gebundene Transferleistung an Menschen die von Nahrungsunsicherheit betroffen sind und in keinen physisch anspruchsvollen Arbeitsprozess, wie jene der Gemeinschaftsprojekte integrierbar sind (z.B. Menschen mit Behinderungen, schwangere Frauen, oder ältere Menschen). Das Programm wurde im Jahr 2005 implementiert und deckt seither rund 10% der gesamten Bevölkerung des Landes ab. In einem ersten Schritt der Arbeit werden die Konzepte von Ernährungssicherheit und sozialer Sicherung dargelegt. Darauf aufbauend wird der Bezug zu Äthiopien hergestellt und verschiedene mit dem Thema Ernährungssicherheit zusammenhängende Aspekte im Land beleuchtet. Basierend auf verschiedenen Studien in den Jahren von 2006 bis 2010 – allem voran zweier landesweit durchgeführten Umfragen - soll im zweiten Teil der Arbeit das produktive Sicherheitsnetz auf die Frage hin untersucht werden, inwieweit durch erbrachte Transferleistungen die Ernährungssicherheit der betroffenen Personen verbessert werden konnte. Zusätzlich sollen Herausforderungen in der Implementierung und programmbezogene Engpässe behandelt werden. In Bezug auf die Ernährungssituation scheint das Programm einen positiven Effekt auf die Verfügbarkeit von Nahrungsmittel, vor allem während der Trockenzeit zu haben, jener Zeit im Jahr in welcher der Zugang zu Nahrungsmittel traditionell erschwert ist. Aufgrund der Ergebnisse der Langzeitstudien lassen sich keine positiven Auswirkungen auf den täglichen Konsum von Nahrungsmittel (u.a. gemessen an der Anzahl eingenommener Kilokalorien pro Tag) treffen. Als zentrale Herausforderungen des Programmes lassen sich u.a. unzureichende Kapazitäten der lokalen Regierungsstellen in Bezug auf personelle Ressourcen und technischer Expertise, als auch die steigenden Lebensmittelpreise seit 2008 ausmachen.

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SPRACHEN

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|-------------|--|
| DEUTSCH | MUTTERSPRACHE |
| ENGLISCH | FLIEßEND IN WORT UND SCHRIFT |
| SPANISCH | SEHR GUTE KENNTNISSE IN WORT UND SCHRIFT |
| FRANZÖSISCH | GRUNDLEGENDE KENNTNISSE WORT UND SCHRIFT |