



Chronic Poverty
Research Centre

What is Chronic Poverty?

The distinguishing feature of chronic poverty is extended duration in absolute poverty.

Therefore, chronically poor people always, or usually, live below a poverty line, which is normally defined in terms of a money indicator (e.g. consumption, income, etc.), but could also be defined in terms of wider or subjective aspects of deprivation.

This is different from the transitorily poor, who move in and out of poverty, or only occasionally fall below the poverty line.

Background Paper for the Chronic
Poverty Report 2008-09

Implementing Policies for Chronic Poverty in Ethiopia

Taylor Brown

Amdissa Teshome

CPRC and ODI

2007

www.chronicpoverty.org

The research for this Background Paper was made possible by CPRC core funding from the United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DFID).



Table of Contents

Index of Boxes.....	ii
Acknowledgements	ii
Introduction	1
1 Ethiopia's chronic poor	2
1.1 Quantifying chronic poverty in Ethiopia	2
1.2 Who are the chronic poor?	5
1.3 Vulnerability and chronic poverty.....	7
1.4 The Geography of chronic poverty in Ethiopia	7
1.5 Trends in chronic poverty	10
2 Policy making and implementation	11
2.1 Ideology, politics and policy making	12
3 Ethiopia's PRSPs and chronic poverty focused policies.....	16
3.1 The SDPRP process	16
3.2 The PASDEP process	17
3.3 SDPRP policies for addressing chronic poverty	18
4 Food security.....	22
4.1 The PSNP.....	22
4.1.1 Capacity.....	25
4.1.2 Timelines of transfers and donor funding	25
4.1.3 Ideologies of 'graduation' and 'dependency'.....	26
4.1.4 Public works.....	27
4.2 Resettlement	28
4.3 Other Food Security Programmes.....	30
4.3.1 Household packages	31
4.3.2 Credit.....	31
4.3.3 Agricultural inputs	32
4.4 Conclusions about the Food Security Programme and chronic poverty...33	
5 Education policy and chronic poverty	34
5.1 Chronic poverty and education.....	34
5.2 Education policies and programmes and chronic poverty	35
5.2.1 School feeding programmes.....	36
5.2.2 Alternative Basic Education.....	37
5.2.3 Satellite schools and multi-grade classrooms.....	38
5.2.4 Girls' advisory committees.....	39
5.3 Implementation and impact	39
6 Lessons and recommendations	44
References.....	49
Annex 1: People Met.....	1

Index of Tables



Table 1: Poverty episodes 1994 to 2004 (based on 5 rounds)	3
Table 2: Chronic Vulnerability Indicators (WFP)	8
Table 3: Comparison of Ethiopia's two PRS processes	18
Table 4: Food security and education policies/strategies related to chronic poverty	21
Table 5: Mean yield of major cereals when using inorganic fertilizers (EEA/EPRI, 2006)	32
Table 6: Mean yield of major cereals when using improved seeds (EEA/EPRI, 2006)	33

Index of Figures

Figure 1: Number of PSNP beneficiaries by Region (PSNP Project Implementation Manual, 2006)	4
Figure 2: The PSNP's targeting of the chronically poor (Source: Devereux, Mulugeta Tefera et al 2006)	23
Figure 3: Billboard in Amhara campaigning against dependency	27
Figure 4: Educational attainment by wealth group and gender, 15-19 year olds, 2000 (from Filmer in Rose 2003)	34
Figure 5: School enrollments in historical perspective (World Bank 2005)	40
Figure 6: Regional differences in Gross Enrollment Rates	42

Index of Boxes

Box 1: Indicators for chronic poverty in Ethiopia	2
Box 2: Local conceptions of chronic poverty	5
Box 3: Steps in making Water Resource Management Policy	11
Box 4: Policy Makers and Influencers	14
Box 5: Other SDPRP policies and programmes linked to chronic poverty	20
Box 6: The impact of the PSNP in the words of beneficiaries	24
Box 7: 'Dependency' and the Safety Net	26
Box 8: Coordination problems in education programmes targeting chronic poverty .	42



Acronyms

CPR	Chronic Poverty Report
CSA	Central Statistics Agency
DFID	Department for International Development
ERHS	Ethiopian Rural Household Survey
ESDP	Educaiton Sector Development Program
EUHS	Ethiopian Urban Household Survey
JBAR	Joint Budget Aid Review
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoFED	Ministry of Finance and Economic Development
PANE	Poverty Action Network Ethiopia
PASDEP	Plan for Accelerated and Sustained Development to End Poverty
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
PSNP	Productive Safety Net Programme
SDPRP	Sustainable Development and Poverty Reduction Paper
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training

Acknowledgements

The research for this Background Paper was made possible by CPRC core funding from the United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DFID). The authors thank DFID for permission to use these findings in this report, but stress that the findings do not necessarily reflect the views of DFID.

Authors

Taylor Brown, Development Consultant, The IDL Group Ltd, Bristol, UK

Email: Taylor.Brown@theidlgroup.com

Amdissa Teshome, A-Z Capacity Building Consultant, Addis Abbaba, Ethiopia.

Email: azconsult@ethionet.et

Introduction

This study explores the implementation of policies that respond to chronic poverty in Ethiopia. It demonstrates that Ethiopia's two PRSPs contain a range of policies which are either inclusive of the poorest or are specifically targeted at addressing the roots of chronic poverty and ameliorating its symptoms. On the whole, the study finds that the government has committed its resources and political will to the implementation of these policies. This commitment has resulted in some significant improvements in access to services for chronically poor groups, and greater social protection for chronically food insecure people in rural areas. The study, however, shows that a range of factors limit the chronic poverty impact of some policies and programmes. These limiting factors include: capacity and resource constraints at all levels; poor sectoral, policy and programme linkages; political and ideological factors; and limited accountability and substantive responsiveness to the voices of chronically poor citizens.

The study is structured as follows. Section 2 examines chronic poverty in Ethiopia. It attempts to quantify and characterise the chronic poor, to explore where they live and to understand what makes them vulnerable to long term destitution. Section 3 examines the processes of policy making and implementation in Ethiopia. In particular, it highlights the political and ideological dimensions of policy formation, the key actors involved in shaping and implementing policies, and the capacity constraints that can limit impact on the ground. Section 4 explores Ethiopia's PRS process. Specifically it compares the country's two PRSPs: the Sustainable Development Poverty Reduction Programme (SDPRP) implemented and the Plan for Accelerated and Sustained Development to End Poverty (PASDEP). It then focuses on the implementation of the SDPRP which was completed in 2005. The report then examines two key policy areas that were central to the SDPRP and have a direct bearing on chronic poverty in Ethiopia: food security and education. The implementation and impact of both of these policies and their constituent programmes are then explored in detail. The final section of the report explores the implications of the report's analysis for Ethiopia's PRS process.

Fieldwork for this study was carried out in October and November, 2006. Interviews were carried out with a wide range of observers, analysts and stakeholders in government, the donor community, civil society and academia (see list of interviews in Annex 1). In addition, field interviews and community discussions were held in Wonchi Woreda (Oromiya Region) and Libo Kemkem Woreda (Amhara Region). The study also builds on research the two authors carried out for the UK Department for International Development (DFID) as part of a review team for the Productive Safety Net Programme in mid-2006.



1 Ethiopia's chronic poor

'Chronically poor people are those who experience deprivation over many years, often over their entire lives, and who sometimes pass poverty on to their children' (CPR 2004). Who is chronically poor in Ethiopia? Where do they live? And what constraints and vulnerabilities keep them poor year after year? This section briefly explores these questions to provide a portrait of chronic poverty in Ethiopia.

Drawing on a number of recent studies and data sets, it is possible to gain a broad sense of what characterises and drives chronic poverty in Ethiopia. By triangulating this evidence, we can also gain a broad sense of the scale of chronic poverty in Ethiopia. It is more difficult, however, to gain a precise estimate of the number of chronically poor Ethiopians since each of these studies and datasets has its own limitations.

In 2000, according to the Poverty Assessment for Ethiopia, '42.2 percent of the population lived below the national poverty line, while **22.5 percent of households were extremely poor** and lived below the food poverty line of 1650 kcals per person per day'(World Bank 2006).While this percentage indicates the scale of severe poverty in Ethiopia, it does not capture its persistence.

1.1 Quantifying chronic poverty in Ethiopia

Box 1: Indicators for chronic poverty in Ethiopia

Total population, 2003 (million)	73.8
Percentage of people living below the national poverty line, 1999/2000	42.2
Percent of extremely poor households living below the food poverty line of 1650 kcals per person per day, 1999/2000	22.5
Under-five mortality rate (per 1,000 live births), 2003	169
Infant mortality rate (per 1000 live births), 2002	112
Maternal mortality rate (per 100,000 births) 2000/2001	500-700
Proportion of stunted children	51.2
Life expectancy at birth, 2003	47.6
Adult literacy rate 2003	41.5
Real GDP per capita US\$, 2003	97
Percentage of population with access to sanitation, 2000	15



Percentage of population with access to safe water, 2002	22
HDI Rank	170/177

Sources: HDR 2006, World Bank 2006 and SDPRP 2002

Two sets of **panel data**, one rural and one urban, provide a more chronological sense of the number of Ethiopians living in chronic poverty. The Ethiopian Urban Household Surveys (EUHS) provide panel data on 1500 households between 1994 and 1997. Based on real total household monthly expenditure, this survey found that **25.9 percent of urban households** surveyed were poor in all years of the survey (Kedir and McKay 2003).

The Ethiopian Rural Household Survey (ERHS) is a panel data set covering 1477 households in 15 kebeles.¹ These households were surveyed six times between 1994 and 2004. Looking at poverty in terms of consumption, the survey has been able to track the trajectory of the sample households over the course of a decade. Of these households, **21 percent remained poor throughout the decade** and were therefore chronically poor (see table 1)(Dercon et al 2006). While both the EUHS and the ERHS are revealing of the duration and depth of poverty, they cannot be extrapolated to Ethiopia as a whole, as neither survey is nationally representative.

Table 1: Poverty episodes 1994 to 2004 (based on 5 rounds)

	Percentage of households
Never Poor	17
Poor once	22
Poor in 2 out of 5 rounds	23
Poor in 3 out of 5 rounds	17
Poor in 4 out of 5 rounds	14
Poor in all rounds	7

Source: Dercon et al 2006: 15

A proxy indicator of the number of chronically poor Ethiopians is the number of households with severely stunted children whose mothers do not have any education. Based on data from the Central Statistics Agency, **26.4 percent of Ethiopian children** (aged 6 to 59 months) fit this description (CSA 2006).

Chronic poverty in Ethiopia, particularly in rural areas often cannot be separated from **chronic food insecurity**. Many rural Ethiopians are food insecure at one time or

¹ A kebele is the lowest level of administration in Ethiopia, usually covering a few villages.

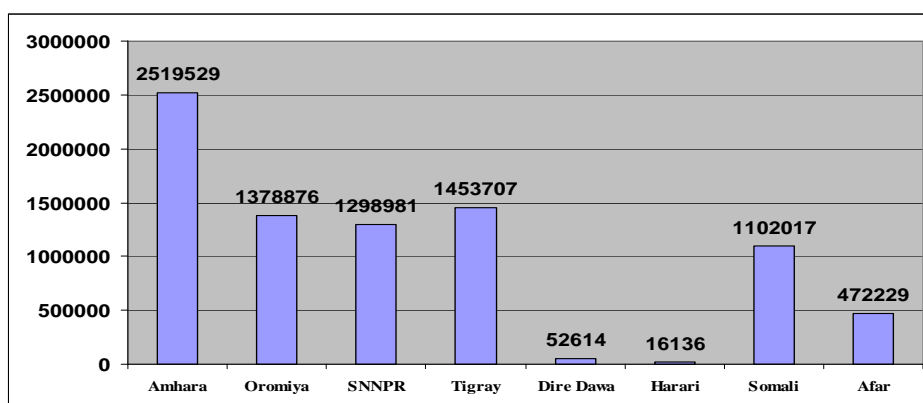


another. When the rains fail, as they periodically do, even relatively well endowed households may face short-term shortages. A significant number of Ethiopians, however, are chronically food insecure; they are always or usually unable to access enough food for an active, healthy life—even in the absence of shocks. Every year for the past two decades, the Government has had to appeal to the international community for food aid. Since 2000, between five and 14 million rural Ethiopians have needed emergency relief out of a total estimated population of 73.8 million (UNDP: 2006).

There is, however, no precise estimate of chronically food insecure Ethiopians. The key programme for providing support to chronically food insecure households, the Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP)—to be explored below—provides resources to 8.3 million chronically food insecure rural Ethiopians. This amounts to 13 percent of Ethiopia’s population. The government considers this to be the official number of chronically food insecure individuals

Despite its scale, however, the PSNP does not reach all chronically food insecure households. The programme is only now being extended into the pastoralist regions of Afar and Somali and does not extend to Gambela, Benshangul or urban areas (including Addis Ababa). Moreover, the programme only provides assistance to those woredas (districts) with a long history of relief. As a result, those who are chronically food insecure but who live in the regions, woredas or kebeles that have not received significant assistance in the past are not included in the PSNP. Moreover, in many PSNP woredas there is a significant exclusion error in which the resources available for the programme are inadequate to cover all food insecure households (see Sharp, Brown and Teshome 2006). Overall then, the number of chronically food insecure households is undoubtedly higher than the number of PSNP beneficiaries *and* the official figure of chronically food insecure people is too low.

Figure 1: Number of PSNP beneficiaries by Region (PSNP Project Implementation Manual, 2006)



In sum, the data does not exist to provide an accurate estimate of the number of chronically poor Ethiopians. However, based on **available evidence it is plausible to estimate that between a fifth and a quarter of Ethiopians** (between 15 and 18



million people) **are chronically poor**. The great majority of these chronically poor are in rural areas. However, unlike much of the developing world, the percentage of chronically poor in urban areas does not appear to be markedly different to that in rural areas (Kedir and McKay 2003).

1.2 Who are the chronic poor?

Ethiopia is an extremely diverse country and the causes and characteristics of poverty reflect this diversity. Nonetheless, Ethiopia's chronic poor tend to share a number of characteristics and are trapped in poverty by a similar range of structural constraints. In Ethiopia poverty is pervasive, deep-rooted, and multi-faceted. The chronic poor in Ethiopia lack the capabilities and assets to meet their daily needs and to escape from poverty. They lack the financial, human, natural, physical, social and natural assets from which they can build a sustainable livelihood.

In **rural areas**, the chronic poor tend to be landless or farm little land—across Ethiopia, the per capita area of cultivated land has fallen from 0.5 ha in the 1960s to only 0.11 ha in 1999 (World Bank, 2005). They also possess few animals and (as noted above) are fundamentally food insecure. The Ethiopian Participatory Poverty Assessment (PPA) found that the:

'worse off poor' were identified by non-ownership of cattle, oxen or pack animals; their livestock, if any, being limited to 1-2 sheep or goats and a few chickens. The rough average of food security for this group came out at 3 months, although many of the PPA reports stated zero against this indicator. This links closely to land, which was also often stated as zero for this group. Finally, this group is characterised by sharecropping-out what little land they own, and by hiring-out rather than hiring-in labour.(Ellis and Woldehanna 2005: xvii)

The chronic poor in rural areas also tend to have little or no formal education and are socially and politically marginalised.

Asset and capability deprivation also lies at the heart of **urban chronic poverty**. Whereas access to land and livestock are the primary constraints on rural livelihoods, in urban areas it is the lack of education and skills and the inability to access credit or savings with which to start or maintain employment enterprises that are critical constraints to escaping from chronic poverty.

Box 2: Local conceptions of chronic poverty



Meskin: 'the poor, destitute' (Amharic)

Geltu/Kittikusi (Oromiffa): 'The poorest of the poor (chronically food insecure)'

Yetefenakele/lemagn (Amharic): 'A person who doesn't have any roots': they have no material assets, have no social voice, and no power' displaced and became beggar

Yata yeneta yegeteta (Amharic): 'white poor': white is clean, meaning they have nothing.

Cherso deha (Amharic): 'absolutely / completely poor'

Ye mecheresha deha (Amharic): 'the completely poor' there is no body poorer

minim yelalew (Amharic): 'those who have nothing'

Tsom-adari (Amharic): 'those who pass the night fasting/ go to bed hungry'

Wuha anfari (Amharic): 'those who cook water'

(Terms drawn from interviews and from Sharp, Devereux et al, 2003)

In both rural and urban areas, chronic poor households often have **high dependency ratios**; there are few able bodied adults in proportion to children and other dependents. In urban areas, Kedir and McKay, for instance, found that 'chronically poor households are more likely to be large, and likely to have more children in them compared to households that are only sometimes poor' (Kedir and McKay 2003).

The social groups who are most likely to be chronically poor in rural areas of Ethiopia are: the landless, female headed households, the elderly, the disabled, the chronically ill, and pastoralists. In urban areas, the chronically poor are likely to be elderly or young, squatters, and those who are chronically ill or disabled (including people living with HIV/AIDS).

In most parts of Ethiopia, there is little to separate the chronic poor from the coping poor and even the better off. It is often said that Ethiopia is an equal, but equally poor society. The evidence bears this out. The Gini coefficient for Ethiopia is estimated to be 0.272 (1999), whereas in most African countries the Gini coefficient exceeds 0.450. As the PPA highlights: 'When 3-4 hectares is considered a generous farm size and 4 oxen or 2 donkeys makes you a rich person, then inequality is hardly the most pressing problem the society confronts' (Ellis and Woldehanna 2005: xviii).

Many rural Ethiopians cycle around the poverty line, moving in and out of poverty and food insecurity during the course of a year. With so many households cycling around the cusp of severe poverty, a shock is often all it takes to push them into chronic poverty. These households, while not currently chronically poor are continually at risk of becoming so.



1.3 Vulnerability and chronic poverty

Livelihoods in Ethiopia are particularly vulnerable to shocks and **Ethiopia is a shock prone country**. Most of Ethiopia is subject to periodic and severe droughts (there were 15 droughts between 1978 and 1998 alone), debilitating illnesses are pervasive and internal and trans-national conflicts continue to threaten livelihoods. These shocks reinforce chronic poverty by undermining what little resilience and assets poor households possess. They also tend to drag new households into chronic poverty.

Shocks have a lasting effect on a household's economic prospects. Experiencing a drought at least once in the previous five years lowers per capita consumption by about 20 percent and experiencing an illness reduces per capita consumption by nine percent (Dercon, Hoddinott et al. 2005). The impact of these shocks is particularly profound and long lasting for households which are already chronically poor. Household heads who are female and/or lack a formal education and households with less than average land holdings 'all report a much bigger impact of drought shocks experience at least once in the last five years on current levels of consumption' (*ibid.*).

'If you lose one June, you loose the next seven' (if you fail to plant, you suffer the consequences for the next seven years) – Tigrayan proverb.

1.4 The Geography of chronic poverty in Ethiopia

The chronic poor are found throughout Ethiopia. There are, however, particular parts of the country in which there is a greater concentration of chronic poverty.

Although rural poverty dominates the headlines and only 15 percent of Ethiopians live in cities, there is **significant urban chronic poverty in Ethiopia**. Addis Ababa in particular has a high incidence of chronic poverty with up to 750,000 of Addis Ababa's nearly three million residents estimated to be chronically poor. Dire Dawa also has a high proportion of chronically poor households (Kedir and McKay 2003).

In rural areas concentrations of chronic poverty are found in highly populous, drought prone areas in which average land holdings are especially low and food insecurity is a perpetual problem. Roughly these areas include the highlands of Tigray and Amhara, the lowlands of SNNP and parts of Oromiya (e.g. East and West Hararge). There are also significant pockets of chronic poverty in the more peripheral and thinly populated regions of Gambela and Benshangul-Gumuz and arid pastoralist areas (i.e. Afar and Somali Regions).

The Ethiopian government began to distinguish between the chronic and transitory food insecure with the launch of the Coalition for Food Security in 2003. The Coalition determined that the chronically food insecure are found in eight regions and 262 woredas of the country. These are areas that have been affected by recurrent drought over the decade, are unable to produce or have access to enough food, and as a result have had to rely on emergency relief even in time of good rains. These are the areas that have been targeted by the Food Security Programme (FSP) and the PSNP (see Figure 1).



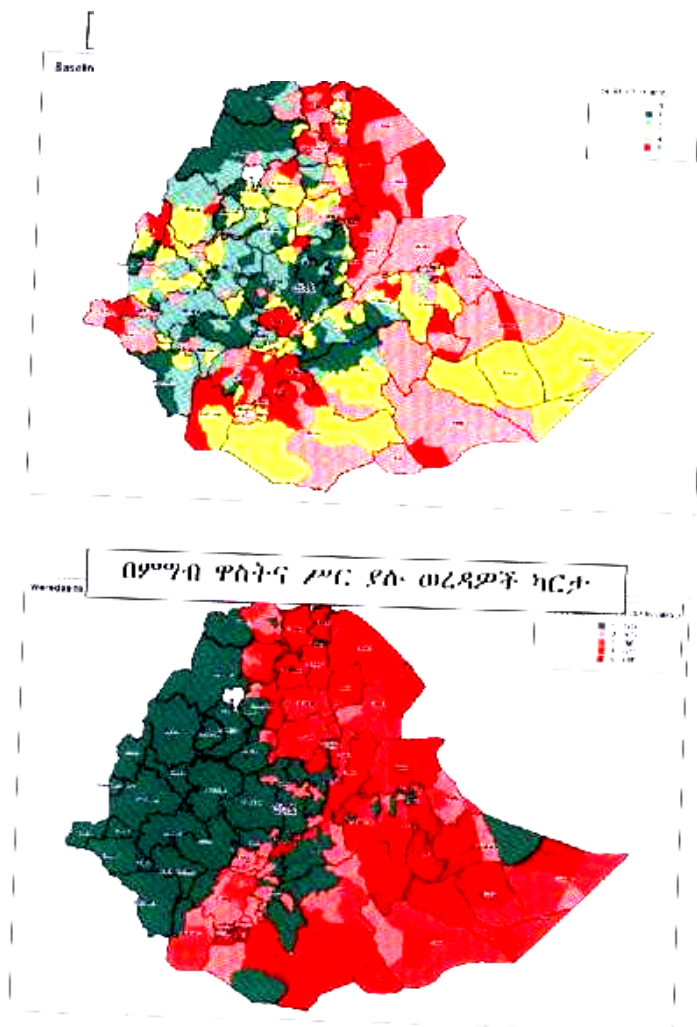
As highlighted above, however, there are significant numbers of chronically poor households that do not live in drought prone areas. To gain a more accurate sense of the geography of chronic poverty and vulnerability in Ethiopia, WFP has developed a set of Chronic Vulnerability Indicators. These indicators have been revised several times. Table 2 gives both the early indicators and the latest revised indicators.

Table 2: Chronic Vulnerability Indicators (WFP)

First round, vulnerability indicators	Improved vulnerability indicators
Rapid population growth	Individual per capita production over a number of years
Reduced access to land at household level	Livestock asset by individual
Soil degradation and loss of soil fertility	Access to clean water at woreda level
Reduction in yield per hectare	Population density at woreda level
Civil conflict and war	Yearly variation in crop production
Inadequate infrastructure such as roads	Vulnerability to malaria at woreda level



Figure 1: Vulnerable wordas vs. wordas under food security (WFP, 2006)





WFP used these indicators to rank 485 woredas on a scale of 1-5.² Based on this ranking WFP produced a baseline map in 2003 and another map in 2006. The top half of Figure 1 shows the map of chronically vulnerable areas. The most vulnerable woredas are red, moderately vulnerable woredas are pink and yellow, while the least vulnerable are green. The bottom half of Figure 1 shows those woredas under the Food Security Programme (i.e. those woredas officially classified as chronically food insecure). A comparison of the two maps reveals significant overlap between vulnerability and areas covered by the FSP, but also vulnerable pockets in the west of the country that are excluded from the FSP.

1.5 Trends in chronic poverty

It is unclear whether the numbers of chronically poor in Ethiopia are increasing or decreasing. At an aggregate level, there appears to have been little or no decline in overall poverty incidence in Ethiopia since 1992 (World Bank 2005). The same assessment reveals that while rural poverty has perhaps declined by one or two percentage points, urban poverty has increased in recent years.

Changes to the numbers of chronic poor are harder to assess. Ministry of Finance and Economic Development (MoFED) officials interviewed for this study report that on aggregate, the severity of poverty in Ethiopia has lessened in recent years (based on their initial assessments of the poverty incidence and squared poverty gap from the forthcoming Welfare Monitoring Survey). Other evidence, however, indicates that chronic poverty has recently increased, at least in parts of Ethiopia. A detailed study of highland areas of Amhara indicates that the number of households that identified themselves as destitute or vulnerable has grown substantially in the past 15 years. In 2002, 14.6 percent of respondents considered themselves destitute, up from 5.5 percent in 1992 while those who identified themselves as vulnerable to destitution increased from 17 percent in 1992 to 55 percent a decade later (Sharp, Devereux et al. 2003).

² 1= excellent condition; 2=good condition; 3 = medium; 4 = bad conditions; and 5=very bad condition.



2 Policy making and implementation

How is public policy in Ethiopia made? How is it implemented? This section addresses these questions and sets the stage for an analysis of the PRS process and the implementation of specific policies addressing chronic poverty.

Overall, **policy formation and implementation in Ethiopia is shaped by the ideology and political strategy** of the ruling EPRDF party, the **political and logistical realities of governing** such a large and diverse country, the **influence of key actors** (including the international community), and **capacity constraints** at all levels of government.

According to government guidelines, policy making in Ethiopia is a systematic, technocratic, consultative, and evidence based process:

- Problems are identified;
- Evidence and analysis of these problems is amassed;
- Priorities are set based on this evidence and draft policies are formulated;
- Key stakeholders (including regional decision makers) are then consulted to test their appropriateness and workability of proposed policy;
- The policy is then reviewed and reformulated; and
- The policy is implemented.

Box 3: Steps in making Water Resource Management Policy

1. Commissioned technical papers on the water sector as part of the problem analysis/diagnosis
2. Federal and Regional authorities reviewed the technical papers;
3. A taskforce formed to draft the policy
4. Federal and Regional authorities reviewed the draft policy
5. The Water Resource Management Policy finalised and submitted to the Council of Ministers
6. The Council of Ministers approved and issued the policy
7. Water sector strategies and programmes developed to operationalise the policy
8. Programme Implementation Manual Prepared
9. Monitoring and evaluation framework developed.

In interviews, administrators at the federal and regional levels were able to recite each of these steps in order, indicating the consultative nature of policy making in this sector.

(From Teshome in Sharp, Devereux, et al, 2003)



In some cases, policy making has roughly followed this systematic and consultative process, as the outline of the formation of the Water Resource Management Policy in Box 3 shows. Often, **however, policy making in Ethiopia is less systematic, less consultative and more top down.** The formation of the Education Policy, for instance, has been criticised by outside observers and local administrators as lacking consultation with key stakeholders—teachers, students and parents. As will also be seen below, both PRS processes have largely been driven from above with limited consultation.

2.1 Ideology, politics and policy making

To understand policy making and implementation in Ethiopia, it is crucial to understand the **role and ideology of the ruling party, the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF)**. The EPRDF, its cadres and ideas are intertwined with government structures and policies at all levels of the state.³ The EPRDF's ideology is rooted in its military history, Marxist-Leninism, and its experience of mass mobilisation in resistance to the Dergue. As a result the EPRDF's preferred conception of democracy has not been the liberal bourgeois variety, based on individual participation, a diversity of interests and views, and plural representation. Rather 'revolutionary' democracy is based on communal collective participation, based on consensus forged through discussion led by the vanguard organisation. (Vaughn and Tronvoll:15)

From this perspective, the government views most of the rural populous as an undifferentiated peasantry 'with common needs, interests and political outlooks'. Intra-community debate occurs among this peasantry, but 'participation in these "mass terms" ...makes pluralism irrelevant [and] once consensus is achieved...the community speaks with one voice' (Vaughan and Tronvoll 2001: 117).

These ideological foundations shape how the party and hence the state tends to view participation and consultation. They also help to explain the rural bias of many policies, and the campaigning approach taken to their implementation.

Ethiopia has a decentralised, federal system of government and the ruling party sees **participation** as the cornerstone of good governance. However, the form that participation takes in Ethiopia often more directive and top-down than genuinely participatory. As a result, the **policy making process remains top down and directive**; Key policies tend to be formed at the very heart of government by the Prime Minister, Deputy Prime Minister and leading figures in the EPRDF (see Box 4 below). These policies then tend to be presented to stakeholders at the national and regional level for confirmation rather than genuine consultation; they are seldom modified once presented. The PRSP processes described below exemplify this

³ The fall out from highly contested and controversial 2005 elections may be changing some of these political dynamics, however, the role of the party, priorities and the ways in which decisions have been made and implemented has not changed significantly.



tendency. There is also a tendency to roll out policies all at once rather than to pilot them. The Safety Net programme, for instance, was introduced simultaneously across four regions and over seven million beneficiaries.

Throughout its history, the **EPRDF leadership has seen the rural poor as its primary political constituency** and viewed its central purpose as bringing development to the countryside. Key government policies and programmes have therefore often had a **strong rural bias**. The SDPRP, for instance, has an overriding rural development focus and the education and Safety Net programmes (discussed below) are focused almost exclusively on rural areas.⁴ The ideological focus on equity and the mass of poor rural Ethiopians has periodically been tempered by a more strategic alignment with what are seen as more entrepreneurial middle and wealthier peasants. This tension is still visible in the targeting of less poor households for inclusion in the Safety Net Programme in Amhara during 2005.

To push its development agenda, the government often pursues a '**campaign approach**' to implementing policies and programmes. This tendency partially stems from the perceived effectiveness of past mass mobilisation efforts and the belief that the state (and party) at all levels should act as a vanguard for development. Regional, woreda and kebele officials interviewed for this research repeatedly stated that one of their key duties was to mobilise poor people and to change their mindset and attitudes. During these campaigns local administrators are expected to focus their energy and resources on making the campaign a success, sometimes at the expense of their other responsibilities. **Targets** (or quotas) are often set by the federal or regional level for local administrators to achieve, often regardless of local administrative capacity or the willingness of communities to contribute. The state also spearheads mass education/training campaigns to change attitudes and local practices. The campaign to combat 'dependency', (discussed below in section 5.13) exemplifies this approach as do recent plasma television trainings of farmers and teachers in woreda centres.

A similar campaigning approach has been applied to civil service reform. During the course of the SDPRP, the civil service became a testing ground for various types of management reforms (e.g. results-based management and system engineering/re-engineering) with a view to make the civil service client oriented, efficient and cost effective. The civil service was constantly restructured to the extent that it almost became unstable.⁵ A series of staff evaluations known as *gimgema*, in particular

⁴ There are recent signs that the government is focusing more of its attention on urban areas. The latest PRSP, the PASDEP, gives greater attention to urban areas and businesses as drivers of development. The outcomes of 2006 elections in which the EPRDF fared poorly in urban areas may also be prompting a rethink.

⁵ The Head of the Civil Service Commission for Oromiya recently criticized the way in which result-based program was implemented and identified factors that limited its effectiveness and impact (see The Reporter July 2006 – Amharic).



have been used to enforce political compliance and has eroded moral in the civil service.⁶

Box 4: Policy Makers and Influencers

Policy Makers

The **Prime Minister (PM), on behalf of the Council of Ministers**, is the locus of policy implementation. Article 74:3&5 of the Constitution states 'he shall follow up and ensure the implantation of laws, policies, directives and other decisions adopted by the House of Peoples' Representatives'. In practice, however, the PM, his key cabinet members and leading officials within the ruling party take the initiative in the making of major policies. As Chief Executive, the PM is also the ultimate focal point of many of the lobbying efforts by policy influencers (i.e. bilateral and multilateral donors).

The **Deputy Prime Minister (DPM)**, who is also the Minister for Agriculture and Rural Development, is believed to be highly influential in the policy making and approval process particularly in the design and implementation of the Productive Safety Net Programme(PSNP).

Both the PM and the DPM have **Chief Economic Advisors** that provide them with strategic, political, and economic advice. There is much speculation that the PM also relies on his **staff at the PM's Office** as both a sounding board for and a source of policies and political strategies. These staffs are carefully selected for trustworthiness and also may be moved to sensitive positions such as the Electoral Board as and when required.

According to the Ethiopian Constitution (Article 55:10), the **House of People's Representatives**, (HPR) "shall approve general policies and strategies of economic, social and development, and fiscal and monetary policy of the country ...". This confirms the general view that Parliament seldom initiates legislation. Instead its role is largely confined to 'rubber stamping', modifying, or occasionally delaying legislation handed down to it from the executive.

Among the Cabinet members, the Ministers of **Capacity Building** and **Finance and Economic Development** (MoFED) are considered very powerful. The latter is the focal institution for the national policy process such as the PRSP and the former is the focal institution for the implementation of all government reform programmes. With increasing role played by MoFED, the role of the other **Cabinet ministers** (e.g. Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development- MoARD) in the policy making process has diminished in recent years. They are leaders in the implementation of sectoral policies within and perhaps act as a conduit for policy ideas from outside government.

Ethiopia has adopted a Federal system of administration in which regional autonomy is the underlying principle. This has been enhanced by the government's commitment to the process of **decentralisation**. However, in practice, each region adopts (rarely adapts) the policies and strategies initiated at federal level.

Policy Influencers

Some commentators have observed that the Ethiopian policy debates are often vigorous and passionate but they are often limited to a narrow pre-determined agenda (Devereux, et. al., 2005). Under these conditions, influencing the policy process and outcome in Ethiopia is by no means straightforward. The government has a stronghold over the policy process and virtually claims ownership of the outcome. However, a range of non-government actors also attempt to influence policy, either as individuals or as elements of civil society, the private sector, the international financial institutions, or the donor community.

⁶ Gimgema is a public meeting of employees of a given government office with the sole objective of finding faults (often of a rudimentary/routine nature). The accusations are often put forward by subordinates to humiliate a superior. The consequences of such gimgema range from reduced position and salary to dismissal.



International actors—particularly the **World Bank**, the **IMF** and **bilateral** donors—exercise influence on the Ethiopian policy making. The SDPRP is an example of a process in which the government was ‘forced’ to repackage its existing poverty oriented policies to meet the requirements of the financial institutions. Nevertheless, the government’s latitude for independent policy making at both macro and sectoral levels is not as distorted by donor pressures as it is in many other African countries.

Bilateral donors and **UN** agencies are also active in their attempts to influence policies through the **Development Assistant Group** (DAG) that is in regular contact with the government on the policy process particularly the PRSP process.

NGOs and Civil society organisations in Ethiopia have grown substantially since the end of the Dergue regime. However, they have an uneasy relationship with the government. The lengthy registration process and the stringent regulations under which they operate have put considerable limitations on their role as policy influencers. However, networks of NGOs and Civil Societies such as CRDA and PANE have played a role in the preparation and monitoring of the SDPRP and more recently PASDEP. Following the 2005 General Election, there is a sense within much of government that civil society is its opponent rather than its partner in development.

The **Private sector** in Ethiopia is at its infancy and its role as policy influencer is rather limited. The exception is the **Chamber of Commerce** which has had some success in lobbying for an improved enabling environment for business. **Labour Unions (including Farmer Associations)** have a weak history of influencing policy in Ethiopia. Under both the Dergue and EPRDF, the farmer associations and labour unions remain policy implementers rather than influencers.



3 Ethiopia's PRSPs and chronic poverty focused policies

Ethiopia has developed two PRSPs (the SDPRP and the PASDEP) and has completed the implementation of the SDPRP. This section briefly compares both PRS processes. It then focuses on the content and chronic poverty focus of the SDPRP.

3.1 The SDPRP process

The first PRSP, the SDPRP was launched in 2002. As in other countries, the impetus for the PRS came from the World Bank, the IMF and bi-lateral donors, as a condition for debt relief.⁷ However, the Ethiopian government has embraced the PRS process as a way to build on and integrate its existing programmes and strategies into a more comprehensive planning framework. As the IMF/World Bank's Joint Staff Assessment notes, the PRS is 'established as the framework for policy formulation and has accelerated the shift toward a more strategic focus on poverty-reducing policies, and is increasingly forming the basis for harmonised donor support'(IMF and IDA 2004: 8).

As was highlighted above, most policy making in Ethiopia is top-down rather than substantively consultative. By Ethiopian standards, however, the SDPRP entailed unprecedented discussions.⁸ Meetings were held with stakeholders at the federal and regional levels and in 116 woredas. A broad range of individuals (including the chronic poor) were involved in the woreda level discussions.

The degree to which these discussions were genuinely consultative, however, is questionable. The consultation exercise occurred in the final phases of PRSP preparation, only after the SDPRP had been drafted. As a result there was little scope for new perspectives to be integrated into the final document. According to the SDPRP itself, the consultation exercises served only to *confirm* 'the broad development strategy, sectoral and cross sectoral priority actions followed by the government' (MoFED 2002: 31).

Some civil society organisations attended federal, regional and local consultations and provided written comments on the draft SDPRP.⁹ These organisations claim that their engagement helped to strengthen the food security and HIV/AIDS content of the SDPRP. However, civil society's overall influence on the content of the PRSP was

⁷ The Ethiopian Economic Association (EEA) and the Forum for Social Studies (FSS) also lobbied for the government to adopt a PRS approach in the time leading up to the SDPRP.

⁸ For a more detailed review of the first PRSP process in Ethiopia, see Amdissa Teshome, in Sharp, Devereux, et al. (2003).

⁹ CRDA, an umbrella organization for NGOs and CSOs, for instance, commissioned a study and published a comprehensive document: *NGO Perspective on PRSP in Ethiopia*.



limited. There were no civil society members of either the PRSP's Steering Committee or the Technical Committee (Bijlmakers 2003).

3.2 The PASDEP process

The drafting of Ethiopia's second PRSP, PASDEP, began in mid 2005 with a series of consultative meetings in each of Ethiopia's regions. These meetings aimed to review the performance of the SDPRP and to identify priorities for PASDEP. Similar meetings were undertaken within each line Ministry. At the same time, civil society organisations (spearheaded by the Poverty Action Network, PANE), including the private sector were invited to raise issues and priorities for the new PRSP in writing.

Holding these meetings at an early stage in the drafting process indicated that the PASDEP process might be significantly more consultative than SDPRP. However, the fraught **2005 elections fundamentally disrupted the consultation process** by polarising government-civil society relations and turning the regional consultations into what one well-placed observer termed: 'political events aimed at testing lines of accountability and [exposing] criticism'. Consultations never went beyond the region to the woreda as they had under SDPRP. As one government official explained: 'because the elections aired issues, we did not feel that there was a need for consultation.'

Partially as a result of this, the **PASDEP is fundamentally a desktop policy** document, with considerable use of secondary data largely from government sources, namely

- The MDG needs assessment (MoFED, 2005a);
- The findings of Participatory Poverty Assessment (PPA) (Ellis and Woldehanna, 2005);
- The Welfare Monitoring Survey (MoFED, 2005b); and
- The Household Income and Expenditure Survey (Central Statistical Agency CSA, 2006).

Technically speaking, PASDEP is a much better document than SDPRP. Its pillars are more focused and give the impression that the government has been listening to some of its critics. Unlike the SDPRP, a major emphasis is placed on economic growth to be achieved mainly through greater commercialisation of agriculture and a strong push from the private sector. In line with international PRSP processes, the PASDEP endorses the scaling-up of efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The final version of PASDEP was approved by Parliament in May 2006, but as of December 2006 had not been circulated to the IMF and World Bank.

Table 3 provides a comparison of the two PRSP processes and their pillars.



Table 3: Comparison of Ethiopia’s two PRS processes

	SDPRP	PASDEP
PRSP Content	<p>Focus on agriculture and rural development and public sector reform and capacity building</p> <p>Explicitly pro-poor and rural in focus.</p> <p>SDPRP Pillars:</p> <p>Agricultural Development Led Industrialization (ADLI)</p> <p>Civil service and justice system reform</p> <p>Governance, decentralization and empowerment</p> <p>Capacity building (including education)</p> <p>Food Security (added as a pillar in 2003)</p>	<p>Greater focus on growth and private sector development.</p> <p>Building on SDPRP in: agriculture and rural development, expanding education, health and HIV/AIDS, capacity building, decentralisation and food security programme.</p> <p>Greater attention to urban issues</p> <p>PASDEP Pillars</p> <p>A Massive Push to Accelerate Growth</p> <p>A Geographically Differentiated Strategy</p> <p>Addressing the Population Challenge</p> <p>Unleashing the Potential of Ethiopia’s Women</p> <p>Strengthening the Infrastructure Backbone</p> <p>Managing Risk and Volatility</p> <p>Scaling up to Reach the MDGs</p> <p>Creating Jobs</p>

3.3 SDPRP policies for addressing chronic poverty

At the start of the PRSP process, the government argued that since EPRDF came to power, it has been implementing policies and strategies that were ‘pro-poor’ and aimed at poverty reduction. Accordingly the opening line of the SDPRP states:

For some countries economic growth is the primary policy goal, and poverty reduction is to be achieved through measures complementary to growth. This is not the approach of the Ethiopian government. Poverty reduction is the core objective of the Ethiopian government. Economic growth is the principal, but not only means, to this objective. (MoFED 2002)

With this over-riding objective in mind, the SDPRP took existing policies and programmes and repackaged them in a way that targets the MDGs.

The SDPRP’s broad strategy is two fold: 1) to reduce poverty by stimulating rural growth through agriculture and rural development and 2) to strengthen public institutions to deliver services. The SDPRP has five pillars:

- i. Agricultural development-led industrialization (ADLI);
- ii. Justice system and civil service reform;



- iii. Decentralization and empowerment;
- iv. Capacity building in the public and private sectors; and
- v. Food security (added in the 2002/03).

ADLI, the principal pillar of SDPRP, has been the government's flagship policy since the early 1990s. ADLI is based on the assumption that in a capital scarce country like Ethiopia, labour intensive agriculture is the engine of growth and poverty reduction. Agricultural development is the first stage of a process that will ultimately lead to industrial development.

ADLI is a strategy in which agriculture and industry are brought into a single framework, wherein the development of agriculture is viewed as an important vehicle for industrialisation by providing raw material, a market base, surplus labour and capital accumulation. (MoFED 2002:13)

ADLI aims to improve the productivity and growth in the agricultural sector through increasing the use of fertiliser, improving access to better seed varieties, strengthening extension services, cooperatives and rural credit systems. It also seeks to stimulate the participation of the private sector in larger-scale agriculture, processing and other industries with an eye toward exports. (The content and implementation of Ethiopia's agricultural policy is explored in more detail in Annex 2).

Pillars (ii), (iii) and (iv) of the SDPRP were identified largely in recognition of the fact that public sector inefficiency was becoming a bottleneck to development efforts. The Ministry of Capacity Building was established to spearhead the reform.

Though explicitly focused on poverty reduction at an aggregate level, in its initial version the SDPRP makes little reference to chronic poverty or to specific groups of vulnerable people in Ethiopia. As Grant and Marcus (2006) note:

There is very little on vulnerable groups at all in the Ethiopian SDPRP: nothing in the poverty analysis section and only one sentence in the policy section referring to reforming traditional social safety nets to support groups such as street children, orphans and commercial sex workers. (2006: 25)

The addition of a fifth pillar on food security in 2003, however, placed chronically food insecure Ethiopians squarely into the SDPRP and a range of other policies and programmes contained in the SDPRP have a direct or indirect impact on the lives and livelihoods of chronically poor Ethiopians (see Box 5).



Box 5: Other SDPRP policies and programmes linked to chronic poverty

In addition to the Food Security Policy and Education a range of policies and programmes outlined in the SDPRP have a direct and indirect impact on the lives and livelihoods of Ethiopia's chronic poor. These include:

- Maintaining Macro-economic stability and growth through managing inflation and maintaining foreign exchange reserves;
- Encouraging the establishment of rural banks, savings and credit cooperatives, insurance firms, warehouses and micro-finance institutions;
- Remove any hindrances to the improved functioning of markets for agricultural inputs;
- Increase shares of public expenditure in education, health, agriculture, natural resource and roads sectors;
- Improving access to and quality of basic services (e.g. education and health care);
- Establish HIV/AIDS councils at regional, zonal and district levels;
- Encourage community participation in the process of social and economic development;
- Enhance decentralisation and democratisation process through capacity building at woreda levels toward poverty reduction and overall economic and social development; and
- Construct and improve various infrastructures such as markets, roads, drainages, sewerages systems and sanitation projects that increase accessibility in low-income settlements [In urban areas].

(Source MoFED 2002: 174-179)

The remainder of this study focuses on the implementation of policies and programmes in two sectors: **food security** and **education**. These two sectors have been selected because they illustrate policies that are aimed at mitigating those factors that keep people in chronic poverty and those that could facilitate their exit from it. They have also been selected because they present a mixed picture of implementation: highlighting both the constraints and openings for pro-chronic poor policy making in Ethiopia and elsewhere in the developing world.

Education—especially improving the access to and quality of primary education—features prominently in the SDPRP. Section 6 explore several policies and programmes aimed at improving the enrolment and retention of the most vulnerable and marginalised children: school feeding programmes, alternative basic education, satellite schools, multi-grade classroom, and girls' advisory committees.

The **Food Security Programme** (explored in section 5) directly targets chronically food insecure households. The programme incorporates those aspects of the



agriculture and rural development policy that are targeted to the chronically food insecure (including credit packages and agricultural extension)¹⁰; the resettlement programme; and the Productive Safety Nets Programme (PSNP). Of these, the PSNP receives particular attention.

For both of these sectors we explore the specific policies and programmes which could have an impact on chronic poverty; how they have been implemented in practice (including the political, logistical, resource drivers and constraints that have shaped implementation); and the impact that these interventions have had on the lives and livelihoods of chronically poor Ethiopians.

Table 4: Food security and education policies/strategies related to chronic poverty

Policy Area	Overall policy and policies and programmes aimed at chronic poverty reduction
Food Security	<u>Food Security Programme (Food Security Policy, 2002)</u> Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP) Resettlement Programme 'Other Food Security Programmes' (including household packages and non-farm income generation schemes)
Education	<u>Education Sector Development Programme II (ESDPII)</u> School feeding programmes Alternative Basic Education Satellite Schools Multi grade classrooms Girl Students Advisory Committees

¹⁰ A more detailed analysis of agricultural policy in Ethiopia is presented in Annex One.



4 Food security

Chronic poverty in Ethiopia is often correlated to chronic food insecurity. Each year for the past decade the Ethiopian government has had to appeal to the international community for funds and food to provide relief to between five and 14 million individuals. Between 1997 and 2002 relief amounted to around US\$265 million a year. In drought years such as 2003 the costs rose to over a billion dollars (Ashley, Brown, et al. 2006).

These emergency appeals have undeniably saved lives, but they have not saved livelihoods. Relief provision has tended to arrive too late and has often not been adequate or appropriate enough to prevent asset depletion among beneficiary households.

The government with the backing of a range of international donors launched the **Coalition for Food Security and the Food Security Programme (FSP) to break this cycle of annual relief** and to work toward achieving the Poverty and Hunger MDG. The programme aims to reduce the vulnerability of and attain food security for approximately eight million chronically food insecure Ethiopians. The FSP has three primary components:

- i. The Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP);
- ii. Resettlement; and
- iii. Other food security programmes including public works and household packages.

These programmes are implemented by the Federal Food Security Bureau in conjunction with regional, woreda and ultimately kebele Food Security Task Forces and kebele level development agents.

4.1 The PSNP

Launched in February 2005, the **PSNP aims to smooth consumption in chronically food insecure households by providing efficient and predictable transfers of cash and/or food** during lean months. It aims to reduce household vulnerability, protect household assets and improve household resilience. At the same time it aims to provide labour to create community assets (e.g. check dams and roads). In conjunction with other programmes such as credit packages and agricultural extension, the PSNP seeks to address both the immediate and underlying causes of food insecurity. Over the course of the PSNP, the programme aims to 'graduate' participants from food insecurity into sustainable food secure status.

The PSNP provides assistance to two kinds of chronically food insecure households: those in which able-bodied members are able to contribute to labour-intensive public works activities (public works beneficiaries) and those that are labour poor, elderly or

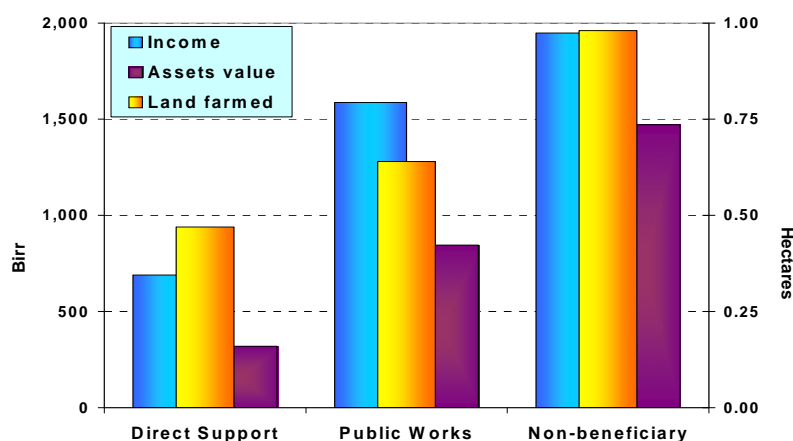


otherwise incapacitated (direct support beneficiaries). The programme provides a mix of food and cash transfers to beneficiaries in an effort to sustain and stimulate local markets and provide smallholders with greater flexibility over consumption decisions.

The PSNP was launched in January 2005. By early 2007 it will have reached about 8.3 million rural Ethiopians in eight regions (Tigray, Amhara, Oromiya, SNNPR, Afar, Somali, rural Harari and Dire Dawa). In 2005-6, approximately 55 percent of the transfers were in the form of cash and 45 percent were in the form of food. Nineteen percent of beneficiaries receive direct support while 81 percent are public works beneficiaries.

Considering the scale and complexity of the programme and that the programme is in its initial stages, the first year and a half of implementation has gone reasonably well.¹¹ Overall the **programme appears to be successfully targeting chronically food insecure** households. As figure 2 shows, the assets held by direct support beneficiaries are on average lower than those held by public works beneficiaries and the assets held by both types of beneficiaries are lower than non-beneficiary households.

Figure 2: The PSNP's targeting of the chronically poor (Source: Devereux, Mulugeta Tefera et al 2006)



Based on a household survey conducted in eight woredas, the **PSNP also appears to be improving household income**. To a lesser extent the programme appears to be increasing access to services and protecting and building household assets (All from Devereux, Mulugeta Tefera et al 2006: 40 and Slater, Ashley et al 2006):

¹¹ For more detailed reviews of the implementation of the PSNP see Sharp, Brown et al (2006), Slater, Ashley et al (2006), and Devereux, Mulugeta Tefera et al (2006).



- Three quarters (75 percent) of households surveyed consumed more food or better quality food than before the advent of the PSNP. Ninety-four percent of these households attribute this to the PSNP.
- Three in five beneficiaries (62 percent) avoided having to sell assets to buy food in 2005—a common ‘distress response’ to household food shortages. While 36 percent of beneficiaries avoided using savings to buy food. In both cases 90 percent of these households explained these positive outcomes in terms of the PSNP.
- Almost half of beneficiaries stated that they used healthcare facilities more in 2005/06 than in 2004/5 and 76 percent of these credit the PSNP with this enhanced access. More than one third of households enrolled more children in school and half kept their children in school for longer, rather than withdrawing them when cash or food was short. Over 80 percent of these impacts were said to be due to the PSNP.
- About one quarter of PSNP beneficiaries acquired new assets or skills in 2005/06. In a great majority of cases (86percent) the PSNP was held responsible for the acquisition of these skills--presumably through training received on public works projects. More than half (55percent) of beneficiaries claim that the PSNP helped them acquire new assets.

Box 6: The impact of the PSNP in the words of beneficiaries

“Before the PSNP we ate twice, at breakfast and dinner, but now we can eat three times.”

Household, Oromiya

‘Beneficiaries cease to sell their livestock during food deficit months due to PSNP’

Livestock trader

‘Before the safety net I tried to get all the kids in school doing casual labour but there were lots of gaps in their education. Now all three stay in school.’ Widow, mother of 4

(From Sharp, Brown et al. 2006 and Slater, Ashley et al. 2006)

The relatively **effective implementation of the PSNP has been driven by government ownership** of the programme at the federal and regional level as well as a **reasonable degree of coordination between the seven donors** funding the programme (partially facilitated by the PSNP donor coordinator).¹² The PSNP is a

¹² The seven donors are: CIDA, Irish Aid, DFID, EC, USAID, WFP, and the World Bank



flagship programme for both the Government of Ethiopia and the donors involved. As a result, both have invested heavily in the programme's success.

Although the PSNP is being implemented reasonably well and is making a difference to the lives and livelihoods of chronically poor households, a range of factors continue to hamper its implementation and impact. These include:

- Capacity;
- Ideologies of 'graduation' and 'dependency'; and
- Timeliness of transfers and donor funding

4.1.1 Capacity

Capacity particularly at the woreda and kebele level remains a significant constraint to the effective implementation of the PSNP. There are four key capacity constraints:

- i. Local-level staffing is often inadequate to effectively implement the PSNP and its related programmes. At the kebele level, the recent increase in the number of development agents has boosted local capacity. However, in many woredas the burden of implementing the PSNP essentially falls on only one or two administrators.
- ii. There is a high turnover of administrators at all levels of the FSP. In some of the woredas explored in the PSNP review the annual turnover is estimated to be as high as 80 percent (Sharp, Brown and Teshome 2006: 47). High turnover not only hampers implementation, it impairs continuity, lesson learning and the development of institutional memory.
- iii. The PSNP brings with it a higher work load for administrators. When combined with high turnover and inadequate staffing, this can create a significant implementation bottleneck at the woreda level.
- iv. The individual capacity of implementers is often low. A Programme Implementation Manual and training have been provided to local level implementers. However, high staff turnover rates and training materials which do not reflect local realities hamper the effectiveness of the PSNP (see Slater, Ashley et al., 2006 and Sharp, Brown and Teshome 2006).

4.1.2 Timelines of transfers and donor funding

The effectiveness of the PSNP as a means to prevent asset depletion and building for chronically poor households hinges on the **timeliness and predictability of the transfers to beneficiaries**. During the first two years of PSNP implementation, however, the transfer of funds from donors to the federal government, from the



federal government to the regions, and particularly from the region to the woreda have been delayed. As a result, beneficiaries in some woredas have experienced significant delays in receiving benefits. In some cases, this has resulted in reduced consumption and the depletion of household assets.

These delays stem from a range of factors including the lack of coordination between donors and their budget cycles, lack of capacity and staff at the regional and woreda level, and failure by woreda staff to submit required paper work to the regions.

4.1.3 Ideologies of 'graduation' and 'dependency'

As was highlighted in section 3.1 the government of Ethiopia often pursues an ideologically driven campaign approach to policy implementation. Several **'ideological' campaigns have the potential to limit the pro-chronically poor implementation** of the PSNP. These campaigns are the push for beneficiaries to 'graduate' from the PSNP and a campaign to minimise 'dependency'.

As highlighted above, **'graduation' to food security** is a key objective of the PSNP. As Sharp, Brown and Teshome (2006) write, however:

The high priority placed on achieving graduation has led some administrators to target with graduation in mind. In Amhara, the emphasis on graduation fundamentally skewed the 2005 targeting away from the poorest members of the region. The regional government instructed woreda and kebele officials to target households likely to graduate and to exclude many of the poorest able-bodied households so that they could be candidates for resettlement. These instructions were reversed in mid- 2005 and Amhara's targeting is much more pro-poor this year. However, local administrators in Amhara and elsewhere will continue to be under pressure to work toward graduation and it will be important to monitor that this pressure does not distort Safety Net targeting again. (2006: 48)

Box 7: 'Dependency' and the Safety Net

In the review of the PSNP, regional and woreda officials repeatedly raised concerns about the potential for the PSNP to foster rather than reduce dependency:

'This area has been dependent on food aid for a long time. The people have become almost too lazy to work developing dangerous dependency attitude.'

'Before the safety net we held a series of conferences to tackle dependency. The coming of safety net is both good and bad. It is good because of the resources it brings. It is bad because it has reversed our attempt to beat dependency.'

'For three years we campaigned to fight dependency and we had a feeling that we were getting somewhere. These efforts are undermined by the coming of safety net. Through food security programmes and agricultural packages we focused on those hard working citizens who have a better chance of success. We were beginning to see results. [But the] Safety Net focuses on the poor thereby reversing the efforts.'

(From Sharp, Brown and Teshome 2006)

Formatted: Font: 10 pt



In the years leading up to the launch of the PSNP, there was a high profile government **campaign to combat the 'dependency'** that was perceived to be arising from long-term relief. This campaign has been pushed to the lowest levels of the state and has had a significant impact on the attitude of many administrators toward the Safety Net. As a result, local PSNP administrators face incentives to target in ways that minimise dependency. In part this explains Amhara's failure to target the poorest households in 2005. It also helps to explain why the number of direct support beneficiaries are kept low in some woredas (particularly in Tigray) and why there is sometimes resistance to reducing the overall labour burden of households in which there are few workers but many dependents (*ibid.*: 49).

In some parts of Ethiopia, the push to minimise dependency is also linked to an **over-emphasis on productive public works**. As Sharp, Brown and Teshome (2006) write: 'Local administrators are often under pressure from above to ensure that ambitious public works projects are completed. In some sites, this may be contributing to a selection bias away from those who cannot carry out heavy physical labour' (*ibid.* 49). In some woredas benefits to both public works and directs support beneficiaries have been delayed until the completion and verification of public works. Although the intent is to reinforce the quality of public works, in practice, this is a form of 'collective punishment' that hits the poorest households hardest (*ibid.*: 49).

Figure 3: Billboard in Amhara campaigning against dependency



4.1.4 Public works

The PSNP's **public works beneficiaries** contribute to the construction and maintenance of a range of **community assets** including check dams, hillside terracing, roads, schools, clinics, small scale irrigation and ponds. At an aggregate level, these public works are operating on a massive scale, generating over 172 million person days of labour per year in 2006 (World Bank 2007: 3). In many cases,



these public works have improved access to services and created shared physical and natural assets (public goods) which have the potential to improve the lives and livelihoods of chronic poor households. However, a number of factors may limit the quality, impact and sustainability of public works. These factors include:

- Local **capacity constraints** have limited the effectiveness of field staff to plan and implement public works. These constraints include inadequate training of and technical support to local level administrators, high staff turnover rates and insufficient access to public works guidelines and manuals.
- The **degree of consultation and participation** in planning public works is high in many cases. In other locations, however, decisions on the prioritisation and location of public works have been made by local administrators with little local consultation. In some cases this has created ownership and sustainability problems.
- **Labour requirements for public works** can prevent chronically poor households from investing their time in other activities. Although public works should be carried out during the agricultural slack period, in all 8 woredas studied for the PSNP review, public works were continuing into the agricultural season (Slater, Ashley et al 2006: 34).

4.2 Resettlement

The **history of resettlement in Ethiopia is fraught**. Under the Derg regime (1974-1991) around 600,000 people were resettled in ways that were poorly planned, divisive and often coercive. As one set of observers write: 'the experiment was a costly failure with tragic human consequences' (FSS 2006: 1).

Partially as a result of these past failures, the EPRDF government was opposed to resettlement throughout the 1990s. However, both the SDPRP and the FSP revived the policy of resettlement as a pathway for poverty reduction and food security:

Under the current level of agricultural technology and overall development, areas referred to as drought prone areas cannot feed and support the people currently residing on them ...Therefore, resetting some of these people in areas where sufficient land and rainfall are available is one of the basic means to ensure food security. (FDRE 2001 in Teshome 2006: 16)

During the period of the SDPRP, the government aimed to resettle 2.2 million people from the over populated land-stressed highlands to lowland areas in Amhara, Oromiya, SNNPR and Tigray. This **Voluntary Resettlement Programme** (VPR) targets those chronically food insecure (or chronically poor) households with the productive labour capacity to build a livelihood in their new homes. To prevent the problems experienced under the previous resettlement programme, the New Coalition for Food Security outlined four pillars for the VPR. These are that resettlement must be 1) voluntary, 2) on under-utilised land, 3) in consultation with host communities, and 4) carried out with proper consultations.



Overall there have been significant implementation problems with the resettlement programme. The government has resettled less than a quarter (around 500,000) of those it aimed to and has often done so in ways that violate its own principles (pillars). A Forum for Social Studies research project (2006) found that:

- Although there has not been direct coercion, resettlement was not truly voluntary. Households were 'encouraged to move' through desperation, unrealistic inducements, and exclusion from food aid. 'The resettlement can be characterized as having elements of indirect compulsion and inducement if not outright coercion' (FSS 2006: 2).
- The land selected for resettlement was often utilised by already existing communities as an economic resource. 'Limited time and resources hindered careful planning and assessment of land availability and existing land uses. [...] In some cases, the land selected was used by local groups as fallow areas, for grazing or forest resources' (*ibid.*).
- Consultation was not substantive or participatory. 'Consultation with local peoples took place to obtain their consent. However, this was generally restricted to *convincing* them to accept the resettlement and mobilize them to prepare for the resettlers arrival by building shelters' (*ibid.* emphasis added)
- Preparations in resettlement areas were often inadequate: meetings with potential settlers often promised more than was delivered in terms of land and livestock, support, infrastructure, and services. 'Differences between expectations and actual conditions were a major factor leading to many resettlers leaving shortly after arrival and dissatisfaction among those who remained' (*ibid.*: 3).

Our fieldwork reveals similar problems with the implementation of the resettlement programme, particularly in Amhara. In 2005, as was highlighted above, targeting in Amhara for both the PSNP and resettlement was shaped by selection pressures toward those households likely to graduate. The regional government's instructions were for the Safety Net to target those individuals who were likely to graduate and to 'encourage' the poorest households to resettle. As one official in Bugna Woreda described:

In the initial targeting [for the PSNP], it was assumed that those who had no land were going to the resettlement areas. About 20,000 people were in this category. The safety net beneficiaries were supposed to be those who could graduate early, despite differences. So, in 2005 the targeting was almost focused on the middle class categories.[...] This instruction was from the region.

In practice this meant that some chronically poor households were excluded from the safety net and other benefits as a way to 'encourage' them to resettle. As one villager explained:



Last year, even youths who were born here were excluded from all programmes. When they appealed they were told that they should 'go somewhere else (to resettle) to create development

In parts of Amhara, anxiety over resettlement caused some of the poorest households to inflate their assets and food security status. As an impoverished 64 year old female household head with four dependents described:

Last year, I was excluded from the safety net because of the confusion in targeting. During the assessment I said I have enough harvest to feed my family for the whole year because of the fear that they might take me to the resettlement program, if I said otherwise.

To an extent the government has acknowledged the shortcomings of the resettlement programme. This appears at least partially to be a result of the EPRDF's poor electoral performance in some resettlement and 'home' areas. Although resettlement continues to feature in PASDEP as a key component of the Food Security Programme, the programme has been de-emphasised on the ground and there appears to be a greater substantive emphasis on volunteerism. As one official in Amhara stated:

Resettlement this year is a hundred percent voluntary. Last year 20,000 households were registered by force [sic], but this year we're even writing to the woredas telling the people to stay and work. Only 8,000 households have resettled this year. Resettlement is becoming the interest of the people, not the interest of the government.

It is difficult to say how well resettlers are doing in their new homes and in particular if they have moved out of chronic poverty and into food security. The draft of PASDEP states that a 'recent assessment undertaken by the Federal Food Security Coordination Bureau shows that the majority of the settlers have attained self-sufficiency in food and their livelihood has improved considerably.' In Amhara, the Regional FSB told the research team that '80 percent of resettlers support themselves within in one year....they have become food self-sufficient'. However, there is no formal monitoring system for resettlement in place (although it exists on paper as part of the FSP Monitoring and Evaluation Plan, 2004), and independent observers shed some doubt on these claims.

4.3 Other Food Security Programmes

Under the FSP, woreda officials and kebele development agents are responsible for implementing a range of other activities aimed at reducing chronic food insecurity. These activities include water and soil and water conservation measures, agricultural and livestock extension, and 'household packages' of credit and agricultural inputs. These OFSPs are intended to link with the PSNP (and the shared assets its public works beneficiaries create) to enable chronically food insecure households to 'graduate' to food security.



4.3.1 Household packages

Household packages are intended to provide chronically food insecure households with the **credit** and **agricultural inputs** (e.g. improved seeds, livestock and fertiliser) needed to protect and build their asset and incomes so that they can 'graduate' from chronic food insecurity.¹³

4.3.2 Credit

The government sees the provision of credit to PSNP beneficiaries and other poor households as crucial to building livelihoods and reducing food insecurity. Federal plans are to provide credit to approximately 30% of PSNP beneficiaries per year for three years. Six billion Birr has been allocated for this purpose and woreda and kebele level administrators have been tasked with providing short term flexible loans to PSNP beneficiaries (Slater, Ashley et al 2006: 24).

FSP credit has made a difference to the lives and livelihoods of many food insecure households. Because of the income and food provided by PSNP, many beneficiaries now 'feel secure enough in their incomes to take productive loans which they previously found too risky' (Slater, Ashley et al 2006: 24). In many cases, these households have been able to use loans to purchase productive assets such as livestock and bee colonies with which they have been able to strengthen their livelihoods.

However, credit is not yet reaching as many intended clients as anticipated. There is also concern, raised by some administrators and in focus groups, that it is seldom the poorest households who take loans. There appear to be several reasons for this:

- On the demand side, chronically poor households in rural Ethiopia continue to be justifiably risk averse and are often wary of debt. As one local observer remarked in Amhara: 'frankly speaking, people are more afraid of credit (going into debt) than they are of poverty.'
- On the supply side, the credit packages offered by local development agents are often too large and focused on a limited menu of investment options (e.g. livestock purchase or fattening) to appeal to poorer households. In many cases, the size of an initial loan is fixed at 1000 or 1500 Birr (about US\$120 to US\$190). As one regional government official noted: 'loans are not customised to the capacity of the household and [debtors] are often encouraged to take too much.' According to the same official, the pressure to push households toward 'graduation' may in some cases also be encouraging development agents to grant loans to less poor households and to push larger loans.

¹³ In the first year of the PSNP there was no direct link between PSNP beneficiaries and household packages. This year, however, the household package is being explicitly targeted at PSNP beneficiaries.

- In some cases, chronically food insecure households that have taken loans have found that they are subsequently excluded from the PSNP for possessing too many assets. As one Tigrayan household head told the PSNP appraisal team: 'I have a few livestock purchased with the credit [...]. They are still not my own and belong to the institution until I settle my debt. However, I am excluded from the safety net on the assumption that I own assets' (Sharp, Brown and Teshome 2006: 28).

4.3.3 Agricultural inputs

Local extension officers are supposed to provide a menu of choices to households so that they can tailor the package to their needs and capacity. In practice, however, the options available to households tend to be quite narrow. As one senior Food Security official explained: 'the packages are not really customised to local household situations; They are the same in North Shoa or in West Hararge'. There is also a tendency for households to receive only components of an overall package. A recent evaluation of the performance of the extension system shows that only 39 percent of surveyed households receiving packages were given a complete package of improved seeds and fertilisers and support to improve their farming practices (EEA/EPRI, 2006). The remaining households (61percent) were given an incomplete package lacking one or more of the major components. The incomplete use of extension packages can reduce the profitability of input use and reduces household confidence in the modern agricultural inputs.

The introduction of improved seeds and fertilisers, however, has generally had a positive impact on the productivity of those households that have taken packages (EEA/EPRI, 2006). Those households that adopted the new inputs saw an improvement in their yields for maize, sorghum, barley and wheat. However, the inputs appear to have had little or even a negative impact on teff production (see Tables 5 and 6).

Table 5: Mean yield of major cereals when using inorganic fertilizers (EEA/EPRI, 2006)

Crop	Sample		Yield (Q/ha)		% difference
	Participants	Non-participants	Participants	Non-participants	
Barley	237	293	16.2	10.7	+51.2
Maize	727	736	25.4	15.8	+60.8
Sorghum	106	635	13.2	10.7	+23.8
White teff	394	166	9.4	10.7	-12.3
Sergegna teff (mixed)	465	357	8.6	7.7	+12.4
Wheat	578	264	19.7	13.9	+42.2

Table 6: Mean yield of major cereals when using improved seeds (EEA/EPRI, 2006)

Crop	Sample		Yield (Q/ha)		% difference
	Participants	Non-participants	Participants	Non-participants	
Barley	40	460	16.8	13.0	+29.5
Maize	558	861	24.5	18.2	+34.6
Sorghum	112	585	13.3	10.6	+25.9
White teff	43	480	9.3	9.6	-2.7
Sergegna teff (mixed)	41	739	9.4	8.2	+14.0
Wheat	210	606	19.8	17.3	+14.3

4.4 Conclusions about the Food Security Programme and chronic poverty

The PSNP in conjunction with the other components of the Food Security Programme is **one of the most ambitious and comprehensive social protection programmes of its kind in the developing world**. The programme has the potential to smooth the incomes and stabilise and build the assets of millions of chronically poor Ethiopians. The implementation of the programme has improved significantly since its first year. However, a number of challenges remain if it is to achieve its objectives. These include:

- Local level **capacity** to implement and monitor the PSNP, public works, and the household packages is not yet adequate and these limit the effective linkages between the PSNP and other food security programmes (OFSPs).
- Pressures toward **graduation** and reducing '**dependency**' have the potential to influence the priorities and actions of local administrators in ways that limit the programmes impact on the poorest and most vulnerable households.
- The lack of **timeliness of transfers** at all levels limits the predictability and therefore the effectiveness of the PSNP as a mechanism for smoothing consumption and preventing asset depletion.
- The household **packages** are not yet tailored or delivered in a way that is likely to reach the poorest households (especially the landless and most vulnerable).
- It is not yet clear how long the Safety Net will run. At the moment the government assumes that most households will graduate to food security within the PSNP's five to ten year time horizon. This assumption is unrealistic. Even given the most optimistic scenarios, the chronically poor who are economically inactive (due to age, ill health or disability) will continue to need long term provision.

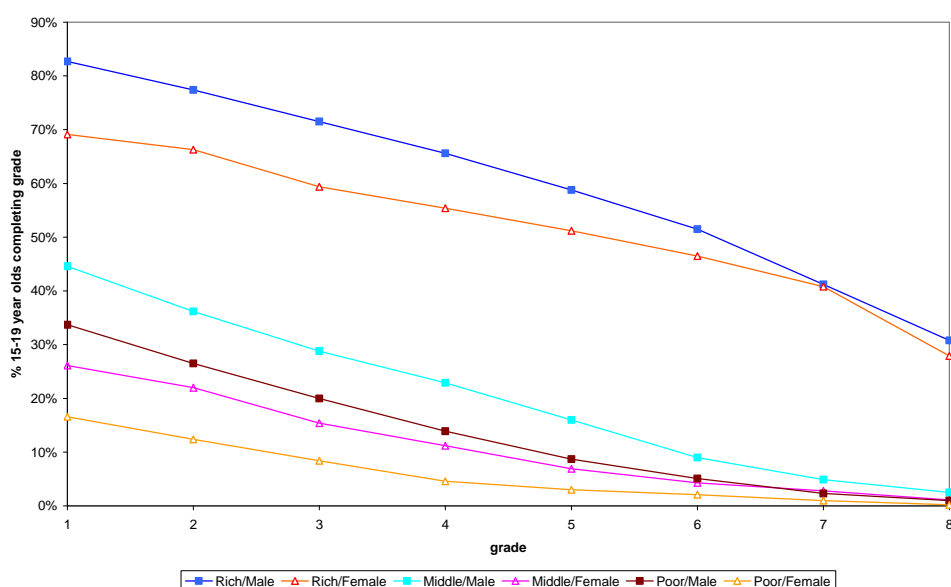


5 Education policy and chronic poverty

5.1 Chronic poverty and education

Ethiopia is one of the most educationally disadvantaged countries in the world. Historically, most of the population has had little access to schooling. This has particularly been the case for the chronic poor and those living in more remote parts of the country. As Figure 4 shows children (especially girls) from poorer households have been much less likely to enrol in and stay in school than their wealthier counterparts (Filmer from Rose 2003).

Figure 4: Educational attainment by wealth group and gender, 15-19 year olds, 2000 (from Filmer in Rose 2003)



A range of **inter-related factors prevent the children of chronically poor Ethiopians from enrolling in school** in the first place and increase the likelihood that they will drop out once enrolled:

- **Accessibility:** The greater the distance from school is, the greater the opportunity costs are for students and their families. Access to school is often lowest in the parts of Ethiopia in which a high percentage of the local population is chronically poor. This is particularly true in pastoralist areas. The total gross enrolment rate of pastoralists in all parts of Ethiopia is just ten percent (Beruk in Rose 2003: 15). In Afar and Somali, 48 percent and 28 percent of all households claim that their children are not in school because there are no schools nearby (CSA 2001 from Rose 2003: 19).



- **The costs of schooling:** School fees were abolished in Ethiopia in 1994. However, other costs remain, including those for school clothes (particularly in areas where uniforms are compulsory), school supplies (such as notebooks and pens) and other monetary and labour contributions (e.g. contributions to school construction or to school guard salaries). For the poorest households, these costs can act as a barrier to school enrolment or attendance.
- **Food, nutrition and education:** Hungry children do not make good students. Children from chronic food insecure households are therefore likely to face greater difficulty in staying in school and are less likely to do as well as those who are better fed.
- **Barriers to girls education:** As will be highlighted below, it is the education of girls that suffers most from both household labour demands and adverse shocks on household livelihoods. In some parts of the country early marriage inhibits girls from completing schooling. The threat of abduction also prevents girls from attending school, particularly if they have to walk long distances to reach a classroom.
- **Household labour demands:** Ethiopia has one of the highest incidences of child work in the world. Cockburn finds that work is the primary activity for almost three-quarters of 11-15 year olds sampled in the Ethiopian rural household survey. He also finds a higher proportion of girls (78 percent) than boys (64 percent) are working rather than attending school (Cockburn in Rose 2003: 18). Labour demands on children in chronically poor households, however, may not be higher than in better off households. As Rose writes: 'given that destitute households have less access to land and other assets, and therefore have fewer work opportunities for household members including children, children might have the opportunity to attend school where there is one nearby' (Rose 2003: 15).
- **Shocks:** The chronically poor are more vulnerable to adverse shocks (e.g. drought, the loss of a parent) than other households and these shocks are more likely to have a long-lasting impact on schooling. A harvest failure or the loss of a parent creates greater demand on girls' and boys' labour and makes it more difficult for household to meet the direct or indirect costs of schooling. These shocks appear to have a greater negative impact on girls' enrolment rates than on boys' (Chaudhury et al 2006: 17).

5.2 Education policies and programmes and chronic poverty

Both of Ethiopia's **PRSPs place significant emphasis on education**. The SDPRP aimed to achieve four educational goals: 1) to produce good citizens, 2) to expand access and coverage of primary education to achieve universal primary education, 3) to meet the demand for manpower at all levels for the socio-economic development needs of the country, and 4) to build the capacity within the education system.



The guiding framework for education policy in Ethiopia is the 1994 **Education and Training Policy** (ETP). The ETP has been implemented through a series Education Sector Development Programmes (ESDP). Since 1997, the ESDP has been revised twice with ESDP II broadly overlapping with the period of the SDPRP. The primary thrust of all three ESDPs is:

to improve educational quality, relevance, efficiency, equity and expand access to education with special emphasis on primary education in rural and underserved areas, as well as the promotion of education for girls as a first step to achieve universal primary education by 2015. (MoE 2005)

The policies and strategies as laid out in the SDPRP and implemented through ESDP II are driven by concerns with **equity** and expanding **access** to achieve the education MDG. They focused on addressing geographical inequalities in educational access, lowering the barriers to girls' education and promoting non-formal education. With MDG Two in mind, the SDPRP declared that the government aims to achieve a gross enrolment rate (GER) of 65 percent by the end of the PRSP period (2004/05). To achieve this aim, the SDPRP stated that the government would construct, upgrade and rehabilitate several thousand primary schools; build ten boarding schools for pastoralist communities; and recruit and train or retrain over 25,000 teachers (MoFED 2002: 93).

The SDPRP also stated that it will boost the enrolment, the access to and the quality of secondary and technical and vocational training (TVET) schools. Adult and non-formal education is also emphasised through three programmes in the SDPRP: non-formal basic primary education (aimed at reaching 500,000 out of school children); youth and adult literacy programmes (targeting 3.5 million youths and adults); and community skills training centres (for 65,000 adults).

All of these policies and strategies are **inclusive of chronically poor households**. Building primary schools and alternative basic education facilities in closer proximity to communities should make it easier for children in poorer households (and especially girls) to enrol in and stay in school. It also has the potential to boost female enrolment, as was highlighted above. Introducing non-formal schooling not only brings schools closer, its flexible schedules should allow poorer households to keep their children in school as they contribute to household livelihoods.

Other important measures to increase enrolment in general and enrolment of chronically poor children in particular include: school feeding programmes, alternative basic schools, satellite schools, and girls' student advisory committees. We look at each of these below.

5.2.1 School feeding programmes

ESDP II identified school feeding programmes as a strategy to raise enrolment by boosting demand for school attendance among food insecure and vulnerable households:



In order to improve access, stabilize attendance, reduce dropout rates and alleviate short term hunger so that children can attend classes attentively, school feeding program shall continue and be expanded in areas where there is serious shortage of food and that the feeding program will actually serve as incentive to go to school. (FDRE, 2002 in Rose and Dyer 2006)

WFP and the government have been running school feeding programmes in Ethiopia since 1994. The programme has been carried out in chronically food insecure areas of Amhara, Tigray, Oromia, Somali, Afar and SNNPR. In 2004/05 they reached about 544,000 primary school children (MoE 2005, ESDP III: 9). School feeding continues to feature in PASDEP.

In those schools where it has operated, **school feeding has contributed to stabilised attendance, reduced drop out rates, improvements in the ability of children to learn, and a decline in the gender gap** (Rose and Dyer 2006: 49).¹⁴ The programme is getting children into school. However, school feeding is costly and there are **questions of sustainability**. Feeding one child for a year costs (145 Birr)—substantially more than the costs of paying teachers' salaries and other recurrent costs (95 Birr) (Rose and Dyer 2006: 51).

5.2.2 *Alternative Basic Education*

Alternative Basic Education (ABE) was promoted in ESDP II as a way of increasing enrolment, reducing drop outs and boosting girls' participation. **ABE approaches seek to improve access to education, by creating informal schools** in closer proximity to under-served communities—particularly remote and dispersed communities including pastoralists.

ABE centres have a flexible schedule, thereby allowing students who have labour commitments to attend school while working. ABE teaching is generally conducted by 'facilitators', drawn from the local community rather than trained teachers. As highlighted above, improved access and increased flexibility is of particular benefit to chronic poor students.

Rose (2006) finds that only one percent of government education budget is allocated to ABE. As a result, in most of Ethiopia, ABE centres have been provided by NGOs and CBOs rather than the state.¹⁵

Little systematic data has been collected on ABE. However, the available information generally reveals growth in the number of ABE centres and in enrolment over the period of the SDPRP:

¹⁴ For a more detailed review of Ethiopia's school feeding programme see Rose and Dyer 2006.

¹⁵ There are also linkages between food security programmes and education. PSNP public works have been used to construct primary schools and ABE and TVET centres. The income smoothing and nutritional benefits provided by the PSNP also have the potential to support school enrolment and retention among PSNP beneficiaries.



- In Amhara, there are currently 1,954 ABE centres, up from 1,833 in 2005. There are just over 240,000 students in these schools.
- In Oromiya there are currently about 1,800 ABE centres in which 362,000 students have been enrolled.

The **ABE system has boosted overall enrolment rates and appears to be reaching poorer and more marginal pupils**, including pastoralists. Ministry of Education officials also report that the rate of female enrolment in ABE centres is slightly higher than in formal schools.

Different regional governments have embraced alternative education's place in the education system to different degrees. In Amhara, the Regional Education Bureau is strongly committed to ABE. The region is making significant contributions to the salaries of facilitators and their training and is investing in transforming ABE centres into formal school. Last year (2005), Amhara's Regional Education Bureau provided training for over 3,000 ABE facilitators.

Although there are a high number of ABE centres and students in Oromiya, these centres receive less support from the Regional Education Bureau than in Amhara. The building of ABE centres and staffing is more contingent on NGO mobilisation and funding and the links between the ABE approach and formal schooling are less clearly articulated than in Amhara.

There is a push to convert ABE centres into formal schools in some regions (e.g. Amhara, Tigray and Benishangul-Gumuz). These conversions bring the formal education system closer to educationally deprived areas, and thereby improve access for chronically poor and other households. However, these conversions may not be entirely beneficial to chronically poor students. The flexibility of the ABE system (in terms of balancing livelihood and other demands with education) is lost when a more formal school calendar is adopted. Moreover, in some cases the flexibility of the ABE curriculum may be suited more to the needs of chronically poor students.

5.2.3 Satellite schools and multi-grade classrooms

Satellite schools and multi-grade classrooms have been piloted in Amhara and elsewhere in order to increase access. As a regional education official explained: through satellite schools, 'schools go to the village instead of villagers going to the schools.' Satellite schools are often housed in sheds or under tarpaulins. They are affiliated with a formal primary school and classes are taught by teachers rather than facilitators as in the ABE system. Multi-grade classrooms are also being piloted in parts of Amhara and Benishangul-Gumuz where the student population is small and sparsely settled and there has historically been little access to school (e.g. pastoralist areas).

Both of these approaches provide a means through which access to education is increased and chronically poor students who might not have attended school in the



past face fewer opportunity costs in seeking out an education. There is, however, no information yet available on the performance of these approaches to expand school access.

5.2.4 Girls' advisory committees

In parts of Ethiopia Girls Advisory Committees have been established to support female students in primary schools. These committees, often headed by female teachers, run small enterprises selling schools supplies and/or tea next to schools. The proceeds from these enterprises are then used to pay for school supplies for female students.

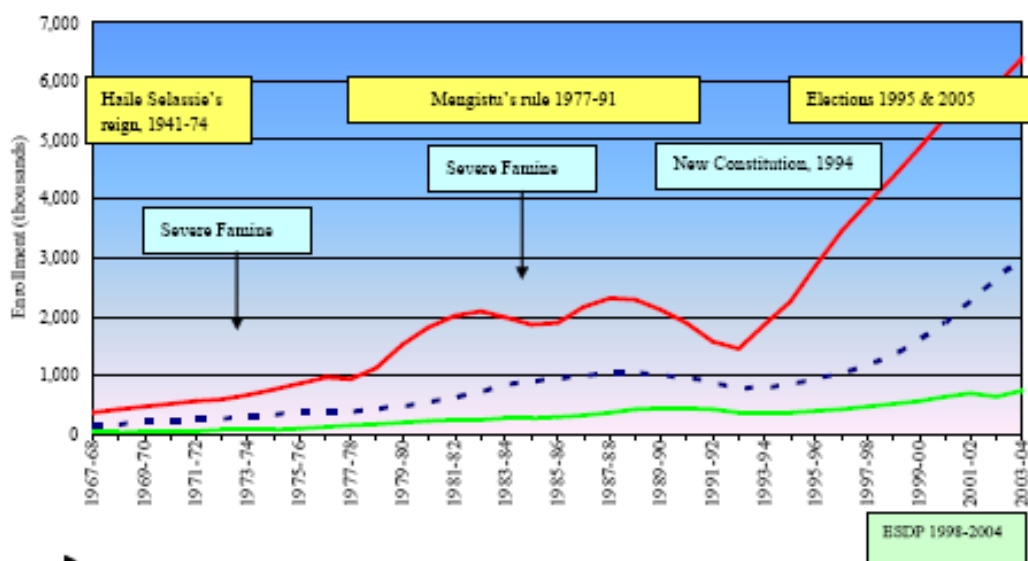
In Libo Kemkem Woreda, Amhara, the USAID funded World Learning Programme initiated these committees in 21 schools three years ago. Since then, Girls Advisory Committees have been established in all 47 schools in the woreda. In the World Learning schools, the proceeds from shop sales go to all female students. In the woreda's other schools, the proceeds are targeted to those girls who committee members deem neediest. Although there is no systematic evidence on the impact that these committees have had on enrolment, the anecdotal evidence in Libo Kemkem and elsewhere is positive.

5.3 Implementation and impact

Overall, the federal and regional governments have shown a **strong political and financial commitment to expanding education** and achieving MDG Two. This commitment has been evident since the EPRDF came to power, and is reflected in the dramatic increase in enrolment since the mid 1990s (shown in Figure 5).



Figure 5: School enrollments in historical perspective (World Bank 2005)



During the course of the SDPRP and EDSP II, even more resources have been allocated to the education sector. The education budget was 2.43 times greater in 2004 than it was in 1999 and this growth outstripped that of the overall resource envelope (which grew by 1.13 times from 1999 to 2004 (World Bank 2006)).

The education budget is the largest portion of the overall government resource envelop. In the 2005/06 education absorbed 20 percent of the overall general government budget. At a regional level, education absorbs 41 percent of the total budgets. Primary education now absorbs more than 50 percent of the total educational resources at all levels, while tertiary education accounts for about 25 percent of resource envelop (JBAR 2006).

The government has **met or surpassed its objectives in increasing enrolment** as laid out in the SDPRP and EDSP II. During the course of the SDPRP and EDSP II primary enrolment increased by an average of 11.7 percent a year to a total of 11.4 million in 2004/2005. The gross enrolment rate (GER) at primary level was 79.2 percent in 2004/5 (girls 70.9 percent and boys 87.3 percent). The net enrolment rate (NER) has also increased from 24.9 percent in 1996/97 to 67.8 percent in 2004/05 (MoE 2005: 7-8).¹⁶

There has been a **significant increase in the number of girls in school**. According to government figures, the gross enrolment rate for girls has increased from 40.7 percent in 1999/2000 to 70.9 percent in 2004/05, an increase of 74.5 percent in five

¹⁶ For a comprehensive review of Ethiopia's education budget and its performance compared to other countries in sub-Saharan Africa, see EEA/EEPRI (2000/2001).



years. 'Moreover, the gender gap that was hovering around 20 percentage points during ESDP-I and the first year of ESDP-II has started to decline since 2003/04 and has reached 16.4 percentage points in 2004/05.' (MoE 2005: 8).

With the data available, it is not possible to disaggregate these gains in enrolment by those who are chronically poor. However, it is undeniably the case the **expansion of schooling has made it possible for many chronically poor students to attend school for the first time.**

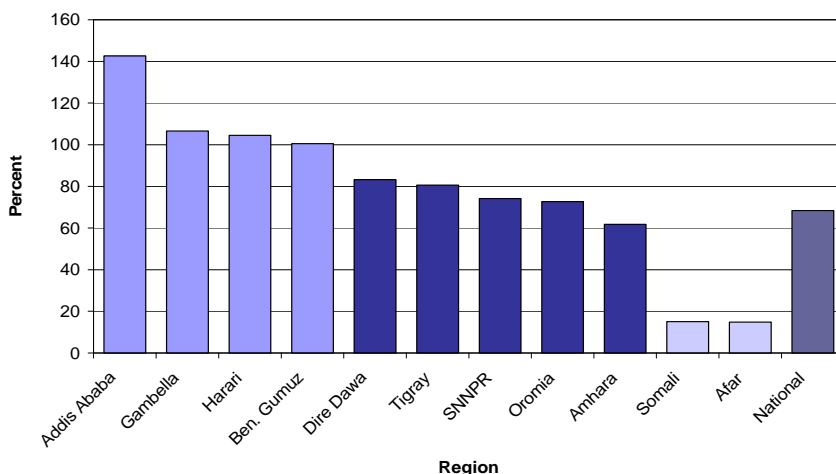
The Participatory Poverty Assessment (PPA) and the Citizen Report Cards (Ellis and Woldehanna 2005 and PANE 2006) both show **improved satisfaction with access to education.** The PPA found that of all areas of public service and infrastructure, it is increased school provision that received greatest emphasis. 'This is also the most valued improvement as indicated by institutional ranking exercises undertaken in the PPA (MoFED 2005: xiv).

Despite gains in access and enrolment, **significant challenges remain** for expanding educational opportunities for Ethiopia's chronic poor.

Expanded enrolments have placed pressure on the quality of education at all levels. Class room size has grown along with enrolments and this has led to a significant shortage of teachers and textbooks. Without improvements to quality, there are concerns that recent educational gains may be short-lived. Despite increasing budgets, the vast majority of resources devoted to education are consumed by teachers' salaries leaving little for other recurrent costs such as teacher training, text books and other learning materials. To an extent the focus on boosting enrolment to achieve the education MDG means that there is greater emphasis on expanding access at an aggregate level rather than reaching those (often chronically poor) household which are difficult to reach.



Figure 6: Regional differences in Gross Enrollment Rates



Improvements in school **retention and completion rates** have not kept pace with overall improvements in enrolment. Although children are more likely to stay in school, drop out rates remain very high in some regions. Overall levels of primary school completion remain at about 30-35 percent (World Bank 2005b). Grade one drop out rates have improved nationally, they remain very high in some regions (e.g. over 30 percent in Benishangul Gumuz) and the made remain below the targets set for ESDP II.

Overall enrolment gains mask significant **regional differences**. Addis Ababa, Gambela and Benishangual Gamuz all have gross enrolment rates exceeding 125 percent. Afar and Somali regions, however, have rates of less than 20 percent (see figure 6). Reaching these poor pastoralist areas will continue to pose a significant challenge.

There are also current and potential **coordination problems between policies and programmes** exemplified in Box 8.

Box 8: Coordination problems in education programmes targeting chronic poverty



In some cases, different programmes to expand educational access create contradictory incentives for chronically poor households.

School feeding vs. ABE: In Legehida woreda, Oromiya, an NGO sponsored ABE centre has been successfully building local enrolment rates (particularly for girls). In 20005/6 a WFP school feeding programme was started in the same woreda providing cooking oil and Famix (a nutrition supplement) to female students. However, this programme only operates out of the formal primary school, which is 7 kilometres from the village where the ABE school is located. The feeding programme is intended to boost female enrolment and nutrition, but in practice it creates an incentive for girls to travel much further than they currently do for school. There has been a decline in enrolment in the ABE centres as families choose to send their children the greater distance to the formal school so that they can pick up their rations. While enrolment in the formal school has increased, there is fear that these gains may not be sustainable due to the distance required to reach the formal school. (Interview with Rift Valley Children and Women's Development Association)

The PSNP and child labour: There is the potential for contradictory incentives between the labour requirements of the PSNP and the educationally needs of children in chronically food insecure households. The recent review of the PSNP did not find evidence of widespread child labour in public works (Sharp, Brown et al 2006). However, there are anecdotal reports that it does occur and there is the potential for older children in particular to be kept from school in order for households to meet their public works commitments. Flexibility of timing in public works and schooling may prevent this from occurring.



6 Lessons and recommendations

Chronic poverty is endemic in much of Ethiopia; millions of Ethiopians live their lives in deprivation, with little hope of eking out a sustainable livelihood. There is little hope that these households will escape chronic poverty without greater social protection, improved access to basic services, better access to productive resources, and expanded livelihood opportunities. All of these changes require structural transformations based on coherent, comprehensive and well implemented policies.

Overall, this study finds that **policies benefiting chronically poor Ethiopians are being designed and implemented**. There is broad political and administrative commitment to poverty reduction and significant resources have been devoted to those sectors and programmes benefiting the poorest Ethiopians. As the 2005 PPA notes 'the government has been fairly successful to date in converting SDPRP policy priorities into visible achievements on the ground' (Ellis and Woldehanna 2005: x) a view that is confirmed by the World Bank and IMF's Joint Staff Assessments (IMF 2004 and 2005).

In terms of impact, the education and food security programmes at least appear to be making a difference to the lives and livelihoods of chronically poor people. However, **political and ideological preoccupations, planning processes and implementation barriers and bottlenecks have prevented these and other policies from having as great an impact as they might on chronic poverty**.

In this concluding section we suggest what can be done to improve policy processes and implementation for chronic poverty reduction in Ethiopia.

- i. **Capacity:** Capacity constraints at all levels of government limit the impact of policies on chronic poverty. These capacity constraints have several dimensions. First, the level of staffing is often inadequate to fulfil the responsibilities; many posts at all levels of government remain empty—particularly in the remote areas where many of the poorest Ethiopians live. The regions also lack the capacity to support woreda administrators in most sectors. Second, the high rate of staff turn-over is a significant barrier to policy planning, implementation, and institutional memory. High staff turn over also inhibits effective utilisation of existing capacity. Third, the individual capacity (literacy, numeracy, skills and training) of policy implementers is often inadequate. There is also a sense among some staffing decisions are made on a political rather than a technical basis. This appears to be especially the case in the so-called 'emerging regions' and following the 2005 elections.

Building capacity for policy implementation is a multifaceted and long term challenge. The government realises this; capacity building and civil service reform featured as pillars of the SDPRP. However, these reforms are not yet delivering and in some cases have been destabilising. The staff turn-over rate and willingness of administrators to take risks, for instance, have been



negatively affected by recent public sector reform efforts, staff evaluations (*gimgema*) and the fallout of the 2005 elections.

The long-term solution to capacity issues will require sustained investment in training and education; efforts to strengthen the incentives for new graduates and existing civil servants to join and stay in government; and support to the creation of less top-down and more accountable approaches to management and administration. The recently launched Public Service Delivery Capacity Building Program (PSCAP) seeks to address the more technical dimensions of capacity building but are unlikely to enhance accountability or transform management style.

- ii. **Linkages and coordination:** Coordination and coherence between policies and implementing agencies needs to improve if policies are to be more effectively implemented. At a federal level, cross-sectoral coordination between policies and programmes is often limited. In particular, administrators are often wary of stepping outside of the strict confines of their own ministries or departments. At the sub-national level, policies and programmes are also often not joined up as effectively as they might be.¹⁷ Woreda Food Security Task Forces, for instance, are supposed to coordinate the PSNP with Other Food Security Programmes and other relevant programmes and projects to support household graduation into food security. Many WFSTFs, however, fail to fulfil this coordination role. The coordination problems in education (shown in Box 8 above) also illustrate the challenges of linking policies and programmes at a local level.

Coordination will partially be improved by building greater implementation capacity at all levels. Further improvements, however, will require better incentives and training for administrators to work outside of their sectoral boxes. It will also require that key officials (i.e. woreda administrators, regional executives) play a stronger coordination role.

- iii. **The politics and ideology of policy making and implementation:** The ruling EPRDF party's Marxist roots and origins as a rural-based resistance movement have contributed to the Ethiopian government's commitment to equity and poverty reduction. These same roots, however, have also contributed to the government's technocratic and command approach to policy making and implementation. This command approach to development and poverty reduction is pervasive and can be seen both in the top down character of policy formation and the campaigning approach to policy, planning and implementation. Once policies are set, there is also a tendency for them to be applied in a relatively undifferentiated way across the country,

¹⁷ Some regions appear to be better at coordinating than others. Dom and Mussa's decentralisation studies, for instance, show that coordination appears to be improving more quickly in Tigray than in Amhara (2006).



with few pilots and little regard for regional variation. In sum, while the policies and priorities of the government may be aimed at the poorest Ethiopians, the 'identikit' approach to implementation may be limiting their overall effectiveness and sustainability.

- iv. **Accountability and participation:** The government firmly believes that it acts in the best interest of Ethiopia's poor and its policies (embodied in the PRSPs) often do have a genuine pro-poor focus. Government policies and its decentralised structures also emphasise participation and accountability. However, the nature of the Ethiopian state and the government's ideology tend to limit substantive participation and skew accountability upward toward higher levels of government rather than downward to the citizenry. The space for civil society engagement in the policy process is also constrained and politicised. As a result, there are few avenues through which the voices of Ethiopia's chronic poor can substantively influence policy planning and implementation and policies tend to be 'confirmed' by rather than forged through local consultation.

To strengthen the role that the chronic poor and their representatives play in the policy process will require more robust and responsive bottom-up planning processes. Continued support to strengthening the capacity and resources available to the regions has the potential to bring planning and implementation processes closer to the ground. In addition strengthening grievance procedures and improving local level access to information of existing and planned policies and programmes may improve transparency and substantive accountability. Donors and other outside actors need to continue to look for ways to support civil society groups that genuinely represent the poorest Ethiopians so that they can more effectively engage with government.

- v. **MDGs, aggregate poverty reduction and chronic poverty:** Progress in achieving the MDGs is measured in terms of aggregate measures of poverty reduction (e.g. percentage of households living on a dollar a day or percentage of children completing primary school). In Ethiopia working toward these MDG and other poverty reduction targets in areas such as education has been a central concern. In practice this means that there is often understandably more emphasis on achieving these targets than on reducing the depth and duration of poverty or reaching the hardest cases. As a result, policies can be implemented in a way that focuses on reaching the 'potential poor'—those for whom poverty gains can be more easily made—rather than the chronic poor. In the PSNP this is evident in selection pressures in Amhara in 2005 toward those households more likely to 'graduate' from the programme. In education, gains in enrolment have largely come from strengthening the 'supply side' (e.g. bringing schools closer to students). Reaching the very poorest children and keeping them in school will require greater investment in (potentially more costly) 'demand-side' interventions



(i.e. flexible schooling, school feeding programmes, conditional cash transfers etc.) Expanding adult education (especially for women) could also make a difference to chronically poor households; greater literacy among women could contribute to multi-dimensional issues such as improved health and nutritional status of children, active participation in policy dialogue, and better participation in the extension system.

The government and its international partners need to emphasise that PRS success is measured not only in terms of its aggregate impact but also in terms of its impact on particularly vulnerable and destitute groups.

- vi. **Urban chronic poverty:** Although the majority of Ethiopia's chronic poor live in the countryside, there is significant and growing urban chronic poverty. However, Ethiopia's policies and programmes for addressing chronic poverty have tended to have a rural bias. The PSNP only operates in rural areas and many efforts to improve service delivery (i.e. in health and education) also have had a rural focus. Moreover, the SDPRP failed to make specific provisions for promoting urban-rural linkages. There are significant formal and informal barriers, for instance, to unregulated migration from rural areas.

The PASDEP begins to acknowledge the importance of urban areas and towns in Ethiopia's development. However, greater attention is needed to develop policies and programmes which address urban chronic poverty including: improved social protection, better access to housing and sanitation,¹⁸ child labour and informal schooling and micro-enterprise development.

- vii. **Monitoring and evaluation, lesson learning and evidence based planning:** The design and implementation of pro-chronically poor policies would benefit from a more effective use of evidence and stronger monitoring and evaluation systems. There have been recent improvements to the government's monitoring and evaluation systems (including a strengthened CSA and the monitoring of the PRSP). However, policies still tend to be made with minimal substantive consultation and there are still significant shortcomings in monitoring policy progress. As was highlighted in section 5, for instance, monitoring systems for resettlement and for the PSNP, though well-designed on paper, have yet to be implemented in practice.

To strengthen planning and monitoring, the government might consider piloting more of its policies and programmes, look for ways to build a more consultative, bottom-up and evidence-based planning process (see number 3 above), make greater use of existing evidence and data sets on the impact of policies on chronic poverty, and explore ways to place greater emphasis on

¹⁸ An exception to this trend has been the ongoing joint government and German Technical Cooperation (GTZ) programme to construct affordable housing for slum dwellers in Addis Ababa.



monitoring including the involvement of chronically poor citizens in monitoring (as is already being done through PANE's citizen's report cards and Help Age International's Old People's Monitoring Groups).



References

Ashley, S., T. Brown, et al. (2006). Breaking the cycle of relief in Africa: Ethiopia's Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP). Presentation to Joint Africa Humanitarian Network & Africa Hunger Task Team Workshop, Munyonyo, Uganda.

Bijlmakers, L. (2003) Process and Impact of the PRSP in Ethiopia: A case study commissioned by Wemos.

Cabral, L. (2006). Growth policies and chronic poverty in Ethiopia during the 1990s (draft 10 October), Chronic Poverty Research Centre.

Chaudhury, N., L. Christiaensen et al. (2006). Schools, Household, Risk and Gender: Determinants of Child Schooling in Ethiopia. Addis Ababa, CSAE WPS.

(CSA), Central Statistical Agency (2006). The Household Income and Expenditure Survey. Addis Ababa, Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia.

CSA (2000) Demographic Health Survey. Addis Ababa, Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia

CSA (2006) Demographic Health Survey. Addis Ababa, Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia.

Ethiopian Chamber of Commerce. (2005). Ethiopian Business Community's review of SDPRP and recommendations for inclusion in PASDEP. Addis Ababa, Ethiopian Chamber of Commerce.

Dercon, S., J. Hoddinott, et al. (2005). Shocks and consumption in 15 Ethiopian Villages.

Dercon, S., J. Hoddinott, et al. (2006). Growth and Poverty in Rural Ethiopia: Evidence from 15 Communities 1994-2004, Chronic Poverty Research Centre.

Devereux, S., Mulugeta Tefera et al (2006). Trends in PSNP Transfers Within Targeted Households. Addis Ababa, IDS Sussex and Indak International plc.

(EEA/EEPRI) (2006) Evaluation of the Ethiopian Agricultural Extension with Particular Emphasis on the Participatory Demonstration and Training Extension System (PADETS). Addis Ababa, Ethiopian Economic Association.

Education, M. o. (2005). Education Sector Development Programme III (ESDP-III) Programme Action Plan. Addis Ababa, Ministry of Education.

Ellis, F. and T. Woldehanna (2005). Ethiopia Participatory Poverty Assessment 2004-05. Addis Ababa, MoFED.

FDRE (1995) The Constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia.

FSS (2006). Understanding the dynamics of resettlement in Ethiopia. Policy Briefing. FSA. Addis Ababa, Forum for Social Studies.



Grant, U. and R. Marcus (2006). Chronic poverty and PRSPs: A desk study, Chronic Poverty Research Centre.

Kedir, A. and A. McKay (2003). Chronic poverty in urban Ethiopia: Panel data evidence. International Conference on Staying Poor: Chronic Poverty and Development Policy, Institute for Development Policy and Management, University of Manchester.

IMF and IDA (2004). Ethiopia Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper Annual Progress Report: Joint Staff Assessment. Washington, IMF and World Bank.

JBAR (2006) Joint Budget Aid Review.

MoE (1994) Education and Training Policy. Addis Ababa, Ministry of Education, Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia.

MoE (2005) Education and Training Policy III. Addis Ababa, Ministry of Education, Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia.

MoARD (2004). Productive Safety Net Programme: Programme Implementation Manual. Addis Ababa, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia.

MoFED (2002). Ethiopia: Sustainable Development and Poverty Reduction Programme. Addis Ababa, Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, Ministry of Finance and Economic Development (MoFED).

MoFED (2005a) MDG Needs Assessment. Addis Ababa, Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, Ministry of Finance and Economic Development (MoFED).

MoFED (2005b). Welfare Monitoring Survey. Addis Ababa, Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, Ministry of Finance and Economic Development (MoFED).

MoFED (2006). Plan for Accelerated and Sustained Development to End Poverty (PASDEP). Addis Ababa, Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, Ministry of Finance and Economic Development (MoFED).

PANE and CRDA (2006). Response to the Draft 'Ethiopia: Building on progress: A plan for Accelerated and Sustainable Development to End Poverty (PASDEP). Addis Ababa, PANE and CRDA.

The Reporter (July 30, 2006 – Amharic) Why result-based has not been successful, Addis Ababa.

Rose, P. (2003). Out-of-school children in Ethiopia. Addis Ababa, DFID Ethiopia.

Rose, P. and C. Dyer (2006). Chronic Poverty and Education: A review of the literature. London, Chronic Poverty Research Centre.



Sharp, K., S. Devereux, et al. (2003). Destitution in Ethiopia's Northeastern Highlands (Amhara National Regional State). Brighton, IDS and Save the Children-UK.

Sharp, K., T. Brown, A. Teshome. (2006). Targeting Ethiopia's Productive Safetynet (PSNP). Addis Ababa, ODI and IDL.

Slater, R., S. Ashley, et al. (2006). PSNP Policy, Programme and Institutional Linkages. Addis Ababa, ODI and IDL.

Teshome, A. (2006). Agriculture, growth and poverty reduction in Ethiopia: Policy processes around the new PRSP (PASDEP). Addis Ababa, Future Agricultures Consortium.

UNDP (2006). Human Development Report 2006. New York, UNDP.

Vaughn , Sarah and Kjetil Tronvoll 2003. The Culture of Power in Contemporary Ethiopian Political Life. SIDA.

Woldehanna, T., B. Tefera, et al. (2005). Childhood poverty, gender inequality and rural-urban disparities: To what extent is Ethiopia's PRSP (2002-2005) addressing child well-being? Children and Global Poverty: Global Conditions or Local Solutions, New School University, New York City.

World Bank (2005). Well-being and poverty in Ethiopia: the role of agriculture and agency. Washington, The World Bank.

World, Bank, (2006). Country Economic Memorandum, January 2006.



Annex 1: People Met

Addis Ababa

Feleke Tadele, County Representative, Save the Children Canada
Eshetu Bekele, Executive Director, Poverty Action Network (PANE)
Beverly Jones, Country Director CAFOD
Lizie Nikosi, Country Director, Help Age International
Laure Beaufiles, DFID Education Advisor
Malcolm Smart, DFID Economist
Getachew, Head, Economic Planning and Policy Department, MoFED
Paul Moreno-Lopez, Country Economist, World Bank
Susan Dan-Hansen, UNDP, DAG Secretariat
Sarah Vaughn, Political Scientist
Jude Sanford, Food Security Advisor, USAID
Dessalegn Rahmato, Consultant

Oromiya Region

Haro Beseka Kebele, Wonchi Woreda

Group Discussion, mixed adult farmers (6 men, 1 woman)
Group Discussion (8 men, 3 women)

Amhara Region

Regional Bureaus/Offices

Dejene Minliku, Programme Director, Organisation for Rehabilitation and Development in Amhara (ORDA)
Teshome Wale, Deputy Bureau Head, Bureau of Agriculture and Rural Development
Amlaku Asres, Office Head, Food Security and DPP Office
Amare Kinde, M&E, Food Security and DPP Office
Tilaye Gete, Deputy Bureau Head, Bureau of Education

Libo Kemkem Woreda

Moges Ambaw, Food Security Desk
Addis Tefera, Head, Woreda Agriculture and Rural Development Office



Fekade Ayalew, Head, Administration and General Services, Woreda
Education Office

Shehochu Tehara PA (Kebele)

Getnet Kasumer, PA Administrator

Tadelew Mekonnen, Development Agent

Group Discussion (7 men; 3 women)