



BUILDING RESILIENCE IN ETHIOPIA

Context

Ethiopia's economic growth and its expansion in the delivery of basic services in recent years have been among the most impressive in Africa. However, it continues to face enormous challenges: rapid population growth; regional instability; pervasive poverty and increasingly frequent climatic and economic shocks. The number of food-insecure people is increasing.

Country-specific challenges

More than 30 million Ethiopians live in extreme poverty. Each year, between 10 and 15 million people (13-19% of the population) are unable to meet their basic food needs. Of these, 7.8 million chronically food-insecure people receive assistance through the national safety net programme. The remainder are dependent on relief food assistance.¹

Population growth is putting increasing pressure on resources. The estimated current population of 83 million people is expected to rise to around 120 million by 2030.² Rapid urban growth is expected. Agricultural yields are struggling to keep up with the increased population and population density. Smallholder farmers generate 95% of agricultural production, which is highly dependent on rainfall. Only 6% of irrigable land is actually benefiting from irrigation. In poor production years, markets are highly vulnerable to supply shortfalls.

Rainfall has become erratic since the 1990s as a result of recurring El Nino and La Nina episodes³ which contributed to the 2011 Horn of Africa emergency and Somalia famine. Ethiopia's climate will get significantly hotter and wetter over the next 50 years, with increasingly erratic rainfall damaging crops and reducing yields.

Economic shocks, including fluctuating commodity prices, also have a significant impact on a vulnerable population. Around 30% of smallholder farmers are net buyers of food and have struggled to cope with the spiralling inflation rates of the last four years.⁴ Ethiopia was also badly affected by the oil and food price shocks in 2008 and 2011.

¹ Ethiopia Humanitarian Requirements Documents 2005 - 2012

² Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, World Population Prospects: The 2010 Revision, <http://esa.un.org/undp/wpp/index.htm>, Wednesday July 20, 2011; 4:33:42 AM

³ Ministry of Agriculture. 2010. Agriculture Sector Policy and Investment Framework. Addis Ababa.

⁴ UNDAF Country Analysis 2010.

UK response

Since 2005 the UK has increased its focus on helping people become more self-reliant, and so less dependent on humanitarian aid. DFID is developing a set of integrated instruments targeted to meet the different needs of different sections of the population. Underpinning this is UK investment in governance, security and justice and the Government's delivery of basic services, such as education, for the benefit of all Ethiopians.

To address the current and future impact of climate change we are supporting government, NGOs and the private sector to help them plan for and implement climate adaptation strategies and benefit from low carbon technology.

We are also designing a programme to support businesses to invest in sectors that create jobs and new enterprises – predominantly for women. This will help to diversify the economy, making it more resilient to shocks and create increasing economic opportunities beyond smallholder agriculture.

For those under the national poverty line, the **Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP)** gives predictable cash or food payments to 7.8 million chronically food-insecure people, usually in return for work to improve their communities, such as soil and water conservation, road building, and construction of schools and clinics. This payment ensures that these people's households have sufficient food, so freeing them to make investments in their future. The PSNP has had success in keeping children in school, preventing the sale of assets, such as animals, and improving household food security, even in periods of acute need. Preliminary findings from a recent assessment show that the amount of time between harvests that households benefiting from the PSNP are without food has been reduced from 3.6 to 2.3 months.

The UK also supports two key supplementary parts of the PSNP. The **Household Asset Building Programme (HABP)** is working with 400,000 poor households providing credit and technical assistance to help them to diversify and increase their incomes. The **Risk Financing Mechanism (RFM)** allows the safety net to scale up and cover additional needs in times of shock.

However, humanitarian needs remain. Each year two to seven million people, outside of the PSNP require emergency food. DFID Ethiopia is developing a multi-year humanitarian programme that allows it to better support humanitarian response in a predictable way and on the basis of established early warning systems. DFID is working to ensure emergency food aid is timely enough and sufficient to protect livelihoods as well as save lives. This means building in flexibility to increase or modify allocations according to changes in the situation.



Ababu Dinin, Wogedi District

"For me resilience means being able to eat properly, having a good house and owning things like livestock. Now I own two oxen and five sheep, and I produce teff, chickpeas, vegetables and wheat. My wife and I have also set up a small bar selling locally brewed beer and soft drinks. The difference between when I started the Productive Safety Net Programme and now is the distance between the earth and the sky."



Jemal Mohammed, Kalu District

Graduating from the Productive Safety Net Programme “means that I can provide enough food for my family... I can do that because of the crops I produce and my vegetable garden. Now this is possible, my wife and I can focus on our own land rather than doing the hard work involved in public works. Before I joined the programme I had nothing. A small bit of land and just the calf my parents gave me as a wedding present. Now I have two oxen, a cow, 10 orange trees and a small area of irrigated land for vegetables. Although I still have to buy food, the money I earn from selling oranges and vegetables is more than enough.”

Next steps

The scale of challenges in Ethiopia means much more work is required to help generate a more disaster-resilient population. This includes:

- making sure that all chronically food-insecure people are able to benefit from predictable social protection (i.e. the PSNP), and that this is better connected with humanitarian response;
- better integrating disaster resilience into development programmes, such as health and education, to ensure that the impact of increasing climate and economic shocks (e.g. children dropping out of school during drought) are understood and mitigated;
- supporting the Government to create a more conducive environment for private sector growth and job creation outside of rain-fed agriculture.