JOINT EVALUATION OF EFFECTIVENESS AND IMPACT OF THE ENABLING DEVELOPMENT POLICY OF THE WORLD FOOD PROGRAMME (WFP)

ETHIOPIA COUNTRY STUDY

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JOINT EVALUATION OF EFFECTIVENESS AND IMPACT OF THE ENABLING DEVELOPMENT POLICY OF THE WFP

ETHIOPIA COUNTRY STUDY

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VOLUME I:

MAIN TEXT

VOLUME II: (on CD Rom)

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2 – Work plan

3 – List of people met

4 - Field findings

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The evaluation has been carried out by a consortium of DRN, ADE, Baastel, ECO and NCG
c/o DRN, leading company:

DRN srl
Via Ippolito Nievo 62
00153 Rome, Italy
Tel +39-06-581-6074
Fax +39-06-581-6390
mail@drn-network.com

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This report was prepared during the months of March and April 2004 by the Ethiopia Country Team (Gebremeskel Dessalegn, Anne-Claire Luzot, Laketch Mikael and Luca Russo) with the support and supervision of the Chief Quality Advisor (Younes Bouarfa). The Team would like to thank in particular the WFP Ethiopia Country Office for having organised, in an efficient and transparent manner, all the field visits as well as several meetings, and for making available promptly the necessary background documents and data.

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ADLI	Agricultural Development Led Industrialisation
AEZ	Agro-Ecological Zone
BoA	Bureau of Agriculture
BoA&NR	Bureau of Agriculture and Natural Resources
BoE	Bureau of Education
CBA	Cost-Benefit Analysis
CBO	Community Based-Organisation
CCA	Common Country Assessment
CE	Cereal Equivalents
CIE	Centre for International Education
CO	Country Office (WFP)
CP	Country Programme (WFP)
CSA	Central Statistic Authority
CSB	Corn and Soya Blend
CSO	Country Strategy Outlines (WFP)
CSP	Country Strategy Programme (WFP)
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DFID	Department for International Development
DOC	Direct Operational Costs (WFP)
DPPC	Disaster Prevention Preparedness Commission
DSC	Direct Support Costs (WFP)
EB	Executive Board (WFP)
EC	European Commission
EDP	Enabling Development Policy (WFP)
EGS	Employment Generation Scheme
EMOP	Emergency Operation (WFP)
EQ	Evaluation Question
ESDP	Education Sector Development Programme
ETH-CP	Ethiopia Country Programme
FAAD	Food Aid and Development
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation
FDRE	Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
FFW	Food for Work
FSP	Food Security Programme
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GNP	Gross National Product
GoE	Government of Ethiopia
HAPCO	HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control Office
HH	Household
HQ	Headquarters
ICT	Information & Communications Technology Division (WFP)
ICTI	Information & Knowledge Management Branch, ICT (WFP)
IP	Implementing Partner
ISC	Indirect Support Costs (WFP)
ITSH	Internal Transport, Storage and Handling (WFP)
LIC	Low Income Country
LLPP	Local Level Participatory Plan
LLPPA	Local Level Participatory Plan Approach

LTSH	Landside Transport, Shipping and Handling
MCHC	Maternal and Child Health Care
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MERET	Managing Environmental Resources to Enable Transitions to More Sustainable Livelihoods
MoA	Ministry of Agriculture
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MoE	Ministry of Education
MT	Metric Ton
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
NPDPM	National Policy for Disaster Prevention and Management
ODA	Official Development Assistance
ODOC	Other Direct Operational Costs (WFP)
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
OEDE	Office of Evaluation (WFP)
ORDA	Organisation for the Relief and Development of Amhara
PA	Peasant Association
PDM	Programme Design Manual (WFP)
PEP	Participatory Evaluation Profiles
PLWHA	People Living With HIV/AIDS
PMTCT	Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission of HIV
PRRO	Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation (WFP)
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
PSA	Programme Support and Administrative funds (WFP)
RBoE	Regional Bureau of Education
RBM	Result-Based Management
RBM&E	Result-Based Monitoring and Evaluation
SC	Steering Committee
SCF	Save the Children - UK
SDPRP	Sustainable Development and Poverty Reduction Program
SFP	School Feeding Project
SO	Sub-Office (WFP)
SPR	Standardised Project Report (WFP)
SSA	Sub-Saharan Africa
SWC	Soil and Water Conservation
UN	United Nations
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme HIV/AIDS
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
UNFPA	United Nations Fund for Populations Activities
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
US	Unites States of America
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VAM	Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping
WFP	World Food Programme of the United Nations
We.S.M.C.O.	Welfare for the Street Mothers and Children Organization
WHO	World Health Organization
WOA	Woreda Office of Agriculture
WOE	Woreda Office of Education

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. On May 4 1999, the Executive Board of the World Food Programme approved the Enabling Development Policy (EDP) to help the organization sharpen the focus of its development activities. The objective of this external evaluation, sponsored by a number of WFP donors, is to assess the efficiency, effectiveness, impact, relevance, and sustainability of this policy. The evaluation has a three-phase structure: a desk phase, completed in March 2004; a field phase that includes a total of seven country studies undertaken between the months of March and July 2004; and a Synthesis phase due for completion by the end of 2004. The Ethiopia Country study is the first (pilot) of the seven country studies to be carried out during the field phase.

2. Within the framework of the overall evaluation exercise, the objective of the Country Studies is "to contribute evidence-based elements to the overall evaluation process through assessment of EDP-related principles[1], activities and results in the specific country contexts". In line with the EDP Evaluation matrix presented at the end of the first phase of the study, the Ethiopia country study aims at assessing the following: the relevance of the EDP to the country and local context; the degree to which WFP's delivery process has been updated to facilitate implementation of the EDP; the results of the EDP at local and country levels; and the degree of - or likelihood of achieving - sustainability of the results attained or intended. Moreover, the Ethiopia Country Study is also intended to serve as a 'pilot' to test and fine-tune the country study methodology and related tools developed during the desk phase. It should also be noted that, in the case of Ethiopia, many of the changes that 'inspired' the EDP formulation were already in the making before its formulation and therefore the evaluation has treated the EDP as an evolutionary process rather than a rupture, which would have allowed assessments along *'before/after EDP'* lines.

3. In line with the overall **evaluation methodology**, the analysis has been articulated according to two main levels: i) country level: to examine translation into practice of the key concepts of the Enabling Development Policy (EDP), such as partnerships; ownership by governments; demonstrating results, etc. The analysis at country level has also included funding and staffing patterns, the balancing and the links of the different components (Emergency Operation – EMOP, Protracted Relief and Recovery Operations-PRRO, Development) in the overall WFP Country portfolio as well as among the five areas of focus; ii) local and beneficiaries level: to assess the results of WFP's development interventions at project and community level, i.e. at project outputs, outcome and impact at the project level. The **evaluation matrix** elaborated during the desk phase has been the main analytical tool used during the country study and has provided the basis for the elaboration of interviews and check-lists, questionnaires and focus group discussion guide. The collection of data for the indicators identified in the evaluation matrix has required a variety of methods and involved different sources and stakeholders, whilst the need for **triangulation** has been the overarching concern of the country team.

4. The **main difficulty** encountered during the Ethiopia country study was the level of available data which was insufficient for a comprehensive efficiency analysis. Indeed the multiple sources of funding and the different nature of the procurements undertaken (in-kind, local purchase, imports) within the Country Programme precluded the collection of comparable data on the actual unit costs of food deliveries, and therefore hindered their comparison with market prices

[1] The principles referred to are: i) assistance should be provided only when and where food consumption is inadequate for good health and productivity; ii) each and every WFP development intervention will use assistance with food consumption to encourage investment and leave behind a lasting asset; iii) beneficiaries of food aid and lasting assets should be poor, food-insecure households; iv) geographical targeting should be used to concentrate resources on food-insecure areas within recipient countries; v) timeliness will be treated as a key aspect of targeting; vi) clear and objective indicators will be used to signal when help is needed and also when it is time for phasing out; vii) greater use of participatory approaches; viii) strengthen partnerships; ix) cost-effectiveness in terms of the development results to be achieved, and M&E becoming more results-oriented.

which are themselves extremely volatile and location specific. Time and shortage of manpower were other constraints faced by the evaluation team, given the size of WFP operations in the country, the size of Ethiopia and the logistical constraints linked to poor road conditions and the number of relevant documents to be analysed.

5. **Ethiopia** is one of the poorest countries in the world, ranking 158th out of 162 countries in the UNDP Human Development Report 2001. In recent years various attempts have been made to gain a better understanding of the food security situation of the country, quite apart from the annual exercise of counting the number of people receiving food assistance. Most analyses seem to concur that the food-insecure population can be estimated as approximately 50% of the population and that about 15 million people (22% of the total population) receive food aid, although not on a regular basis. Of that total, around 5-6 million people are considered as chronically food-insecure (according to the proxy indicators identified by the Government as *households constantly under food aid*) while the others are increasingly vulnerable to shocks and subject to transitory or acute food insecurity at times of drought.

6. Despite massive quantities of emergency food aid delivered annually (yearly average of 742,000 tons between 1993 and 2002), the consumption needs of the Ethiopian population are not fully covered. In fact, notwithstanding the fact that food security is a key priority of Government and donors, results have been so far disappointing owing to poor co-ordination and the fact that food insecurity, essentially a structural problem for a large share of the population, is mainly addressed through short-term measures. More recent initiatives however (e.g. Food Security Coalition and the Strategic Framework for Safety Nets) seem to provide an adequate framework for enhanced partnership and for the adoption and implementation of more structural and long-term approaches to food security. In such a context, given the Ethiopian food balance sheet deficit and existing market failures, there is a widely recognised role and scope for food-aid-based interventions - at least over the medium term - to mitigate short-term transient food insecurity and to provide support to specific vulnerable groups. This would, however, call for the definition of a food policy that clearly establishes when and how food is required and helps to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of existing programmes.

7. At present the WFP Country Programme (CP) portfolio includes three projects: i) MERET, that focuses on natural resources management and sustainable livelihoods and represents 83% of CP planned resources; ii) school feeding in food insecure areas (up to 9% of the CP portfolio); iii) support to HIV/AIDS-affected households in urban areas (8% of the CP portfolio). CP resources in the last 4 years have represented between 9% and 15% of the overall WFP portfolio in Ethiopia. The analysis of the different documents produced by the WFP Country Office and interviews undertaken during the mission indicate that WFP development programming is **coherent** with the EDP principles and directives and that application of the EDP principles can also be traced in other WFP programme categories (Emergency Operation - EMOP - and Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation - PRRO).

8. WFP development interventions in the country are **relevant** to - and consistent with - the national policies and programmes as well as with the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and UNDAF priorities. The high proportion of Country Programme resources allocated to the MERET project reflects the level of priority that the Government currently attributes to the reduction of chronic food insecurity and to rural development. In such a context, the systematic application of the EDP principles and the focus on key EDP priority areas in the CP can be identified as a factor contributing to increased relevance of WFP development programming.

9. It should also be noted that a large part of the chronic food-insecure WFP case-load which should normally be covered by development (or recovery) activities is currently covered by EMOP, because of the preference given so far by donors to yearly food aid allocation based on the traditional annual emergency appeal. Documentary analysis and field visits indicate that application to EMOP of development programming experience and the EDP principles has

increased the relevance of emergency operations to the priorities of the target group (the chronic food-insecure).

10. The **Country Programme (CP) main target group,** 'the chronically food-insecure' is in line with national priorities. CP distribution of resources broadly reflects the distribution of food-insecure people at regional level, but with some higher level of allocation in favour of regions where WFP has a historical presence and with an agricultural rather than a pastoralist livelihood basis[2]. However, whilst the CP operates in food-insecure areas to the benefit of food-insecure people, it is not clear whether this is always fully translated into actions in favour of the most vulnerable people or the most vulnerable communities since the 'developmental' nature of the CP, equity issues, resource constraints and other considerations (e.g. Implementing Partners' capacities and interest, working with farmers with a minimum of assets, site accessibility) appear to influence the targeting process.

11. The progress made, and the constraints faced, by the WFP Country Office when putting in place the Enabling Development Policy directives at country level have been analysed according to a set of criteria identified during Phase 1, namely: i) partnership; ii) stakeholder participation and ownership; iii) demonstration of results; iv) gender mainstreaming; v) HIV/AIDS mainstreaming; vi) resourcing of the Country Programme and of EDP-related measures.

12. **Partnership** with Government can be considered as satisfactory, but with the donor community it is below expectations despite the considerable efforts undertaken by WFP CO. In fact, while some results have been recorded at project level, these are far below what is required by the EDP directives and what is necessary to meet beneficiary needs in a comprehensive manner. Notable progress has been recently achieved at global level through the elaboration of an overall framework for collaboration between Government and multi and bi-lateral donors, a framework to which WFP has substantially contributed. This provides a framework for future strategic collaboration that goes beyond an implementation-based partnership.

13. A number of mechanisms and measures have been put in place at national, project and local levels to ensure increased **ownership by local stakeholders of WFP-promoted projects**. Indeed evaluation findings indicate that the implementation and planning process of the different projects is 'owned' and controlled by local institutions and communities, though with some differences between projects. Capacity-building activities at all levels (funded through Other Direct Operational Costs – ODOC - with provision of non-food items) has been one of the factors contributing more substantially to enhanced participation by local stakeholders in the various phases of WFP-promoted activities.

14. At present collection of the data and information that would allow **demonstration of results** of WFP development interventions is not systematic. However, one-off exercises conducted by WFP and Implementing Partners in the last few years provide clear indications of the attainment of results relating to the EDP strategic objectives. The Country Office has now embarked on a comprehensive effort to mainstream a Result-Based Management (RBM) approach in all its projects. The overall exercise is well structured, and particularly interesting and promising are: i) the involvement of Implementing Partners (IPs) in the exercise; and ii) the objective of mainstreaming the system within the counterparts' monitoring systems.

15. **Gender mainstreaming** is a priority of the Country Office and several measures have been put in place to this end. Particularly relevant for instance is the re-orientation of MERET towards income generating activities that should benefit women in particular. The approach adopted, however, with its focus on increased women's participation, is rather partial compared with what is advocated by the EDP with respect to gender (e.g. encompassing relations between women, men and children and the need for case-by-case understanding of these relations). Interviews and

[2] Pastoralists areas are generally covered by WFP through EMOP.

field findings indicate that WFP's and Implementing Partners' staff are generally concerned about the need to strengthen women participation in project activities but are often constrained by other priorities.

16. The **WFP approach to HIV/AIDS** is based on implementation of a stand-alone project, on mainstreaming of HIV/AIDS considerations in all activities included in the Country Programme, and on engagement in partnerships with other UN agencies. The proposed approach is comprehensive and relevant. Furthermore the targeting of urban food-insecure populations through the HIV/AIDS project contributes to place on the development agenda urban poverty and food insecurity issues. Yet very little has so far been achieved in terms of implementation and, given the negative effects of the HIV/pandemic on food security, more attention should be paid to ensuring adoption of the measures envisaged.

17. The reduction of the level of overall **resources** at WFP's disposal for its development programmes, as envisaged by the 2003-2006 CP, seriously limits WFP's coverage of the chronic food insecure at national level. The problem has been partly mitigated by the allocation (though on a significantly shorter timeframe) of Emergency Operation (EMOP) resources to "development" activities such as school feeding.

18. A crucial role in the implementation of Country Programme activities and in the definition and adoption of the measures envisaged by the EDP at country level has been played by the level of **cash resources** made available along with development food. An analysis of cash resource utilisation indicates that more cash resources are required for the management of development activities than for emergencies and that at country level the allocation of cash resources for development has been proportionally higher than for EMOP. However, the lack of a management accounting system within the WFP Country Office does not allow clear attribution of overhead costs between different WFP operations and therefore the real costs of managing development activities cannot be fully determined.

19. An analysis of Other Direct Operational Costs (ODOC) allocations reveals the role of such cash resources in the implementation of the different projects, particularly with respect to capacity building. However, the current ODOC allocation system, based on food tonnage, implies that the volume of cash resources at the disposal of smaller projects (HIV/AIDS and School feeding) is much lower than in the case of larger projects such as MERET. This automatically translates into a significantly lower level of investment in capacity-building activities.

20. **Project level activities** have been analysed with respect to: beneficiaries actually reached; use of - and potential and actual benefits from - food aid and assets created; and efficiency and sustainability of the results. With respect to **beneficiaries**, it appears that in the case of **MERET**, landless households (or households with very little assets) benefit essentially through their direct participation in food-for-assets activities whilst households with a minimum of assets (land, livestock, etc.), while also participating in food-for-assets activities, receive the most important benefits from the assets created by the project. In the case of the **School Feeding project** beneficiaries are boys and girls from primary schools located in rural food-insecure areas; it should be noted that the geographically-based targeting system does not automatically ensure that children from the poorest households benefit from the project since their participation in school activities may be hindered by other economic and cultural factors. Implementation of the **HIV/AIDS project** started recently and results therefore are not yet visible. The introduction of the project has, however, led to a sharper focus in the identification of WFP urban project beneficiaries.

21. In the case of **MERET**, **food aid** is generally delivered in time and in the quantities necessary to address food shortages at household level. Participants consider it a form of payment for the activities undertaken as well as a support towards the transition to more

sustainable livelihoods. Food aid delivered also plays an important role in asset protection. The majority of beneficiaries appears to prefer food to cash as a form of transfer because of the volatility of food market prices, though some of them consider cash a more flexible form of payment. In the case of **School Feeding**, rations have not been regularly provided over the school year (gaps from 1 to 3 months are often observed). The type of food provided since 2002 (shift from locally purchased Fortified Blended Food to imported Corn and Soya Blend) is less acceptable to the beneficiaries.

22. The **assets created** by **MERET** are of good quality and highly appreciated by users who generally take over maintenance responsibilities. The team's field findings broadly confirm the 2002 impact assessment study findings as regards outcomes and impacts: increased production, enhanced income, improved livelihoods and increased ability to cope with drought; nevertheless, the majority of households still consider themselves as food-insecure. It should be noted that MERET interventions alone cannot secure sustainable food security at community level as long term food security and resilience to shock require a considerable level of asset accumulation that can only be achieved through increased partnerships and a number of co-ordinated interventions.

23. With respect to the **results** achieved by the **School Feeding project** positive trends have been observed with regard to enrolment rates and school attendance, though it is not clear whether the increased enrolment rates are the result of children moving from nearby schools or of children that would not have gone to school at all in the absence of school feeding. Teachers' perceptions of students' increased ability to learn as a result of school feeding is positive. However, education quality remains problematic since increased enrolment levels are not complemented by improvements in the number of classrooms, teachers and school books.

24. The ongoing process of integration of WFP projects such as MERET and school feeding, and of WFP development programming, with other operations such as Emergency Operation (EMOP), is contributing to an overall increase in **efficiency**. The analysis of efficiency in terms of food aid costs is extremely complicated because of conditionalities attached to food aid purchases that limit comparability, and also because of the wide market prices fluctuations existing in Ethiopia. Nonetheless local purchases appear more cost-efficient when compared to imported food aid, and at community level it appears that in most cases grain market prices are lower than the average unit cost of food aid and therefore cash transfers may be considered as potentially more efficient.

25. Yet there are extremely wide variations in grain prices from one market to another and it is clear that the implementation of cash-based safety nets would require institutional capacities which at the moment do not exist. Furthermore, to date, there is insufficient evidence of the effects of cash-based safety nets on food market prices, bearing in mind also that Ethiopia's food balance sheet is, and will remain, negative for quite some time. Nonetheless the mission considers that WFP should pay more attention to efficiency issues and that, at least on a sample basis, the cost of food aid should be constantly monitored in order to allow comparability with other delivery options.

26. Several measures (e.g. capacity building) have been put in place to increase the chances of **sustainability** of the activities undertaken, with satisfactory results, taking into account that in the context of Ethiopia phasing-out should be seen as a long term strategy and that the use of food aid to support education and HIV/AIDS-affected households should be seen not as an instrument limited in time but rather as a permanent feature of Ethiopia's social policies. Nonetheless clearly spelt out exit strategies with related milestones need to be elaborated by the Country Office.

27. A key conclusion of the study is that a large share of the Ethiopian population will need, at least over the medium term, to be supported by some forms of transfer to protect or develop their assets and ensure that basic nutritional requirements are met. These transfers could be either

of a welfare and unconditional nature to protect particularly vulnerable categories, or of a 'conditional' nature to support developmental activities. In such a context **food aid-based transfers** are expected to play a key role, at least over the medium term. In some cases, such as school feeding or nutritional support to HIV/AIDS patients, it is clear that food assistance can play a different and complementary role with respect to other forms of transfer; while in the case of public works or household asset creation the advantages of food aid are open to debate and, in areas with good access to markets, cash transfers, if available, could be more cost-efficient and give beneficiaries more flexibility.

28. A second conclusion is that in the Ethiopian context, where the distinction between emergency and non-emergency situations is blurred, the WFP approach based on three discrete funding categories (emergency, recovery and development) may not be fully appropriate. What is needed to address the longstanding food security problems of the country is a **programming approach** based on longer term commitments and on an enhanced level of resource predictability (for both food and non-food items) and the necessary synergies between social protection, recovery and development activities.

29. The basic purpose of the Ethiopia Study was to contribute evidence-based elements to the overall evaluation process through assessment of EDP-related principles, activities and results in a specific country context. Nonetheless the mission has also identified a number of issues that could lead to an improvement in the overall quality and results of WFP's interventions at country level. At a general level, the mission believes that, in the context of Ethiopia, a more systematic application of the Enabling Development Policy principles to all WFP operations could considerably improve the overall quality and results of WFP's interventions.

30. **Key areas of improvement** and related recommendations that should be addressed by both WFP management and donors include: i) improvement of partnership arrangements both at implementation level, through strengthened collaboration with donors, and at strategic level, through mainstreaming of food aid and WFP assistance within wider frameworks for the reduction of chronic food insecurity; ii) the need to pay further attention to the monitoring of efficiency-related issues so as to facilitate informed policy decision; iii) development of clearly-defined exit strategies; iv) the need to pay further attention to a more pro-active targeting approach so as to reach vulnerable categories which are still not adequately covered (e.g. out-of-school children); v) the need to promote a longer-term approach to WFP financing among donors so as to increase WFP's capacity to plan for and address food security problems of a structural nature; vi) the need to increase the share of food aid acquired through local purchases; and vii) an increase in cash resources to ensure effective implementation of improved targeting and other accompanying measures to enhance the developmental results of WFP activities.

EVALUATION OF WFP ENABLING DEVELOPMENT POLICY ETHIOPIA COUNTRY STUDY

INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND

1. On May 4 1999, the World Food Programme Executive Board approved the Enabling Development Policy (EDP) to help the organisation sharpen the focus of its development activities. This external evaluation, sponsored by a number of WFP donors, aims at assessing the efficiency, effectiveness, impact, relevance and sustainability of this policy. The results of the evaluation are expected to: i) provide the sponsoring donors with valuable insights and issues for consideration in relation to future support for WFP development activities; ii) identify measures and mechanisms that could potentially enhance WFP's effectiveness in the design and implementation of its development portfolio; iii) contribute through empirical evidence to a better understanding of the conditions for success and failure for food aid in development activities. During the scoping phase, it was decided that the EDP will be mainly evaluated on the basis of the assessment of the results it has generated. The assessment is to be carried out at global, country and local levels, but with the main focus on the country and local levels.

2. The Evaluation is to be undertaken in three phases: a desk phase which has been completed in March 2004; a field phase that includes a total of seven country studies undertaken between the months of March and July 2004; and a Synthesis phase due for completion by the end of 2004. In line with the preliminary analysis of the EDP and with the evaluation's intended objectives and focus, four main questions (or topics) and a related evaluation matrix were identified during the inception phase. They are designed as the main framework of analysis to guide the various evaluation team members throughout the evaluation process and keep it focussed.

3. This report is articulated into four main chapters. Chapter 1 presents the methodology employed and difficulties encountered; chapter 2 describes the Ethiopia context with respect to food security and food aid issues and outlines WFP interventions in the country; chapter 3 illustrates the evaluation main findings at the country level and at local and project level; finally chapter 4 presents the country team's main conclusions and draws linkages between findings that have emerged from the different evaluation questions.

RATIONALE AND OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE OF THE COUNTRY STUDY

Basis for country selection

4. In the inception report **two criteria** were proposed for the final selection[3] of the countries to be visited during phase 2 of the evaluation. The first is of a **quantitative** nature and refers to the need to have a balanced regional representation of WFP development intervention, proportional, as far as possible, to the actual development portfolio per region. The second is of a more **qualitative** nature and refers to the evaluation team's judgement of the contributions that each country study could make in responding to the evaluation questions in a comprehensive manner[4].

[3] The Steering Committee presented a preliminary list of 11 countries out of which the evaluation team was requested to make a proposal.

[4] The basis for this judgement includes: i) the need to include all the socio-economic contexts in which WFP operates; ii) coverage of the five areas of focus; iii) the presence of particularly interesting activities or experiences that could be the basis for specific case studies; iv) situations where Countries have adjusted their development portfolios (new activities or phasing-out of activities - particularly if non-EDP), which may provide insights into the

5. A total of seven countries were thus proposed and the proposal was endorsed by the Steering Committee. These are: **Bangladesh, Bolivia, Ethiopia[5], Honduras, Mali, Mozambique and Pakistan.** The countries selected should provide a fair representation of the contexts in which WFP runs its development operations although it should be noted that the selection process has not been undertaken on a statistical basis.

6. The selection of Ethiopia is based on several grounds:

- The overall size of the Ethiopia Country Programme that represents approximately 10% of the overall WFP development portfolio;
- The coverage with respect to the 5 EDP areas of focus;
- The importance of the other WFP operations such as Protracted Relief and Recovery Operations (PRROs) and Emergency Operations (EMOPs) and their potential linkages with the Country Programme (CP) and the Enabling Development Policy (EDP);
- The existence of several reports and internal evaluations of WFP activities that could facilitate the concentration and focus of country team activities;
- The overall importance of Ethiopia with respect to the international debate on food aid and food security issues.

Objectives of the country study evaluation

7. In the framework of the overall evaluation exercise the objective of the country studies is "to contribute evidence-based elements to the overall evaluation process through assessment of the EDP related principles, activities and results in the specific country context". In line with the EDP Evaluation matrix, the country studies[6] aim at assessing:

- The relevance of the EDP to the country and local contexts;
- The degree to which WFP's delivery process at the country level has been updated to facilitate implementation of the EDP;
- The results (outputs, outcomes and impacts) of the EDP at the local and country levels;
- The degree of - or chances to achieve - sustainability of the results attained or to be attained.

Terminology utilised in this report

8. Before entering into the description of the various methodological issues it is important to briefly provide some clarification on the terminology used in this report particularly when describing WFP operations[7]. In the case of Ethiopia WFP undertakes three types of operations:

a) Emergency Operations (EMOPs): the mechanism by which WFP, in response to a request from a government or the UN Secretary-General, provides emergency food aid and related assistance to meet the food needs of people affected by a disaster or other emergency. An EMOP, including extensions, generally lasts no more than 24 months, after which any need for continuing relief and rehabilitation/recovery assistance should normally be met through a Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation;

b) Protracted Relief and Recovery Operations (PRROs): the mechanism by which continuing WFP assistance is provided to emergency-affected populations, including refugees and displaced persons, when an EMOP reaches its two-year limit, and by which

reasons for making changes; and v) existing studies and evaluations that could facilitate the concentration and focus of country team activities.

[5] Ethiopia has been identified in the Inception Report as the most suitable country to conduct the pilot study due to the presence of a wide range of issues relevant to the evaluation.

[6] Moreover the Ethiopia Country Study is also to serve as a "pilot" to test and fine tune the methodology and related tools for the country studies elaborated during the desk phase.

[7] Sources of definitions: WFP Glossary and WFP Programme Design Manual.

'developmental'[8] approaches are gradually introduced to promote recovery. PRROs are normally planned, approved and implemented in a 3-year cycle. Planning for a PRRO should begin after the first twelve months of an EMOP;

c) Development Operations: the category of food aid programmes and projects that support economic and social development. This category includes rehabilitation and disaster preparedness projects and technical assistance to help developing countries establish or improve their own food assistance. The Country Programme is a vehicle for the provision of WFP's development assistance. Country Programmes, approved by WFP Executive Board, consist of a number of specific Projects, called Activities, within a country for a set period, normally five years, to achieve a common goal. These Activities are derived from the "key areas of assistance" described in the Country Strategy Outline.

9. WFP Operations budgets are organised according to the following costs:

a) Direct Operational Costs (DOC): any cost WFP incurs in providing inputs that are used directly in WFP interventions by beneficiaries, by the government of the recipient country or by other implementing partners. This includes the cost of commodities, ocean transportation and related costs, and landside transportation, shipping and handling (LTSH);

b) Other Direct Operational Costs (ODOC): costs that refer to cash resources normally put at the disposal of Implementing Partners for capacity building and project implementation;

c) Direct Support Costs (DSC): costs in immediate support of a project, additional to direct operational costs, which would not be incurred if the project did not exist. These may include non-food items, technical support services, project preparation, appraisal, monitoring and evaluation;

d) Indirect Support Costs (ISC): costs incurred in staffing and operating WFP headquarters and regional offices, and the standard maximum structure at Country Offices that cannot be attributed easily to any programme category or activity.

10. The results of WFP Projects/Activities are classified according to three categories:

a) Outputs (output level of the log-frame hierarchy) defined as the products, capital goods and services which result from a WFP operation; including changes resulting from the operation which are relevant to the achievement of outcomes;

b) Outcomes (purpose level of the log-frame hierarchy) defined as the medium-term results of an operation's outputs;

c) Impact (goal level of the log-frame hierarchy) defined as the positive and negative, intended or unintended long-term results produced by a WFP operation, either directly or indirectly;

d) With respect to sustainability, this denotes the continuation of benefits from a development intervention after major development assistance has been completed; the probability of continued long-term benefits; and the resilience to risk of the net benefit flows over time.

11. Finally when referring to the Enabling Development Policy, it should be noted that:

a) Within WFP it is often referred to as the Food Aid and Development Policy (FAAD);

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8 The word developmental in this report is often put between inverted commas to underline the fact that the EDP recognises that WFP food assistance should play a different but *unique* role. This *is not to promote development* but to *enable* marginalised people, through the provision of food assistance, to take part in the development process and benefit from it.

b) The key policy directives/basic principles referred to in this report are: i) assistance should be provided *only* when and where food consumption is inadequate for good health and productivity; ii) each and every WFP development intervention will use *assistance with food consumption to encourage investment and leave behind a lasting asset*; iii*)* beneficiaries of food aid and lasting assets should be *poor, food-insecure households*; iv) *geographical targeting* should be used to concentrate resources on food-insecure areas within recipient countries; v) *timeliness* will be treated as a key aspect of targeting; vi) use of *clear and objective indicators* to signal when help is needed and also when it is time for phasing out; vii) greater use of *participatory approaches*; viii) strengthen *partnerships*; ix) *cost-effectiveness* in terms of the *development results* to be achieved, and M&E becoming more results-oriented;

c) The five key areas of focus or policy priorities are: 1) Enable young children and expectant and nursing mothers to meet their special nutritional and nutrition-related health needs; 2) Enable poor households to invest in human capital through education and learning; 3) Make it possible for poor families to gain and preserve assets; 4) Mitigate the effects of natural disasters in areas vulnerable to recurring crisis; 5) Enable households which depend on degraded natural resources for their food security to make a shift to more sustainable livelihoods.

Activities undertaken

12. This report is the result of series of activities that can be divided into the following:

a) A preparatory phase, before the country visits, where main documents have been analysed and an inception report has been prepared;

b) A field/country phase of 23 days duration undertaken by a team of four consultants and including: i) briefing sessions with main stakeholders; ii) interviews at all levels; iii) project visits and consultation with beneficiaries; iv) debriefing sessions (see Annex 2);

c) Report preparation and consolidation of findings (including the correction of inaccuracies through a consultation process with WFP Country Office).

1 METHODOLOGY

1.1 KEY FEATURES OF THE METHODOLOGY

13. In line with the overall evaluation methodology, the analysis has been articulated according to two main levels: i) the country level; and ii) the local and beneficiaries level:

- **Country level:** to examine translation into practice of the key concepts of the Enabling Development Policy (EDP), such as: partnerships; ownership by governments; targeting towards the most vulnerable groups; gender mainstreaming; demonstrating results and beneficiaries' involvement in the planning, implementation and evaluation of projects. The analysis at country level has also included funding and staffing patterns, the balancing and the links of the different components (Emergency Operation - EMOP; Protracted Relief and Recovery Operations – PRRO; Development) in the overall WFP Country portfolio as well as among the five areas of focus;
- **Local and beneficiaries level:** to assess the results of WFP's development interventions at project and community level, i.e. at project outputs, outcome and impact at the project level.

14. The **evaluation matrix** elaborated during the desk phase has been the main analytical tool utilised during the country study and has provided the basis for the elaboration of interviews and check-lists, questionnaires and focus group discussion guide. Some points needs to be highlighted at this stage:

- With respect to Evaluation Question (EQ) 1 "*How relevant is the EDP in terms of the evolving context of poverty reduction and food security*?", it was felt that the relevance and coherence need to be assessed with respect to WFP's Country Programme (CP) (i.e. the concrete instrument of WFP development programming). A two step approach to EQ 1 was therefore used: i) the assessment of the coherence of the CP with respect to the EDP principles; and ii) the assessment of the relevance of the CP with respect to the country context;
- The evaluation question (and sub-questions) on sustainability have been modified to take into account DAC definitions (see par. 10);
- A sub-question on HIV/AIDS mainstreaming has been added[9];
- Some indicators have been revised to take into account SC comments on the Phase 1 report and Ethiopia's experience;
- Some sub-questions, included in the matrix, have not been covered because not relevant to the Ethiopia's specific context (e.g. the inclusion of VAM indicators in the project M&E system).

15. The collection of data for the indicators identified in the evaluation matrix has required a variety of methods and involved different sources and stakeholders, whilst the need for **triangulation** has been the overarching concern of the country team. For instance, findings presented in WFP progress and evaluation reports have been, in as much as possible, cross checked at the community level and with other stakeholders (GoE and donors).

16. Interviews (assisted with by the use of check lists) and review and analysis of relevant documents have been the main tools utilised for the analysis **at country level**. Interviews have been undertaken with the following groups of stakeholders:

- **WFP staff** at the country and sub-office levels: to appreciate the progress made and difficulties encountered in promoting the EDP principles at the country and project levels;

[9] It is to be recalled that HIV/AIDS issues were not directly addressed by the EDP since at the time of its formulation HIV/AIDS was not yet part of the International Development Agenda. Nevertheless, the team has decided to add a specific sub-question given the negative effects of HIV/AIDS on food security and the potential role that food aid could play to mitigate (together with other interventions) its negative effects.

- **Government Representatives:** (for most Country Programmes the main implementing partners of WFP's are government institutions) in order to: i) verify the relevance and coherence of WFP interventions with respect to sectoral policies and, on the other hand, assess the implementation mechanisms put in place at all levels; ii) understand WFP's role within the overall framework of the country's poverty reduction and development strategies;
- **UN Agencies:** the rationale for contacting UN agencies has been twofold, namely to: i) improve understanding of the role of WFP (and the potential synergies) within Common Country Assessment (CCA)/UNDAF; and ii) review the past, ongoing and possible future partnership agreements between WFP and individual UN agencies;
- **Donors:** in addition to the meeting held with the Donors sponsoring the evaluation, the team has met other key donors (including some with no direct relationship or partnership agreement with WFP in the country). These contacts have proved very useful in providing the evaluation team with different perspectives and points of view on the pros and cons of the use of food aid in a non-emergency context and on WFP's role in such a framework;
- **NGOs:** despite the fact that NGOs are rarely direct implementation partners of WFP development operations, their knowledge of the country and of the food security and food aid assistance mechanisms and issues can considerably contribute to further clarifying the context in which WFP operates. In the case of Ethiopia, the team: i) interviewed national and international NGOs operating in the areas where WFP operates (when relevant); ii) interviewed an international NGO known for its experience and reputation on food security and food aid matters (SCF UK).

17. **Document and data analysis** (see Annex 5) including: i) project documents and agreements (including other WFP operations); ii) Country Strategy Outlines and Country Programmes; iii) project monitoring and evaluation reports; iv) guidelines and technical notes; v) VAM analysis and reports; vi) partnership and collaborative agreements; vii) food procurement and food markets data; viii) national statistics and reports on food security; ix) national and sectoral policies relevant to WFP activities; x) other donors' and NGO's reports and studies; xi) CCA/UNDAF documents. WFP documents have been analysed mainly with respect to the level of application of (and coherence with) the EDP principles of WFP development programming (as well as other operations) and whenever possible with respect to the reliability of the information provided, whilst analysis of other documents has provided indications on the overall relevance of WFP operations (and development in particular) with respect to the overall country context and development framework.

18. **Results** of WFP activities have been examined both at global/project and at community level. The analysis of the overall **results of WFP operations** have been based on the existing available progress reports produced by WFP and implementing partners, evaluation reports and discussions with key informants (Government staff, local authorities, NGOs and other donors).

19. Furthermore, evidence emerging from **project visits and beneficiaries' interviews** has been a key element in the independent assessment of the actual results of WFP interventions. However, given the size of the WFP's operations (for instance the MERET project - *Managing Environmental Resources to Enable Transitions to More Sustainable Livelihoods* - covers over 600 sites) and the limited number of days at the disposal of the evaluation team, field visits have aimed to provide an illustration of what is actually happening at project level and cross-check the data available in WFP and other reports and the information provided by different stakeholders, at the same time trying to integrate and supplement available information, and local stakeholders' and direct beneficiaries' views, on the results achieved through WFP support. The findings should therefore be viewed as a further contribution to the overall evaluation exercise, without pretending, given the limited sample and statistical value, to be fully representative of the results of WFP efforts in Ethiopia. With respect to the methodological issues, three key points will be discussed here:

- **Sites and projects selection:** given the need to restrict the sample, in the case of Ethiopia priority has been given to the two regions (Tigray and Amhara) with the largest WFP development portfolio and to the MERET project (12 sites out the 19 visited), though projects in Oromia and Southern regions have also been visited given the need to ensure the inclusion of different socio-economic contexts. It is to note, that very often Employment Generation Schemes are being implemented (sometime supported by WFP emergency operations), in communities nearby MERET sites. This has provided the mission with the opportunity, through interviews with local key informants, to broadly compare the results of the two different approaches (development versus emergency);

Table 1: Location of Village Sites visited during the Field Visit in Ethiopia

Region	Woreda	Village Name/Project Site	EDP Activity
Amhara	South Wollo / Kallu Woreda	Ahrbo PA /Addis Mender Watershed	MERET
Amhara	South Wollo / Ambasel Woreda	Limbo PA /Aromba Watershed	MERET
Amhara	South Wollo / Kallu Woreda	Chorissa	School Feeding
Amhara	North Wollo / Meket Woreda	Debrezebit	MERET and School Feeding
Amhara	North Wollo / Meket Woreda	Denkena PA	MERET
Amhara	South Wollo / Ambasel Woreda	Kurkure Genda	School Feeding
Amhara	North Wollo / Meket Woreda	Wakaye	MERET
Amhara	North Wollo / Meket Woreda	Woketa PA / Village Addis Amba	MERET
Amhara	South Wollo / Ambasel Woreda	Minchu PA /Minchu-Mili Watershed	MERET
Oromia	East Shoa / Adama Woreda	Lilifeta Watershed	MERET
SNNPR	Chencha	Kulano and Upper Basso Catchment Areas	MERET
Tigray	Wukro	Gemad and Abraha Ahsbela	MERET and School Feeding
Tigray	Nader Adet	Adet	MERET
Tigray	Adwa	Adi-Keltel	MERET and School Feeding
Addis Ababa	NA	NGOs and CBOs	HIV/AIDS

- **Interviews and focus group discussions:** during the project visits, discussions were held with key informants and beneficiaries. Key informants contacted during the field visits include: i) community leaders; ii) NGOs' representatives operating in the project areas; iii) line ministries' staff at district (woreda) and community level; iv) project committee members; v) teachers. Three main rapid appraisal techniques have been used during the field visits to gather information: i) focus group discussions, which have proved to be a very effective way of gathering and cross-checking information[10]; ii) on the spot individual interviews have been undertaken while visiting the project sites (particularly with women to facilitate further contributions that may have not be emerged during the group discussions); iii) finally, direct observation of project outputs have been undertaken to assess the quality and use of the assets created;
- **Key information collected:** a specific check list has been prepared for each of the projects visited, based on the information gathered during the preparatory phase (in Addis Ababa) and on the evaluation matrix. In line with the Enabling Development Policy directives, key information to be collected was essentially as follows:
  - Quality and appreciation of the food delivered;
  - Timeliness of food deliveries (e.g. when compared with the actual needs);
  - Beneficiaries' views on the benefits created by the project;

[10] In most cases the mission tried to limit the group size to a maximum of 15 people and when the presence of key informants or other stakeholders such as WFP monitors was found not to be conducive to full participation of beneficiaries, separate sessions were held. Focus groups have been generally conducted with men and women together.

- Beneficiaries' and key informants' views on the targeting mechanisms of the interventions;
- Beneficiaries' role in project identification and implementation.

The information collected, though essentially of a qualitative nature, has been then consolidated into tables to allow more systematic analysis of findings (see Annex 4).

20. Finally, during the country study, two separate **briefing and debriefing sessions** for WFP Country Office staff and donors sponsoring the evaluation were organised. The briefing sessions were designed to inform the different stakeholders on the objectives and approach of the evaluation and to identify issues that may have not emerged during the inception phase but that may be worth analysing. The debriefing sessions were designed essentially to provide feedback to the stakeholders and to verify and discuss the preliminary findings of the country study.

1.2 DIFFICULTIES ENCOUNTERED AND LIMITATIONS OF THE EXERCISE

21. The main difficulty encountered during the Ethiopia country study was linked to the insufficient level of available data to allow a comprehensive efficiency analysis. In fact, the multiple sources of funding and the different nature of procurements undertaken (in-kind, local purchase, imports) within the Country Programme do not allow the collection of comparable data on the actual unit costs of food deliveries and therefore their comparison with market prices which are themselves extremely volatile and location specific. These difficulties are also due to the lack of a management accounting system within the WFP Country Office that would have allowed clear attribution of overheads costs between different WFP operations (EMOP, Development and PRRO). Yet all available data have been put at the disposal of the evaluation team by WFP Country Office, which has allowed the mission to undertake some efficiency analysis.

22. Another important constraint, faced by the mission, relates to the way results are presented in WFP Standardised Project Reports. In fact, these are based on reports produced by implementing partners at community level and then aggregated at district and regional level and therefore provide only very broad averages of the inputs delivered and of the corresponding outputs. Furthermore key information such as the actual period of food distribution (in the case of school feeding) is not reported and this makes it difficult the actual estimation of food rations.

23. As highlighted in Phase 1 report, the resourcing Country Programmes, despite the fact that these are based on 4-5 years plans, depends on annual allocations. Therefore project inputs, outputs and outcomes are defined on the basis of annual work-plans, hence the targets (if existing) provided in the Country Programmes log frames are only merely indicative. This clearly affects the appraisal of effectiveness accordingly to DAC definition (*the extent to which an intervention has attained, or is expected to attain, its major relevant objectives efficiently in a sustainable fashion and with a positive institutional development impact)*.

24. Time and shortage of manpower have been other constraints faced by the evaluation team given the size of WFP operations in the country, the size of Ethiopia and the logistical constraints linked to poor road conditions and the amount of relevant documents to be analysed. This has also led to some changes in the methodology proposed such for instance: i) the decision to drop the envisaged interviews with non-beneficiaries at the community level[11]; ii) the cancellation of the envisaged possibility of preparing specific case studies on key issues; and iii) the drastic simplification of the '*good night memos'* proposed in Phase 1 report because too time consuming. Furthermore, in such context, the team, while trying to keep a balance of approach between qualitative and quantitative approaches, has given priority to qualitative analyses.

[11] It is also to note that, at the community level, it is nonetheless difficult to distinguish between beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries (see for instance section 3.3.1) given also the existing food aid redistribution mechanisms.

2 WFP INTERVENTIONS IN THE COUNTRY SPECIFIC CONTEXT

2.1 THE COUNTRY CONTEXT

2.1.1 Socio economic data

25. Ethiopia is one of the poorest countries in the world ranking 158th out of 162 countries in the UNDP Human Development Report 2001, with about 44% of the population living below the poverty line. Its per capita GNP is US$ 100, while the infant mortality rate is 116 per 1,000 live-births[12], under-nourishment is rampant with 42% of the population undernourished compared to 33% in Sub Saharan Africa as a whole[13]. Illiteracy rate - 58% - is also high, likewise, gross primary school enrolment for both male and female school age population is low - about 76% and 52%[14]. The HIV/AIDS pandemic with 2.2 million (2002 data)[15] infected is a further deterioration of the socio-economic situation. The country is also vulnerable to recurrent drought that makes millions of people prone to severe famine and food shortages and to depend on food aid. Official estimates[16] show that the number of people who received relief food assistance over the period 1996-2003 was, on average, 6.2 million per annum (see Table 4).

26. The total population of Ethiopia in 2002 was about 67.3 million. The urban population accounts for only 16%, which is extremely low compared to Sub-Saharan Africa (33%) and Low Income Countries (30%). Agriculture is the single most important economic sector in Ethiopia accounting for about 52.3% of GDP[17] and employing more than 80% of the population. Despite the significant contribution of agriculture to the national economy, its performance depends on weather and rainfall conditions; in most years, the country faces serious food crises due to recurrent droughts.

27. The data on aid per capita shows that Official Development Assistance (ODA) for Ethiopia averages 13 US$ per capita in 1998-2002, which is low compared to the average of Sub-Saharan Africa (23 US$) and least developed Countries (21 US$). Approximately 30% of Official Development Assistance (ODA) is allocated to Humanitarian Assistance[18].

Table 2: Basic Socio-Economic Indicators (Ethiopia, Sub-Saharan Africa, Low Income Countries)

Most recent estimates (latest year available, 1996-02)	Ethiopia	SSA	LICs
Population, mid year (million)	67.3	688	2,495
GNP per capita (US$)	100	450	430
Population, average annual growth 1996-02	2.4	2.4	1.9
Labour force, average annual growth, 1996-02	2.2	2.5	2.3
Poverty (% of population below national poverty line)	44		
Urban population (% of total population)	16	33	30
Life expectancy at birth (years)	42	46	59
Infant mortality (per 1,000 live births)	116	105	81
Child malnutrition, weight for age (% of children under 5)	47		
Access to improved water sources (% of population)	24	58	76
Illiteracy (% of population age 15+)	58	37	37
Gross primary enrolment (% of school age population)	64	86	95
Male	76	92	103
Female	52	80	87

Source: World Bank, Development Economics central Database.

12 World Bank, "Ethiopia at a glance", 2003.

13 These data refer to 1999-2001. Source: FAO "The State of Food Insecurity in the World 2003". According to the same source, the number of people undernourished in 1999-2001 was 26.4 million in Ethiopia and 198.4 million in Sub-Saharan Africa.

14 World Bank, "Ethiopia at a glance", 2003.

15 AIDS in Ethiopia – Disease Prevention and Control Department, Ethiopia Ministry of Health, October 2002.

16 "The New Coalition for Food Security in Ethiopia", November 2003.

17 World Bank, "Ethiopia at a glance", 2003.

18 (2004), WFP, Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation – Ethiopia, Draft.

Table 3: Basic Economic Indicators (1982, 1992, 2001, 2002)

Key Economic Ratios and Long-term Trends		1982	1992	2001	2002
GDP (US$ billion)		5.4	10.0	6.3	6.0
Gross domestic investment/GDP		13.4	9.2	18.0	20.2
Export of goods and services/GDP		9.5	4.5	15.4	15.2
Gross domestic savings/GDP		5.6	3.0	2.2	1.9
Gross national savings/GDP		6.8	7.2	13.8	
Current account balance/GDP		-6.8	-3.3	-4.2	
Interest payments/GDP		0.4	0.4	1.0	0.7
Total debt/GDP		60.2	93.0	91.3	108.9
Average annual growth	**1982-92**	**1992-02**	**2001**	**2002**	**2002-06**
GDP	0.7	5.6	7.7	5.0	
GDP per capita	-2.4	3.0	5.2	2.7	
Export of goods and services	-3.2	12.6	-1.6	7.7	
Structure of the Economy		**1982**	**1992**	**2001**	**2002**
(% of GDP)					
Agriculture		54.2	62.9	52.3	52.3
Industry		12.3	8.2	11.1	11.1
Manufacturing		7.6	4.8	7.0	7.0
Services		1.8	8.3	4.6	5.5
Private consumption		1.5	2.5	11.4	-4.0
General government consumption		-1.0	16.4	-18.5	26.8
Gross domestic investment		-1.8	10.3	27.4	17.4
Imports of goods and services		0.0	8.0	-1.8	5.5

Source: World Bank, Development Economics central Database.

2.1.2 Food security situation

Food security

28. In recent years various attempts have been made to gain a better understanding of the food security situation of the country apart from the annual exercise of counting the number of people receiving food assistance. Most analyses seem to agree with the fact that the food-insecure population in Ethiopia can be estimated to approximately 50% of the population and that about 15 million people (or 22% of the total population) receive food aid though not on a regular basis. Among them, around 5-6 million people are considered as chronically food-insecure (according to the proxy indicators identified by the Government as *households constantly under food aid*)[19], while the others are increasingly vulnerable to shocks and subject to transitory or acute food insecurity at times of drought (see for instance the number of people assisted with food aid in 2003).

Table 4: Relief food assisted population by region

Region	YEAR										Average	% of Total
	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003		
Tigray	1,085,000	764,400	751,200	675,000	1,201,000	998,439	1,717,756	938,500	917,200	2,011,427	1,105,992	17 9
Amhara	2,096,800	1,201,600	868,000	822,120	2,022,200	2,786,803	3,569,820	2,130,000	1,724,800	3,122,991	2,034,513	33 0
Oromia	1,995,000	902,000	395,400	547,780	709,614	1,562,451	1,902,824	1,129,000	1,051,400	3,733,711	1,392,918	22 6
SNNPR	840,000	822,000	361,400	331,700		718,517	1,410,008	869,800	303,300	1,439,252	788,442	11 5
Afar	215,000	100,000	50,000	264,200		160,578	306,605	127,700	225,400	786,200	248,409	3 6
Somali	250,000	100,000	210,000	600,000	50,000	864,800	1,489,660	981,000	894,800	1,063,520	650,378	10 5
B Shangule	83,000	20,000	35,000	13,090			4,201		9,000		27,382	0 3
Gambella	27,000	10,000	25,000	41,500	72,300	17,000	46,600		32,800	58,361	36,729	0 5
Total	**6,591,800**	**3,920,000**	**2,696,000**	**3,295,390**	**4,055,114**	**7,108,588**	**10,447,474**	**6,176,000**	**5,158,700**	**12,215,462**	**6,166,453**	**100.0**

Source: The New Coalition for Food Security in Ethiopia (November 2003).

[19] The 5-6 million figure that has been accepted by the Food Security Coalition (see below) is considered by many observers as too low.

29. The fact that food insecurity is as pervasive in Ethiopia's urban areas as it is among the rural population should be highlighted. More than half the urban population may be considered food-insecure (see Table 5). Moreover, food consumption has been, on average, below the minimum energy requirement (2,400 Kcal for a productive adult) in urban areas over the past ten years. Urban food insecurity is a function of poverty reflecting limited employment opportunities, low skill levels among wage seekers and constraints to small enterprise growth.

Table 5: Food poverty in urban areas

Indicators	1995/96	1999/2000	% change
	Urban	Urban	Urban
Real food expenditure per capita	790	631	-20.13
Real food expenditure per adult	947	767	-19.01
Kcal consumed per day per adult	2,050	1,861	-9.22
Food poverty (% of population consuming < 2,400 Kcal per day)	53%	57% (1997)	---

Source: UNECA, Socio-Economic Conditions and Policy Environment in Ethiopia: Appraisal of the Fleming Principle, June 2002.

Causes of food insecurity

Several factors contribute to the problem of food insecurity in Ethiopia, including:

- Recurrent droughts that, together with other crisis, seriously affect households' livelihoods basis and resilience to shocks and blur the distinction between emergencies and non-emergency situations;
- Small land holding and land fragmentation with more than 60% of the farming households cultivating less than one hectare of land*;
- Severe land degradation and low soil fertility in the highland areas where the majority of the vulnerable groups is concentrated;
- Inadequate agricultural practices, low technological adaptation, lack of irrigation and water harvesting techniques, low land productivity, limited employment opportunities outside agriculture and poor market integration;
- Poor infrastructure is also a contributing factor to food insecurity. According to some studies, the road network of Ethiopia is the sparsest in Africa. It is estimated that the road density of Ethiopia is some 29 km/1000 square km. Moreover, about 80% of the country's land area is estimated to be about half-day walk from an all-weather road;
- In urban areas, where food and most other basic necessities must be purchased, food insecurity is directly related to low and irregular household income;
- Policies and programmes focussing essentially on short-term measures (such as relief) or on the offer/productive (rather than the demand side) of the food security equation to tackle food insecurity.

*Central Statistic Authority data.

…and food gaps

30. Over the past seven years, Ethiopia's average yearly production of cereals, pulses and oil seeds was about 8.6 million metric tons, of which about 17% is estimated to be retained for seed and other non-consumption purposes. The remaining balance was available for domestic consumption. During the same period, the total food available for domestic consumption was about 8.4 million metric tons in Cereal Equivalent (CE). This amount included net domestic production, food aid, net commercial import, and stock changes. Thus *imported food aid accounted for nearly 7.3% of the average annual food available for domestic consumption.*

31. On the other hand, the average annual food requirement was roughly 10.5 million metric tons and therefore the magnitude of the food gap was about 2.1 million metric tons on average (see the table below).

Table 6: Food gap per region in Cereal Equivalent (CE)

Region	Annual Food Requirement Average 1997/98-2003/04 (MT-CE)	Annual Surplus/Shortage Average 1997/98-2003/04 (MT-CE)	as % of Food Requirement
Tigray	669,631	-115,455	-17.2
Afar	155,895	-128,747	-82.6
Amhara	2,920,265	-394,504	-13.5
Oromia	3,922,212	-312,074	-8.0
Somali	476,056	-368,031	-77.3
Benshangul-Gumuz	93,897	39,622	42.2
SNNPR	1,757,049	-1,004,715	-57.2
Gambela	36,467	72,734	199.4
Harari	28,940	-23,130	-79.9
Addis Ababa	453,456	-440,060	-97.0
Dire Dawa	58,239	-52,420	-90.0
Total	**10,486,962**	**-2,070,595**	**-19.7**

Source: CSA, DPPC, WFP and own calculations.

32. The quantity of food aid allocated by Donors to Ethiopia is generally based on the annual Food and Crop Supply Assessment undertaken by the Government with the support of FAO/WFP which is the basis for the annual appeal made by the Disaster Prevention Preparedness Commission (DPPC) to the international community. In 1993-2002, Ethiopia has received an annual average of 742,000 tons of food aid, a relevant share of which through WFP, with wide variations from one year to another (see Table 10). As shown in the table below, even with an average annual imported food aid flow of about 612,325.7 metric tons, the overall food made available from different sources was not sufficient to cover the consumption needs of the Ethiopian population.

Table 7: Levels of imported and locally purchased food aid

Food items	1997/98	1998/99	1999/00	2000/01	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	Average
Food Aid Imported (in MT)								
Cereals	349,658.3	234,379.9	1,138,801.9	671,726.9	396,930.4	735,939.3	601,620.2	589,865.3
Pulses	37.9	447.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	69.4
Oil	4,060.9	19,946.5	10,912.8	9,480.9	1,787.1	7,430.1	6,251.0	8,552.8
Total (cereal equivalent)	360,327.5	287,047.4	1,167,371.6	696,547.9	401,609.0	755,391.4	617,985.3	612,325.7
Food Aid local purchase (in MT)*								
Cereals	51,567.0	94,872.0	197,956.0	161,169.0	167,476.0	247,987.0	NA	120,525.0

*Accounted separately to avoid double counting.
Source: DPPC.

2.1.3 Government and donors priorities, policies and programmes addressing poverty and food insecurity

The Sustainable Development and Poverty Reduction Programme (SDPRP)

33. This comprehensive programme sets very ambitious objectives in terms of poverty reduction and growth leading towards the Millennium Development Goals. The strategy is based on 4 pillars: i) Agricultural Development Led Industrialisation (ADLI) and food security; ii) justice and civil service reform; iii) governance, decentralisation and empowerment; and iv) capacity building.

34. In general terms, the SDPRP provides a common overall framework for the implementation of a set of policies and programmes previously developed and then updated and revised to take

into account the evolving socio-economic context. These include, among others, the 1997 **Federal Food Security Strategy** that rests on three pillars: i) increasing supply or availability of food; ii) improving access/entitlement to food; iii) strengthening emergency response capabilities. In such framework agriculture and rural development are to play the leading role.

35. Ensuring access to elementary education to all citizens is a key priority of the SDPRP and at the core of the second **education sector development programme**. Emphasis is placed on supply side issues such as construction of facilities, training and deployment of new teachers, development and provision of text books, etc.

36. Priority is also given to **HIV/AIDS** whose levels of infection are recognised to be high and hampering the economic growth through diversion of investment, loss of adult labour and productivity, etc.

37. The Government in its commitment to eradicate poverty is also proactive in addressing its gender dimension through specific initiatives as well as mainstreaming.

The Millennium Development Goals[20] (MDGs) and UNDAF

38. The MDGs and the UNDAF together with the SDPRP provide the main framework of reference of Government policies and donor interventions. As already stated, Ethiopia is committed to developing policies to meet the ambitious MDGs[21]. In the same line, the overall goal of the UNDAF is to contribute to reducing absolute poverty focusing on 6 thematic areas[22].

The New Coalition for Food Security and the Strategic Framework for Safety Nets

39. This initiative recently launched by the Government and supported by several key donors and the UN (mainly WFP, UNDP and FAO) is designed to build partnerships among the various stakeholders to address chronic food insecurity related problems in a co-ordinated manner. It involves three main objectives:

a) Increase food availability at household level through a series of activities aimed at improving land management and crop and livestock husbandry;
b) Increase access to food by enhancing/stabilising the incomes of chronically food-insecure households;
c) Enhance provision of health and nutritional services to reduce morbidity and malnutrition among people living in food-insecure areas in order to improve their overall health and nutritional status.

40. Within the overall framework of the Coalition, the **Joint Government Multi Donor Strategic Framework for Safety Nets** appears as particularly relevant because it addresses the "access" aspect of food insecurity that in the past was essentially tackled with short term food aid – based assistance. The framework is still under negotiation but would provide a nationally based framework for public transfers (either in cash or food) along three core components:

a) Labour intensive public works identified though community participation in decision making to assure transfer to those who are very poor but able to work;
b) Conditional transfers targeted to specific groups for specific activities (e.g. pregnant women for targeted nutrition, school children for school feeding);

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20 UN country team, 2003, 'Millennium Development Goals: challenges and prospects for Ethiopia'.

21 Goal 1: by 2015 extreme poverty and hunger should decline by half; Goal 2: to achieve universal primary education; Goal 3: to promote gender equality and empower women; Goal 4: to reduce child mortality; Goal 5: to improve mother health; Goal 6: to combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases; Goal 7: to ensure environmental sustainability; Goal 8: to develop a global partnership for development (Source: *Millennium Development Goals: Challenges and Prospects for Ethiopia*, United Nations Country Team, Addis Ababa, November 2003).

22 Sustained economic growth; Productive employment; Improved food security at household level; Improved access to basic services; Good governance; Mitigation of HIV/AIDS.

c) Unconditional transfers that meet the welfare objectives of those who are destitute (e.g. the elderly, the handicapped, AIDS patients).

41. Whilst it builds on existing programmes and policies, the Food Security Coalition introduces some new elements compared to the past:

a) It is based on the recognition that food insecurity is mainly a chronic problem and therefore the traditional short-relief based approach to food insecurity needs to be reconsidered;
b) It recognises and advocates the need for building stronger partnership among all stakeholders;
c) It introduces health related elements within the overall framework of food security interventions;
d) It recognises the importance of vulnerability reduction as a basis for sustained development and, in this framework, the role that safety nets could play and therefore it emphasises the relation between social protection and development actions.

Relevant Sectoral Policies

Basic directions of agriculture and rural-centred development, as presented in the **National Rural Development Policy,** are the following:

- Proper use and management of land, water and other natural resources: through different community-based conservation and rehabilitation mechanisms and a more rational utilization of the country's land and water resources so as to improve land productivity;
- Agro-ecology based development approach: to identify problems and development potentials of different Agro-Ecological Zones (AEZs);
- Integrated approach to development: within agriculture itself (between different activities) and between agriculture and other sectors such as education, health, water supply, road infrastructure, trade, industry, rural financial institutions, etc;
- Targeted interventions for drought-prone and food-insecure areas.

The main focus of the **education policy** is to increase access to educational opportunities with enhanced equity, quality and relevance. This was the basis of the first Education Sector Development Programme (ESDP) started in 1997/98. The assessment of this programme showed impressive results in terms of enrolment rates increases and highlighted some bottlenecks such as gender gap, student/teacher ratio increases, etc. The second ESDP initiated in 2002/03 pursues among its major goals: *achieving universal primary education through expanding access and coverage of primary education with equity and improved quality.*

The **National Policy on HIV/AIDS** was adopted in 1998 and a Strategic Framework for the National Response to HIV/AIDS in Ethiopia (2001 to 2005) was approved in 2001. Similarly, the Sustainable Development and Poverty Reduction Programme (Ethiopia's PRSP) includes multi-sectoral measures to address issues of HIV/AIDS pandemic issues. Thus, prevention and control of HIV/AIDS has been placed at the top of Ethiopia's development agenda. Ethiopia's national response to HIV/AIDS includes among its 10 intervention areas: i) information, education and communication and the promotion of behavioural change; ii) prevention of mother-to-child transmissions; iii) provision of care and support to HIV/AIDS infected and affected people.

Other Policies

Decentralisation is an outcome of the adoption of a federal system of government in the country. Planning and implementation of economic policies and development programmes has, to a large extent, been shifted from the centre to the Regions. By way of deepening and broadening the decentralisation process, measures are currently under way to pave the ground to make the district/woredas the focus of socio-economic development. It involves strong measures to build capacities, as technical abilities limitation is the major constraint to implementing such a process.

According to the **land policy**, land belongs to the people and the federal and regional governments administer it on their behalf. The land ownership policy stipulates that every farmer who wants to make a livelihood from farming is entitled to have a plot of land free of charge. Land cannot be sold or exchanged. In order to protect farmers' user rights, their land holdings should be registered and provided with a certificate of user rights. Some regional states (Amhara and Oromia) have already taken initiatives in this direction.

42. In Ethiopia there is no specific **food aid** policy. However the role of food aid is recognised in different policy documents such as:

a) The Sustainable Development and Poverty Reduction Programme (SDPRP) where food aid is explicitly considered necessary in the short term, while in the medium term it should be replaced by fiscal transfers for the relatively small number of households that will not be able to benefit directly from agricultural development. The emphasis is placed on the need to link relief and development through environmental protection (soil and water conservation, terracing and reforestation) activities implemented through food-for-work;
b) The Education Sector Programme that advocates the role of school feeding in increasing primary school enrolment and attendance;
c) The National Policy for Disaster Prevention and Management (NPDPM) (see below) which in the framework of the relief interventions considers food aid as the main (but not the only) form of transfer to vulnerable groups.

43. Nonetheless the use of food aid (particularly in the development context) remains extremely controversial, particularly among some donors, also because in the absence of a specific policy with clearly spelt out exit strategies, the modalities of food aid use are open to question. In this report the mission tried to avoid entering into a debate (cash *versus* food) that is to a large extent theoretical. Yet, given the importance that the food aid debate has for instance in WFP's partnership building efforts (see section 3.2.1), the 'pros' and the 'cons' of food aid use in Ethiopia, as perceived by the different stakeholders, are summarised in the table below.

Table 8: Pros and cons in food aid use in Ethiopia

Pros	Cons
▪ Addresses food balance sheet problems at national and local level ▪ Less prone to corruption ▪ Addresses local food markets failures ▪ Normally used to meet households nutritional requirements ▪ Better targeting towards the most vulnerable ▪ Complements other interventions to reduce vulnerability ▪ Ethiopia has a solid system in place for food aid distribution but not for other forms of transfers	▪ Negative impact on local food production ▪ Less efficient than other transfer such as cash ▪ Inhibits the development of local food markets ▪ Lack of flexibility in being converted in other primary goods ▪ Low value commodity that tends to be redistributed within the community more than other forms of transfer and therefore with may have a lower impact on the targeted population ▪ Creates dependency

Source: own elaboration based on documents analysis and interviews.

In addition to a number of specific **food security related projects and programmes** supported by different donors such as WFP, World Bank and FAO, there are two major national initiatives in the field of food security:
i) **The Food Security Programme (FSP)** funded though the Food Security Budget Line of the Federal budget that is also being resourced by some donors such as the EC. The funds flow as a block-grant to woredas for the implementation of a range of activities such as water harvesting, irrigation, rural roads, natural resource management and rural finance. The level of resources allocated to the Programme for the next Fiscal Year (July 2004-June 2005) is Ethiopian Birr 2 billion (approximately 235 million US$) that represent a 100% increase over the ongoing fiscal year;
ii) **The Relief and Emergency Actions** undertaken under the framework of the National Policy for Disaster Prevention and Management (NPDPM) and defined in Ethiopia on a yearly basis, based on the Disaster Prevention Preparedness Commission (DPPC) annual appeal. The NPDPM policy establishes that 80% of relief resources (either cash or food) should be provided through Employment Generation Schemes (EGS) to able-bodied food-insecure individuals for the creation of assets designed to improve the food security situation of the areas so as to create the required linkages between relief and development, whilst the remaining 20% should be transferred to vulnerable people unable to provide labour inputs. The EGSs implemented so far have been widely criticised by communities, GoE and donors* for the poor quality of the assets created which have not resulted in any significant decrease in the level of food insecurity or in linking relief to development (see discussion in section 3.1.3).

* This was also highlighted during several interviews and field visits undertaken by the mission.

Country context main features

- Despite massive quantities of emergency food aid delivered annually the consumption needs of the Ethiopian population are not fully covered
- Notwithstanding the fact that food security is a key priority of Government and donors, results in terms of food security have been so far disappointing due to poor co-ordination and to the fact that food insecurity, essentially a structural problem for a large share of the population, is addressed mainly through short-term measures
- Recent initiatives (e.g. Food Security Coalition and the Strategic Framework for Safety Nets) seem to provide an adequate framework for enhanced partnership and the adoption and implementation of more structural and long term approaches to food security
- In such a context and given also the food balance sheet deficit and market failures, food aid is expected to play - at least over the medium term - a key role, by providing the target population with the necessary transfers while their livelihoods improve. This would however call for the definition of a food policy that clearly establishes when and how food is required and helps to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of existing programmes

2.2 WFP INTERVENTIONS IN ETHIOPIA

44. This section outlines WFP's interventions in Ethiopia. Given the importance in the Ethiopian context of emergency and recovery operations and the potential and actual links between the Enabling Development Policy and other WFP operations, the latter are also briefly presented here.

2.2.1 Portfolio of interventions

45. As illustrated in the previous section, the Ethiopia context with respect to food aid and food security operation is characterised by a marked tendency to address chronic food insecurity and poverty problems through emergency operations that are normally identified on a yearly basis through the traditional DPPC emergency appeal. This practice is indeed reflected in the WFP country portfolio (see Table 9) that is clearly marked by a prevalence of emergency operations which in the last four years have represented between 77% and 88% of the total tonnage.

Table 9: Comparison food distributed Country Programme (CP), EMOP & PRRO (MT)

Year	CP[23]	EMOP	PRRO	Total
2000	49,930	465,549	11,641	527,120
2001	63,290	276,112	44,665	384,067
2002	66,629	301,944	32,707	401,280
2003	68,224	408,003	30,837	507,064

Source: WFP Country Office.

46. As illustrated above, WFP currently undertakes three types of operations in Ethiopia:

a) Emergency Operations (EMOPs): since 1973 WFP undertook 43 EMOPs in Ethiopia. Currently the main operation is Relief Food Assistance to small scale farmers and drought affected pastoralists (total costs 205,467,000 US$) that should assist approximately 4,600,000 beneficiaries and has two main objectives: i) to save lives; ii) to support post disaster rehabilitation of households' assets through Employment Generation Schemes (EGS) that are intended to cover around 35% of the population targeted by EMOP or 1,600,000 people. The Operation is implemented in collaboration with the Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Commission (DPPC) within the framework of the National Policy for Disaster Prevention and Management (NPDPM);

b) Protracted Relief and Recovery Operations (PRROs): designed to assist refugees and refugees repatriation through the "Food Assistance for Refugees and Refugees Repatriation" over a period of two years (total envisaged cost 56,000,000 US$[24]);

c) Development: which currently includes 3 projects (or activities in WFP jargon) which are detailed below.

47. The table below shows the share of WFP's deliveries of food aid to Ethiopia in the decade 1993-2002.

Table 10: WFP and Global Food Aid Deliveries to Ethiopia 1993-2002 (thousand tons)

WFP and Global Food Aid Deliveries to Ethiopia 1993-2002 (thousand tons)											
	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	Average
WFP Food Aid	238	71	113	166	157	220	240	609	373	380	257
Global Food Aid	550	950	631	484	381	605	826	1,434	1,009	549	742
% of WFP on Global Food Aid	43	8	18	34	41	36	29	42	37	69	35

Source: WFP Statistics 1993-1997, 1998-2001, 1999-2002; and own calculations.

23 Includes also Supplementary Activities.

24 However the actual level of resourcing of the PRRO is approximately 39 million US$ as of April 2004.

2.2.2 Country Programmes and outline of ongoing interventions

48. The Enabling Development Policy was formulated in 1999 and its period of existence broadly corresponds to the two Country Programmes so far implemented in Ethiopia. The first County Programme covers the 1998-2003 period and the second corresponds to 2003-2006[25]. However, in the case of Ethiopia, it is nearly impossible to rigidly distinguish between "*before*" and "*after*" the EDP period since many of the changes envisaged and promoted by the EDP were already (though not in a systematic manner) taking place in Ethiopia even before 1999 (see for instance the emphasis paid to community participation in project 2488 described in paragraph 51 and respective box). Indeed it is very likely that the experience gained in Ethiopia may have provided a number of lessons that have been incorporated in the formulation of the EDP.

Country Programme 1998-2003

49. The 1998-2003 CP overall objectives were: i) to improve the level of food security of approximately 895,000 beneficiaries; and ii) to enhance emergency preparedness and response. The CP comprised three main activities/projects. Namely:

a) Activity 1: **Rehabilitation of rural lands, reforestation and development of infrastructure** (Project 2488) through food-for-work activities aimed at rehabilitating highly degraded land in food-insecure areas. The main implementing partner of the project was the Ministry of Agriculture and the envisaged resources allocated to this activity corresponded to 70% of the CP plans;
b) Activity 2: **Improving education through school feeding** that envisaged the provision of fortified food to address the problems of low enrolment and high drop-out rates in chronically food deficit areas. The main implementing partner for this project was the Ministry of Education;
c) Activity 3: **Urban slum physical infrastructure improvement and support for vulnerable women and children** through food-for-work and food interventions in support of MCHC, aiming at improving the nutritional status of vulnerable groups living in urban areas. The activity was to be implemented in partnership with NGOs.

Country Programme 2003-2006

50. The 2003-2006 CP's stated goal is "to strengthen the capacity of food-insecure households to cope with seasonal food insecurity and to increase their long-term food and livelihood security. Like the previous CP it includes three activities, which represent, to a large extent, continuation of activities/projects undertaken under the previous CP[26]. These are:

a) Basic Activity 1: Managing Environmental Resources to Enable Transitions to More Sustainable Livelihoods (MERET) (continuation of the old 2488 project);
b) Basic Activity 2: Promoting Education through School Feeding;
c) Basic Activity 3: Urban HIV/AIDS-Supporting Households, Women and Children affected by HIV/AIDS.

51. The **MERET**[27] has been conceived as a follow up to the 2488 project, it represents 83% of total Country Programme planned resources (a total of 134,824 MT). It is designed to address

[25] The first Country Programme was due to end at the end of 2003 but its completion was anticipated of one year in the framework of the harmonisation of UN programming (UNDAF).
[26] It should be noted that unlikely for other multilateral Agencies, the approval of the Country Programme (CP) by the WFP Executive Board does not necessarily mean that the resources approved will be made available to the country but rather that WFP Resources Mobilisation Service is mandated with the securing with Donors of the approved resources. In such context the implementation of a specific activity is not actually linked to the CP cycle but rather to the availability of resources that are normally secured on a yearly basis.
[27] "Land" in Amharic.

EDP's strategic objective 3 "*to make it possible for poor families to gain and preserve assets*" and 5 "*to enable households that depend on degraded natural resources to make a shift to more sustainable livelihoods.*"

MERET in a nutshell

The MERET long-term objective is to improve the livelihoods of poor rural communities and households, particularly those headed by women, and food security opportunities in food-insecure areas, through:

i) strengthening households' and communities' decision-making concerning their own development;
ii) strengthening the technical and organisational capacities of beneficiaries and implementing partners;
iii) rehabilitation of land and creation of productive assets;
iv) creation of income generation opportunities.

The Project covers over 600 sites in 72 food-insecure woredas (districts) in 5 regions of Ethiopia. A project site is normally part of a watershed area and generally covers from 3-400 to a few thousands households. Each year approximately 125,000 persons are expected to participate in MERET food-for-assets activities and therefore an estimated 750,000 people will benefit from the food assistance at the household level.

The project basically consists in the provision of food (3 kg of wheat per participant per workday) to be used to reduce food gaps and to compensate families engaged in assets creation. Participating households are selected by a local committee and receive a daily family ratio up to a maximum of three months' employment per year (during the lean season).

Local Level Participatory Plans, undertaken by community members, which normally are defined on a 5 years basis (and updated/revised on yearly basis) are the starting point for the identification of activities to be supported by the project. These include over 50 different activities and numerous technical packages (to be implemented with the support of food aid and in some cases non-food items) designed to increase and diversify agricultural and livestock production such as: i) soil and water conservation and fertility management measures (e.g. check-dams and field terraces); ii) forestry and biological stabilisation measures (e.g. area enclosure); iii) homestead productivity intensification and income generation (e.g. compost making and bee-keeping); iv) water harvesting measures at community and homestead level (e.g. community ponds, shallow wells for irrigation); v) small community level access roads.

Capacity building activities at all levels (national, regional, districts and communities) for implementing partners, namely Ministry of Agriculture staff and community members, is another fundamental component of the project.

52. **Promoting Education through School feeding project** addresses the EDP policy priority 2 to *enable poor households to invest in human capital through education and training*. The Activity is to be supported over 4 years with a total of 14,789 MT of food commodities (7.6 million US$) or 9% of the total Country Programme budget.

School Feeding Project (SFP)

The long-term objective of this activity is *for households in food-insecure areas to invest in the education of children, especially that of girls,* through: i) increased enrolment and retention of children in schools in food-insecure areas; ii) the establishment of a community based management system of school feeding; iii) increased household awareness about education, especially for girls, and its linkage to health, HIV/AIDS and food security.

The school feeding activity is designed to cover annually 110,000 primary children (grade 1 to 8) in food-insecure districts.

The project consists essentially in the provision of a meal per day composed of fortified foods (famix a locally blended food and/or corn and soya blend). At the school level the management of food and costs of food preparation are entirely under the local community responsibility under the management of a school feeding committee that employ cooks and collect the necessary resources from school parents. Take home ratios (oil) to encourage girls' school attendance are also piloted in pastoralist districts. The project is implemented jointly with the Ministry of Education. The latter is responsible for the logistics of food transportation to schools from the extended delivery points while WFP is to provide meals (fortified foods) to girls and boys attending primary schools.

53. According to the Country Programme (CP) document the **Urban HIV/AIDS project** is designed to address the EDP policy objective 1, *to enable young children and expectant and nursing mothers to meet their special nutritional and nutrition-related requirements*. However it is clear that the complexity of the HIV/AIDS issues and the target groups of this activity cannot be fully covered by the EDP strategic objective 1 as presented in the EDP document. The Activity replaces the old Urban Project that was discontinued for lack of results. The Activity is to be supported over 4 years with a total of 13,908 MT (7.6 million US$) or 8% of the CP budget.

HIV/AIDS Project
The long term objective of this activity is to improve the nutritional status of urban food-insecure, HIV/AIDS infected/affected households headed by women, through: i) support for home-based care for HIV/AIDS affected households; ii) support for HIV/AIDS orphans; iii) strengthening of community-based capacities for local-level participatory planning and action against HIV/AIDS.
Target groups of the project are households with bed-ridden patients and AIDS orphans (at least of one parent). Beneficiaries are identified by implementing partners that utilise the services of community carers (who receive food aid as a compensation).
The project consists essentially in the provision of food (currently food rations include of wheat, vegetable oil and famix or faffa - locally produced, micro-nutrient fortified blended food products) to cover the monthly food requirements of bed ridden patients and of other household's members as well as of orphan that are also encouraged to attend schools. The food-based support is to be complemented by non-food project assistance aimed at: i) improved programming by various partners (i.e., training on integrating gender concerns, results based management, participatory planning and action, project planning, management and monitoring); ii) technical competency for effective delivery of services (e.g., introducing a nutrition component in training on home-based care); and iii) capacity building (equipment and training). The project is implemented under the responsibility of the HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control Office and implementation is carried out by NGO and CBO partners which are already involved in HIV/AIDS related activities focusing on the poor in Addis Ababa and are requested to use WFP food aid as s complement to other activities in favours of HIV/AIDS affected households (e.g. health care, cash transfer, income generating activities).

54. **The Country Programme (CP) Basic resource level is 163,524 MT** (or 40,881 MT per year) at an operational cost of 56.1 million US$ over a period of four years which represent a substantial reduction when compared to the previous CP (see discussion in section 0).

3 MAIN FINDINGS

3.1 RELEVANCE OF THE WFP COUNTRY PROGRAMME AND ENABLING DEVELOPMENT POLICY

This chapter presents an analysis of the relevance of the EDP according to evaluation question (EQ) n° 1 that is "How relevant is the EDP in terms of the evolving context of poverty reduction and food security?" Two observations need to be made. First, at the country level it is felt that the relevance and coherence need to be assessed essentially with respect to the WFP CP (i.e. the concrete instrument of WFP development programming) rather than to the EDP. A two step approach to EQ 1 has therefore been used: i) the assessment of the coherence of the CP with respect to EDP principles; and ii) the assessment of the relevance of the CP with respect to the country context; second, the evaluation sub-questions have been reorganised and sometime re-grouped together to facilitate the presentation. The sequencing of the sections is therefore as follows: i) the CP coherence with respect to EDP; ii) the CP coherence and relevance with respect to the national context and international priorities; iii) links between Development and other WFP operations; iv) relevance of targeting.

3.1.1 Country Programmes coherence with the EDP principles and objectives

55. To date, two CPs have been formulated for Ethiopia, one before and one after the approval of the EDP. As already mentioned, a "*before and after comparison*" will not be appropriate since some of the principles and changes advocated by the EDP were introduced in Ethiopia even before the formulation of the EDP itself. However the analysis of the two documents provides a basis for appraising the changes that have been introduced by WFP over the course of the years and that can be attributed directly or indirectly to the implementation of the EDP. In fact, whilst the overall strategy and typology of operations have remained basically the same, the introduction of some key changes can be noted, and when appropriate, they are further discussed in other sections of this report. The main changes that appear to be in line with the EDP principles and objectives, are the following:

a) The increased integration of WFP activities in the overall framework for poverty reduction with a clear identification of the links between the CP objectives and the MDGs and between the activities promoted and government sectoral policies;
b) The increased focus on the need to strengthen the links between relief and development operations through the use of development methodologies in refugee recovery interventions;
c) The introduction of clearer criteria for geographic targeting based on the level of vulnerability and food insecurity of the district/regions;
d) The introduction of People Living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA) as a specific targeting category and the introduction of specific measures to support households with people affected by HIV/AIDS given their extreme food insecurity level;
e) Greater attention paid to outcome indicators and therefore to the effects of the interventions on people's livelihoods;
f) More emphasis on the need to ensure more participation in and social control over project activities as well as ownership of assets created and promotion of livelihoods diversification;
g) It is also to note, that contrary to EDP broad indications, in the case of Ethiopia there was no shift from asset creation to human resources development. This is explained by the high priority attributed by GoE and local stakeholders to such kind of initiative (see section 3.1.2).

56. Coming to the specific activities of the CP, the **MERET** presents a particularly interesting case to illustrate the evolution of WFP approaches in the use of food aid in activities linked to

Natural Resources Management, since this activity/project has been undertaken in Ethiopia (through different phases) for over 20 years (see the box below).

MERET: OVERVIEW OF THE DIFFERENT PHASES

The evolution of the project started before the formulation of the Enabling Development Policy to then gather momentum with the formulation of the MERET project in 2002. In terms of approaches the 2488 (now MERET) can be subdivided into three main phases: i) food-for-work for large infrastructure development and forestry (1981-1993); ii) introduction of participatory approaches for activities identification (1994-2000); iii) focus on livelihoods (from 2000/2001).

1980-93 Phase 1 and 2 of 2488. This phase was characterised by 4 essential elements: i) top-down government managed Watershed Approach; ii) focus on large watershed areas; iii) very limited level of long-term planning with activities defined on the basis of available food aid; iv) total lack of ownership by the community of the assets created. The approaches promoted at that time were in line with the highly centralised and authoritarian policy of the Derg regime and it should be noted that part of the assets created through food-for-work were either destroyed or abandoned in 1991, when the regime fell.

1994-2000 (Phase 3 and part of phase 4 of 2488). A number of EDP-related principles were introduced at this stage, namely: i) a more community-friendly smaller scale of planning; ii) introduction of Local Level Participatory Planning tools with a focus on smaller watershed activities; iii) increased attention to targeting activities towards food-insecure areas; iv) a focus on and consequent investment in creation of local stakeholders' implementation and technical capacities; v) enhanced ownership of assets created by the community.

From 2000 (end of phase 4 of 2488 and MERET). The main relevant changes introduced in MERET project design relevant to the EDP policy directives are essentially three: i) the introduction of outcomes indicators focussing on direct benefits to people rather than as in 2488 simply on asset creation; ii) a further emphasis on communities' and beneficiaries' role in project implementation through the introduction of participatory monitoring and evaluation practices; iii) the introduction of income generating activities and the emphasis put on homestead based production activities.

57. The Government adopted the first **school feeding pilot project** in 1993 with the support of WFP. In 1994 this project covered 40 schools in 4 regions. After a couple of positive management and assessment missions undertaken in 1996 and 1997, a 5-years project was agreed upon with the Government in 1999 covering the period 1998-2003, followed by another one covering the period 2003-2006. Table 11, in the following page, highlights the main characteristics of the two projects agreements signed with the Government.

58. A comparison between the previous and ongoing School Feeding Project (SFP) presented in the following page clearly shows how the new programme integrates the EDP principles, namely: i) explicit linkages are made to the overall policy framework (Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper and UNDAF); ii) introduction of outcome indicators; iii) focus on targeting; iv) attention to gender issues and participation.

59. WFP has assisted **urban development activities** of NGOs in Addis Ababa since 1990 with the overall objective of improving the living standards and food security of poor households in the poorest slum areas of Addis Ababa. WFP resources complemented existing activities of implementing partners and were used to create short-term employment opportunities, improve infrastructure in slum areas, provide training opportunities for self-employment and to provide the necessary incentives for increased use of basic health care and other social services.

Table 11: Main features of the two last School Feeding Projects

	1998-2003	2003-2006
Long term objective	Assist the Government in its efforts to improve the efficiency of the primary education and contribute to the overall social progress of the country through the development of its human resources.	Contribute to reaching the Government objectives in the education sector as outlined in the ESDP II and its SDPRP. This is also in line with the UNDAF priorities and addresses area focus 2 of the EDP.
Immediate objectives	Contribute to reaching an adequate daily micro-nutrient requirement, particularly of vitamin A, iron and iodine.	Improve student's intake of micro-nutrients.
	Improve students' capacity to concentrate and assimilate information.	Improve the ability of students to concentrate and participate in class.
	Contribute to increasing stabilizing attendance and reducing drop-outs particularly of girls.	Contribute to increasing stabilizing attendance and reducing drop-outs particularly for girls and children from pastoralist population groups.
Outcomes		Enrolment and retention of children, particularly girls, in schools in food-insecure areas increased.
		Community-based system for the management of school feeding established.
		Households' awareness about education, especially for girls, and its linkage to health, hygiene, HIV/AIDS and food security is increased.
Targeting		Geographical targeting using VAM. School assisted under the previous programme except for the urban ones.
Food aid provision	All commodities will be purchased locally in Ethiopia to the extent possible.	As far as possible WFP will procure commodities locally when cash resources are available to WFP for food purchase. In case of in kind food donations the Government is responsible for paying or waiving any import taxes.
Internal transport	WFP will continue to extend its assistance for transport of commodities to the schools for the first two years of project. After the Regional Education Bureaux (RBoE) will be responsible for delivering to the schools. WFP will cover 50% of the RBoE transport costs.	The Regional Education Bureaux (BoEs) will cover US$ 20[28] per ton transport costs from hubs to the schools, while WFP will pay the balance (about 66% of average transport costs from hubs to schools).

Source: Plan of operations agreed upon between Government of Ethiopia and SFP concerning assistance to "Improving Education through School Feeding" (WFP project n. 4929 exp/01 and WFP Ethiopia Country Programme 2003-2006 (Project n. 10208.0 act 2).

60. The strategic focus of the project was to improve the nutrition status of children under 5, expectant and nursing mothers, and urban women and men belonging to the most vulnerable sections of society while investing in human capital and the living conditions of the urban poor. While the project allowed for a valuable use of food aid to support vulnerable groups, activities were constrained by a cumbersome design that included a large number of implementing partners, diverse beneficiaries and a variety of interventions. The design of the new Activity focussing on **HIV/AIDS** thus aimed essentially at simplifying the implementation mechanisms and at sharpening the focus with respect to beneficiary selection.

Key findings on Country Programme coherence with the Enabling Development Policy

- The design of CP Activities promoted by WFP is coherent with the EDP principles and directives
- In the case of Ethiopia many of the changes that have "inspired" the EDP formulation were already in the making before its formulation. However as pointed out by WFP Country Office staff the formulation of the EDP may have favoured a more systematic and comprehensive application of the key principles

[28] From 2004-2005 this obligation has been waived by WFP as a further contribution towards the MDGs.

3.1.2 Relevance to the country policies and context and to the international priorities

National Policies and Programmes

61. The mission considers that there is a good degree of consistency between the Country Programme in terms of its overall objectives and activities and the main national food security and poverty reduction policies and programmes. For instance the MERET project is consistent with and contributes to the goals outlined in the National Rural Development and Food Security strategies (e.g. through the proper use and management of land, water and other natural resources and the promotion of agro-ecology based development approach) and with the Food Security Coalition objectives (increasing food availability at household level through a series of activities aimed at improving land management and crop and livestock husbandry). MERET is also consistent with the approach to assets creation advocated by the Strategic Framework for Safety Nets with respect to labour intensive public works principles (e.g. community participation in decision making, building community or individual food-insecure assets, emphasis on community management to ensure long term sustainability). Finally, it is to note that the overall MERET envisaged beneficiary coverage represents approximately 20% of the total of the chronic food-insecure to be supported by the Food Security Coalition[29].

62. The SFP is in line with the **Education policy's** second priority which is to give access by all citizens to primary education. Indeed the Education Sector Development Programme (ESDP)[30] states in full that: "*to improve access, stabilise attendance, reduce dropout rates and alleviate short term hunger so that children can attend classes attentively, School Feeding Project (SFP) shall continue and be expanded in areas where there is serious shortage of food and so that the feeding programme will actually serve as incentive to go to school*". The SFP, although a comparatively small scale programme, is thus an important tool to support the demand side of the education policy. It is also to note that school feeding is part of the conditional transfer component of the Safety net strategy. However, as we shall see in section 3.3.2, the level of Government financial contribution to WFP supported school feeding activities is extremely low, since the support of donors' to EDSP has been delayed due to the conflict with Eritrea and has resumed only recently.

63. Care and support for People Living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHAs), their household members and children orphaned by **AIDS** is one of the national priority intervention areas in the fight against HIV/AIDS. WFP's activity in support of "households, women, and children infected and affected by HIV/AIDS" is therefore in line with the Government of Ethiopia's development strategies. Addressing issues associated with HIV/AIDS are highlighted in the government's urban development strategies, as the disease has progressed furthest in urban areas and there is an increasing need to deal with the effects of AIDS (particularly on poor urban livelihoods) as well as HIV transmission. Thus, in Addis Ababa's current three-year strategic plan, HIV/AIDS is recognized as a critical area of concern and support to PLWHAs and orphans are included as necessary areas of intervention. However, the shift away from infrastructural development in slum areas and skills development for women and men in the poorest districts of Addis Ababa is somewhat counter to the Addis Ababa development policy, which includes improving housing, infrastructural development in slum areas and the creation of employment opportunities as the Administration's priorities for development[31].

64. With respect to the relevance of **food aid** to the national context (and to development), the fact that the PRSP recognises explicitly a role for food aid in development for a transition period, before shifting to financial support in the medium term, should be noted. Similarly the National

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29 Estimates of the number of chronic food insecure are a point of open debate. The food security coalition estimates this number to 5 million whilst other observer considers 8/10 million as a more realistic estimate.

30 FDRE, 2002, 'Education Sector Development Programme II (ESDP-II). Programme action plan'.

31 Discussion with W/ro Genet Meseret, Deputy Head of Social and Civil Affairs Bureau, Addis Ababa Administration.

Policy for Disaster Prevention and Management (NPDPM) - and now the safety net strategies - recognises the fact that food aid can be one of the forms of public transfer for assisting the chronic poor. In the case of HIV/AIDS, improving the nutritional status of HIV infected adults is an important factor in keeping such adults productive and therefore also in maintaining a household's income[32]. Also, where dependants (children, the disabled and elderly, the chronically ill) have lost their primary caregivers, food aid may serve to address food needs of vulnerable individuals within households. The focus on HIV/AIDS within WFP's urban activities in Ethiopia thus allows a strategic use of food resources.

65. Furthermore, when looking at the principles of the safety net strategic framework, it is evident that they largely reflect the Enabling Development Policy directives - for instance with respect to the approach to asset creation and conditional transfer (e.g. school feeding, food for education, targeted nutritional interventions). This can also be explained (see section 3.2.1) by the important contribution that WFP has provided (policy dialogue and technical assistance) to the elaboration of the strategy.

MDGs and UNDAF

66. The Country Programme is explicitly consistent with the UNDAF. It contributes to poverty reduction through the strengthening of food-insecure households (incomes, assets creation, education, HIV/AIDS mitigation). To facilitate partnership with other UN agencies the CP programming cycle is harmonised with those of UNDP, UNICEF and UNFPA.

67. The CP contributes to 5 of the 8 Millennium Development Goals: i) eradicating extreme poverty and hunger; ii) achieving universal primary education; iii) promoting gender equality and empowering women; iv) combating HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases; and v) ensuring environmental sustainability.

Key findings with respect to the national context

- WFP development interventions in the country are relevant to, and consistent with, national policies and programmes as well as with the MDGs and UNDAF priorities
- The high proportion of resources of the Country Programme allocated to MERET reflects the level of priority that the Government is currently attributing to the reduction of chronic food insecurity and to rural development
- In such a context the systematic application of the EDP principles and the focus on the key EDP priorities can be identified as a factor contributing to increased relevance of WFP development programming. Indeed the EDP is fully consistent with the national framework for safety nets

3.1.3 Complementarity and integration with other WFP operations

68. As shown in Table 9, in the last 4 years the WFP development food aid resources represented between 9.4% and 16.4% of overall WFP food aid distributed by WFP in Ethiopia, and this while all analyses agree on the fact that food insecurity in Ethiopia is largely a structural problem that requires long-term and co-ordinated efforts rather short-term emergency-type interventions. In practice WFP overall portfolio composition seems to reflect Government and donor approaches to food insecurity that so far have been focussing essentially on short-term measures rather than

[32] In the case of HIV/AIDS, there is a consensus that nutrition plays a key role in delaying the conversion of the virus into AIDS, in the susceptibility of an AIDS patient to opportunistic infections, and in the effectiveness of anti-retroviral therapy. Direct nutritional support thus enables an HIV infected person to remain productive.

on an analysis of the problems to be addressed. It is however important to note that the classification into the 3 funding categories presented in Table 9 does not necessarily fully correspond to the actual reality of WFP interventions in Ethiopia. In fact, whilst development interventions are clearly designed to address chronic poverty related problems, emergency operations should not be seen as addressing exclusively transitory food insecurity problems related to temporary shocks such as drought.

69. For instance, the ongoing WFP emergency operations, that should in theory address short-term food insecurity problems (through free food distribution) and have as main objective *the saving of human lives*, are also supporting post disaster rehabilitation of households' assets through EGS (thus covering around 35% of the population targeted by EMOP or 1,600,000 'mostly chronic food insecure'). However, a sustained reduction of chronic food insecurity would require approaches (medium and long-term planning, participation, partnership) and a set of related interventions that are unlikely to be provided by short-term measures where food distribution is the primary concern. Yet in the case of Ethiopia some interesting experience with respect to the application (present and future) of approaches (often based on the EDP related principles) to WFP non-development operations has been recorded.

70. As described in chapter 1, one of the main and long-standing concerns of the Government and of the donors' community with respect to emergency operation is to link emergency to development actions (see the National Policy for Disaster Prevention and Management). Yet, results have been well below expectations mainly because the assets created (if any) through Employment Generation Schemes (EGS) have in most cases been of extremely poor quality and often not relevant to community priorities. The poor performance of EGS are essentially linked to the poor planning and implementation capacities at the local level, problems of jurisdictions[33], to lack of ownership by the concerned community of the assets created, and to the poor level of predictability of the resources (food and cash) to be used to undertake EGS, as well as to the short term horizon of this kind of activity.

71. In such a context, WFP has been recently promoting, in the framework of its Emergency Operations (EMOPs), what are commonly defined by WFP and MoA as *'Effective' EGSs*. The effective EGS approach is largely based on WFP's development programming experience in the country (MERET in particular), as well as the EDP principles and includes: i) training and capacity building for line ministry staff; ii) tools and guidelines to help in identification (and implementation) of assets designed to decrease the vulnerability level of the community concerned; iii) local level participatory planning (though simplified when compared to MERET). Effective EGSs are currently implemented in areas close to where WFP currently undertakes its development activities although the resources (especially food) used do not necessarily come from WFP donations. Field visits and discussions (see Annex 4) indicate that the quality of EGS has considerably improved as a consequence of the effective EGS approach.

72. In a longer term perspective it is also important to note the current process of formulating a 2005-2007 Protracted Relief and Recovery Operations (PRROs) for Ethiopia that is to be seen as the main WFP contribution to the Ethiopia' Safety Net Programme, which in turn emanates directly from the Coalition for Food Security initiative. The PRRO is still being formulated and is to include two main components:

a) The Protracted Recovery component that targets assistance to the chronically food-insecure (households constantly under food aid) and includes asset-building at community and household level for public goods (feeder roads, schools) as well as building resilience to shocks and contributing to increased productivity and development

[33] Disaster Prevention Preparedness Commission (DPPC) being in charge of all resource allocation consistently choose to allocate late arriving food aid to most pressing emergency related problems thus by-passing the EGS planning efforts undertaken by other institutions such as MoA.

(e.g. spring development, area closure, etc.). This component also includes strengthening of local operational and technical capacities of community and supporting institutions;

b) The Protected Relief component that is based on general relief distribution for the unpredictable acute food-insecure (with able-bodied population involved in similar activities to those included under recovery) and strengthening of local capacities.

73. Therefore it appears that the future PRRO[34] design is widely based on systematic application of the approach and tools of WFP development programming and these are generally in line with some of the key EDP principles such as: i) community participation in planning; ii) use of food as one of the resources (but not the only one) contributing to increase food security; iii) focus on productive assets and ownership of the assets created by the communities; iv) focus on livelihoods-related outcome indicators; v) integration of food aid activities within the wider food security and poverty reduction framework. Furthermore it can be seen as a comprehensive response to Ethiopia's food insecurity through a balance (also resource-wise) between social protection, recovery and development related operations.

Key findings on the integration of the EDP and development programming with EMOP / PRRO

- The level of resources allocation to WFP development programming and activities seems inadequate to the country's circumstances since a large share of the chronic insecure WFP case-load that should normally be covered by development (or recovery) activities is currently covered by EMOP. Document analysis and field visits indicate that the application of development programming experience and the EDP principles to EMOP has increased its relevance to the target group (the chronic food-insecure) priorities
- The PRRO under preparation can be regarded as the main WFP contribution to the Ethiopia Safety Net Programme and is based on a systematic application of EDP principles

Relevance of targeting of Country Programme

74. An analysis of the relevance of CP targeting with respect to the Enabling Development Policy principles should essentially answer a basic question: *Do WFP development interventions target the right people (e.g. the most food-insecure)?* First it should be noted that the overall CP targets chronically food-insecure households (those households that routinely depend on food aid transfers). These are identified essentially through geographic targeting based on the VAM chronic vulnerability index[35].

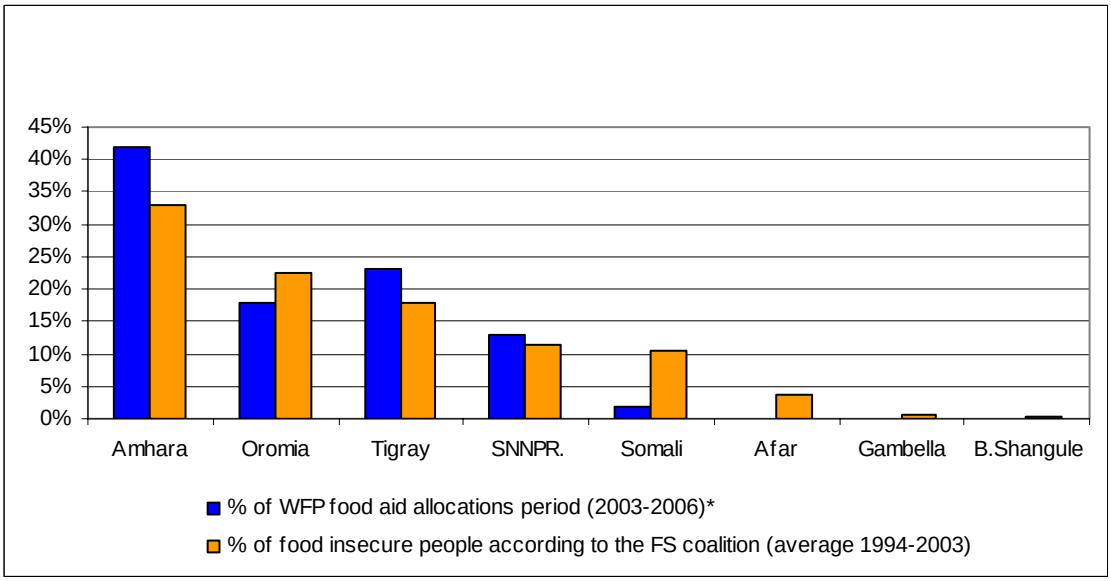
75. Before analysing targeting issues at woreda and community level, it is worth examining the targeting of WFP portfolio at regional level with respect to the number of food-insecure. The figures below relate the planned allocations of the CP to the average number of people under food assistance at regional level. In the case of MERET it is possible to note a good degree of correspondence, although with some higher levels of allocation in favour of the Amhara region,

[34] The mission has paid a particular attention to the future PRRO, given its size (since it is to replace the ongoing EMOP). The ongoing PRRO, given its limited scope and coverage, has not been reviewed.

[35] The VAM chronic vulnerability index includes a total of nine indicators such as staple food production per capita, livestock assets per capita, road infrastructure, food prices, past years' assessed emergency needs, probability of extreme weather shocks. VAM analysis allows the classification of woredas into 5 categories: very highly vulnerable, highly vulnerable, moderately vulnerable, slightly and very slightly vulnerable.

and more in particular towards regions with a historical WFP's presence (or where IPs are more performing[36]) and with agricultural rather than livestock based livelihoods.

Figure 1: MERET: Proportion of food aid planned allocation (2003-2006) and food-insecure people at regional level

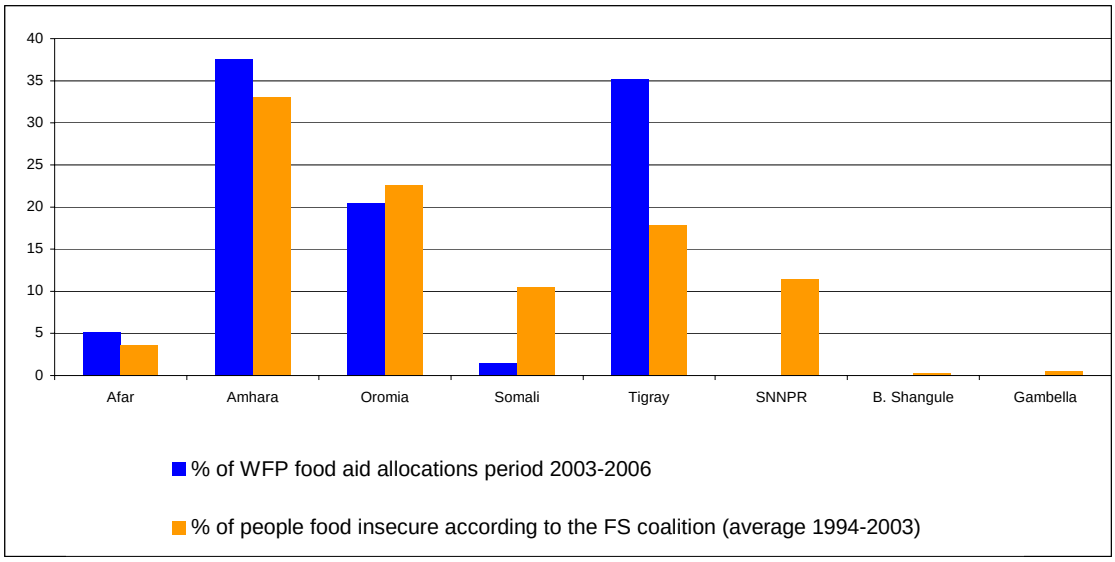


*Excluding WFP food aid allocations in Dire Dawa (2%).

76. Like MERET, the School Feeding Project (SFP) is implemented in food-insecure areas. A comparison between the percentage of food-insecure people and the percentage of WFP food allocated to each region shows that the level of intervention in a region is not always proportionate to the number of food-insecure people. Tigray for instance receives 35% of the food aid allocated to SFP while only 19% of the average food-insecure people are living in this region. On the other hand the SNNPR receives nothing, though 11% of the food-insecure people belong to this region. This is attributable to different reasons such as the level of interest on the part of regional government and accessibility problems. However it is to note that the levels of planned allocations have recently changed with the inclusion of SNNPR. The envisaged distribution plan for the year 2004-2005 will be: Afar 4.5%, Amhara 30.2%, Oromia 25.8%, Tigray 24.9%, Somali 4.5% and SNNPR 8.4%.

[36] For instance, in the case of the Somali region the level of allocation is incremental depending on actual performance. This allocation mechanism was adopted by the Government and WFP in 2002 after a Programme Review Committee that pointed out the poor performance in the region.

Figure 2: School Feeding: Proportion of planned food aid allocation (2003-2006) and food-insecure people at regional level



Sources: The new coalition for food security in Ethiopia, 2003 (average No. of food insecure people between 1994 and 2003); Plan of operations agreed upon between Government and SFP concerning assistance to "Improving education through school feeding (WFP Ethiopia Country Programme 2003-2006 (Project n. 10208.0 act 2).

77. Once resource allocation at regional level has been determined, woredas within each region are then selected. The woredas (identified by VAM) where WFP operates with its development interventions (72 woredas for MERET) are part of the list of the food-insecure woredas (a total of 214) used by Government and donors in their food security interventions. The urban HIV/AIDS project does not use the chronic vulnerability tool of VAM and is based on an assessment of poverty profiles and the distribution of the poor in Addis Ababa whereby it was determined that the inner city held the largest number of poor and food-insecure households.

78. Once woredas are identified, the other targeting-related steps necessary for final identification of specific communities and for defining levels of resources allocation by community take into account other criteria not necessarily specifically linked to food security considerations. First the level of resource allocation per woreda is defined at regional levels on the basis of equity considerations (e.g. presence of other donors). Similarly at woreda level the local administration and line ministries identify the Peasant Associations in which to undertake WFP supported activities on food insecurity criteria but also (again) on equity grounds as well as on other operational considerations such as the "relative potential" of watershed or the need to cluster sites within a large watershed to increase the effects (for MERET) or accessibility (for school feeding and partly for MERET) criteria. The latter are often determined by the lack of resources for transport and supervision on the part of local counterparts.

79. At community level, in the case of MERET, targeting is essentially left to the communities' own decisions and community members are trained to prioritise beneficiaries according to basic wealth ranking methods (e.g. *struggling, doing OK, doing well*), although given the watershed approach no member of the community can *de facto* be excluded. Furthermore the fact must be noted that traditionally food aid is at least partly redistributed within the community. In the schools supported by WFP all children receive food rations, whilst take-home rations are being piloted in nomadic areas to encourage girls' attendance.

80. Regarding **urban food insecurity**, there has been very little articulation of the problem and approach towards addressing the issue in Ethiopia's policy framework. The Government's food security strategy focuses on rural food insecurity and the Programme of the Coalition for Food Security in Ethiopia envisages interventions solely in rural woredas. Therefore WFP's initiatives

within urban areas help to keep the urban dimensions of food insecurity on the development agenda.

81. With respect to "changes" that may have occurred with regard to targeting, it should be noted that targeting the food-insecure had been the overall concern of WFP in Ethiopia well before the introduction of the EDP and that the target groups and target areas have not significantly changed over the course of the years. However with the reduction of Country Programme resources (see Table 12) some drastic reduction of coverage had to be introduced and in such cases the analysis of vulnerability levels have been probably the most important (but not the only) criteria utilised. VAM is therefore to be seen as an instrument that has provided a further analytical basis for basic targeting criteria that were already in place.

Key findings on targeting

- The Country Programme main targeting group "the chronically food-insecure" is in line with National priorities and strategies and the main tool utilised (VAM) to identify vulnerable people and areas is appropriate to this end
- Distribution of resources broadly reflects the distribution of food-insecure at regional level, but with some relatively higher level of allocation in favour of regions where WFP has an historical presence and with an agricultural rather than a pastoralist livelihood basis
- The targeting of urban food-insecure by the HIV/AIDS project contributes to place on the development agenda urban poverty and food insecurity issues that have not been addressed by the Food Security Coalition
- Whilst the Country Programme operates in food-insecure areas to the benefit of food-insecure people, it is not clear whether this is always fully translated into actions in favour of the most vulnerable people or the most vulnerable areas since the 'developmental' nature of the Country Programme, equity, resourcing and other considerations (e.g. IPs' capacities and interest, working with farmers with a minimum of assets, accessibility of sites) are also influencing the targeting process

3.2 MECHANISMS, MEANS AND TOOLS INTRODUCED/STRENGTHENED AT THE COUNTRY LEVEL TO FACILITATE THE ENABLING DEVELOPMENT POLICY/COUNTRY PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION

This chapter reviews the progress made and the constraints faced by WFP Country Office in putting in place at the country level the policy directives of the EDP (EQ2). The different sub-questions presented in the matrix have been slightly re-organised to allow a smoother presentation of findings, according to the following sequencing: i) partnership (e.q.2.4); ii) stakeholders participation and ownership (e.q.2.2 and 2.8); iii) demonstrating results (e.q.2.5); iv) gender mainstreaming (e.q.2.6); v) HIV/AIDS mainstreaming (e.q.2.7); vi) resourcing of the CP and of the EDP related measures (e.q.2.1 and 2.3).

3.2.1 Progress (and changes) in partnership

82. The EDP states that food cannot be considered as a stand-alone resource to promote development and therefore, as stated in Phase 1 report, *partnership is a prerequisite to WFP involvement in development*. In fact, the type of "development" project to be supported through food aid, the way in which the project is conducted (activities, location, beneficiaries, Monitoring & Evaluation – M&E) and its success will largely depend on WFP's partners. Therefore, during the

country study, great attention has been paid to the analysis of partnership related issues. These have been analysed at two different levels: i) project level, with respect to the efforts undertaken and results attained in integrating WFP project activities with other partners' efforts and resources; ii) at the country level with respect to the efforts made to integrate WFP global activities within a common framework shared with other stakeholders.

The Country Programme implementing partners
There are no WFP development projects in Ethiopia but rather national projects supported with WFP food and technical assistance said a Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) staff in Amhara region. Indeed WFP implementing partners (IPs) have a leading role in the implementation of CP activities.
In the case of **MERET**, the IP is the MoA that has a project support unit at central level and coordinators at regional and woreda level plus a series of technical experts whose costs are covered by the Ministry: MoA staff (in consultation with WFP) identify the woredas and the watershed areas where to intervene, manage and supervise the distribution of food aid and ensure the provision of the necessary technical back-stopping to the local community.
The Ministry of Education is the IP of the **School feeding project**. In this case the IP's role is less prominent and it is limited to woreda and school selection and the organisation of food deliveries to school.
In the case of the **HIV/AIDS project** WFP has entered an agreement with the HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control Office (HAPCO). The latter is to play essentially a supervisory role whilst the implementation of activities (beneficiaries identification, food distribution, capacity building) is the responsibility of local NGOs and Community-Based Organisations (CBOs) who are already involved in HIV/AIDS related activities in the framework of the World Bank-supported Multisector AIDS programme.
However, the main role in project implementation is played by the local level committees. In the case of MERET the local committees select beneficiaries, identify and prioritise the activities to be implemented and supervise all the related food for assets activities, whilst School Feeding Committees ensure the proper handling, preparation and distribution of meals.

83. From interviews and document reviews it emerges that the WFP Country Office has made a lot of efforts to try to build partnerships. There are several clear pointers in this regard, such as:

a) Several consultancy activities funded and undertaken by WFP to identify ways and means of strengthening the collaboration with other partners (e.g. preparation of the "Pilot Proposal for a UN Collaborative Programme to develop and implement Integrated livelihoods opportunities with WB, FAO and UNDP);
b) The consultation workshops that WFP has routinely organised when identifying and designing its interventions (e.g. the consultation undertaken when formulating the 2003-2006 Country Programme with several stakeholders at regional and national level);
c) WFP contribution to the elaboration of strategic documents, such as the "Coalition for Food Security" and the "Joint Government Multi-Donor Strategic Framework for Safety Nets";
d) The excellent knowledge that other Agencies and Donors have of WFP activities and strategies in Ethiopia, as it emerged from the various interviews undertaken at national level during the study; and the recognition by all stakeholders of the constant efforts made by the WFP Country Office to forge partnership linkages;
e) The efforts noted during field visits to promote and encourage partnership arrangements (around WFP supported projects) at district and project/site level.

84. Achievements with respect to partnership with Government institutions are to be considered as satisfactory and are further discussed under section 3.2.2, though hindered particularly in school feeding projects by MoE resource constraints. However, despite the efforts and resources invested, results with respect to other partners consulted during the mission (e.g. World Bank, EC) have been, as recognised by WFP Country Office staff, below expectations. In fact, with a

few notable exceptions discussed below, no major partnership agreements at the project level have been achieved. In fact in most cases, WFP supported activities are still not complemented by additional measures supported by other stakeholders (e.g. support to the quality of primary school education or provision of rural credit for livelihoods diversification) as foreseen by the EDP (see par. 82). Indeed, as described under section 4.3, this is affecting the full achievement of the different projects objectives. Nevertheless some results have been indeed achieved at both project and global/national level. **At project level** the most concrete results have been achieved by the School feeding project, the Memorandum of Understanding (May 2003) having been prepared in the framework of UNDAF, and signed by MoE, UNDP, UNICEF, WHO and WFP for a pilot School Health Initiative to be undertaken in Afar region to cover schools' basic needs such as school feeding, water supply, immunization and de-worming. The MoU was followed by specific Letters of Understanding with WHO and UNICEF spelling out the role and contribution of each agency in a joint programme in a limited number of schools (8 with WHO and 39 in -Afar and Somali- with UNICEF).

85. In the case of MERET many efforts have been undertaken to encourage implementation of activities by other Agencies in the same areas covered by MERET on the assumption that: i) MERET activities alone cannot promote the economic diversification necessary to ensure long-term and sustained food security; ii) the results achieved by MERET in terms of improved natural resource base for agricultural and livestock production and in grass-root community planning would have provided a solid basis for the implementation of development initiatives such as credit schemes. Despite several '*pourparlers*' and a number of studies undertaken, few concrete results have been recorded so far. This is due, in the mission's view, to the WFP Country Office approach to partnership, that particularly in the recent past was essentially based on the expectation that other donors will 'join' MERET (due to its successful results) with their resources. Whilst this is understandable and appropriate, since in many MERET sites communities have been 'enabled' to transit to other form of support (see section 3.3.1), this strategy may have engendered some kind of 'institutional resistance' from potential partners to get involved in activities that are clearly led by another agency. In such context it will be important to seek broader alliances where resources, experiences and expertises from different stakeholders are pulled together within a wider framework of collaboration. Recent experiences of a new approach to partnership seem to be quite encouraging (e.g. discussion between WFP and the Canadian Hunger Foundation for strategic partnership in Bati Woreda, where both operate, that aims at a woreda level deliberate combinations of skills, resources, investments and expertises).

86. Furthermore, experiences of 'had hoc' partnerships at project site level have been recorded. For instance during field visits the evaluation team noted the existence of several local level partnership arrangements promoted either by WFP and MoA field staff or by the local authorities. These included for instance the joint funding of water points with cash resources provided by the National Food Security Programme through the Ministry of Agriculture, and/or the funding by NGOs of activities identified through the local level planning promoted by WFP.

87. At **the national level** notable progress has been recorded with respect to the definition of an overall framework for collaboration between Government and donors, particularly with regard to actions to reduce chronic poverty. Particularly relevant in such a framework is the preparation of the Coalition for Food Security Document and the Safety Net Strategic Framework described under section 2.1.3, to which WFP has consistently contributed. Both documents provide a framework for collaboration that goes beyond a project-based partnership and have recently been approved by the Government and the donor community. WFP interventions are already fully in line with the two documents.

88. The mission has also tried to understand the constraints on achieving the expected results with respect to partnership, among others:

a) The Government equity preoccupations which (according to what has been reported to the mission by several stakeholders and GoE staff in particular) translated have the effect of spreading donor support too thinly over the country, with a consequent reluctance to encourage joint interventions focusing on a particular area;
b) The lack of resources at the disposal of several donors and development agencies as it emerges from Official Development Assistance (ODA) allocations at the country level and from direct interviews;
c) The tendency by WFP to seek partnership essentially around activities initiated by them (in this case by WFP);
d) The reluctance by other Agencies to accept the idea that food aid (and WFP) could play a role in development and the consequent refusal to engage on a partnership dialogue.

Key findings on partnership

- WFP Country Office has paid much attention and invested resources in building partnership at all levels. Whilst partnership with Government can be considered as satisfactory, partnership with donors is considered below expectations
- Some limited results have been attained at the project level for school feeding projects, however these are far below the level required by the Enabling Development Policy directives and to meet beneficiary needs in a comprehensive manner
- At the global level notable progress has been recorded on the definition of an overall framework for collaboration between Government and donors. WFP interventions are fully in line with the different initiatives recently formulated that are aimed at reducing chronic poverty are and that provide a framework for future collaboration that goes beyond a project-based partnership

3.2.2 Stakeholders' participation and ownership

89. Enhanced participation by beneficiaries and other stakeholders is another key element of the EDP and is strongly linked to the promotion of partnership described above. In this section the issue of stakeholder participation is examined in the light of their role in project identification, design and management and of the tools used and mechanisms put in place to promote participation at both country and project level.

90. At country level, the most notable effort to be recorded is the process of consultation undertaken at national and regional levels[37] (2002) for the formulation of the 2003-2006 Country Programme. This consultation process saw the participation of all main Government institutions and other partners and was instrumental in defining the strategy, objective and priorities of the overall Country Programme and of its specific projects and activities.

91. At project level the constitution at national (review and co-ordination) and regional level (review) of Project Committees that include the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development and the project implementing partners (MoE, MoA and HAPCO)[38] represents an important step towards improved ownership. The Committees, on the one hand, supervise and review project activities and, on the other hand, decide on resource allocation and other project implementation matters. Project focal points are also nominated at district and (for MERET) local level. From the

[37] This has included a series of workshops involving GoE, donors and NGOs.
[38] See the various Plans of Operation agreed upon between the Government and WFP.

interviews undertaken it appears that the implementation and planning process is "owned" by and placed under the control of the local institutions and partners.

92. However, in the evaluators' view, the main and most interesting efforts to promote stakeholders participation have been undertaken at project level. In the case of MERET, three main points should be highlighted:

a) The existence of a project committee at each site level (normally formed by 5 men and 5 women) that is in-charge of overall supervision and beneficiary selection;
b) The identification and prioritisation of project activities on the basis of Local Level Participatory Plans (LLPP) that are 5-year plans elaborated by the population of the watershed areas which often present both a very detailed analysis of the development problems and constraints faced by the community, and related proposed solutions. The latter in some cases may be addressed by MERET while other cases require the support of other stakeholders. The analysis is essentially but not exclusively based on the inventory of the watershed areas' natural resources;
c) Revision and updating by beneficiaries on an annual basis of the LLPP through a participatory assessment (Participatory Evaluation Profile-PEP) of the project performance based on specific guidelines elaborated by the WFP Country Office.

93. School feeding related activities (food storage, food preparation and distribution) are managed by school feeding committees that include teachers, parents and students, and costs are covered by the local community.

94. As regards the recently started HIV/AIDS project, less progress has been made in terms of enhancing community participation in project development. The assistance package includes training on participatory approaches for implementing partners as well as for other actors in the area of HIV/AIDS within the activity's geographic focus (such as *kebele* HIV/AIDS committees). However, no system is in place to ensure that there is community participation in the design and follow-up of interventions to which WFP resources are expected to contribute.

95. Training at all levels has been one of the factors that have contributed more substantially to enhanced participation by local stakeholders in the various phases of WFP-promoted activities. The list of the training activities directed towards concerned implementing partners' staff and the local community is extremely long and covers technical (e.g. soil and water conservation issues) and cross cutting issues (e.g. gender), and also managerial aspects (Result-Based Management – RBM, participatory monitoring and evaluation). Data and report analysis and interviews combined with field visits indicate that:

a) Training activities have been one of the main components of WFP development programming and of MERET in particular as indicated by the allocation of Other Direct Operational Costs (ODOC) resources (see par. 113). The importance of training activities has been also widely reported by all people interviewed;
b) ODOC resources have been the main source of funding of training activities (and therefore a key element in the overall success of the capacity building activities) but are generally considered as insufficient to meet all capacity building requirements (particularly with respect to school feeding);
c) Capacity building activities at all levels are considered satisfactory, particularly with MERET, and also when taking into account the limited level of available resources at the disposal. Furthermore increased capacity building at the community level on management issues could possibly also enhance the sustainability of the activities undertaken.

96. WFP Country Office also produced a long list of country specific **guidelines and tools** (see Annex 5 for a complete list) to facilitate implementation of the different projects by local stakeholders and the conduct of training and capacity building activities. The analysis of the guidelines shows that:

a) The guidelines produced are in line with and often inspired by the EDP principles;
b) They are simple to use and generally appreciated by local users;
c) The manuals and tools produced at Headquarters level to guide the programming of the EDP 5 areas of focus are relevant to the Ethiopia context as broad guidelines establishing the basic principles. However they are not detailed enough (particularly in the case of areas of focus covered by MERET) to be used as an implementation tool at the country/project level.

Key findings on stakeholders' participation and ownership

- A number of mechanisms and measures have been put in place at national, project and local level to ensure increased ownership of WFP promoted projects by local stakeholders
- The implementation and planning process for the different projects is "owned" and controlled by local institutions and partners, though with some differences between different projects
- The main and most interesting efforts to promote stakeholders participation have been undertaken at project level where activities are managed by local project committees and, in the case of MERET, identification and prioritisation of project investments is undertaken by beneficiaries on the basis of Local Level Participatory Plans (LLPP)
- Training at all levels has been one of the factors contributing more substantially to enhanced participation of local stakeholders in the various phases of WFP-supported activities, particularly in the case of MERET which has benefited from more comprehensive efforts in capacity building. The provision of cash resources through ODOC has been instrumental to this end
- Several useful, country specific, guidelines and manuals have been produced by the Country Office to facilitate stakeholder participation in the project cycle

3.2.3 Progress (and changes) in demonstrating results

97. One of the EDP policy directives emphasises the need to demonstrate results through the introduction of Result-Based Management (RBM). The Phase 1 report highlighted the attention that should be paid towards outcome level indicators since the possible "developmental" results of food aid interventions cannot be properly captured if project performance is assessed only against process (e.g. food distributed) and outputs (e.g. number of school children receiving food) rather than against development-related outcomes (e.g. increased school attendance) indicators.

98. At present collection of data and information allowing comprehensive analysis of the results of WFP development interventions at Country Office level is not yet systematic. In fact data are regularly and systematically collected (essentially by the implementing partners) only at output level (e.g. number of beneficiaries, assets created, etc.) and are presented in the Standardised Project Reports. It should be noted that the lack of systematic collection of outcome indicators has been a constraining factor in the undertaking of this evaluation exercise. However a number of non-systematic actions[39] to demonstrate results needs to be highlighted.

[39] The ongoing implementation of a Result-Based Monitoring and Evaluation (RBM&E) Work; Plan to systematically introduce RBM in WFP supported development activities starting from 2004; The Impact Assessment

99. The Result-Based Monitoring & Evaluation (RBM&E) Work Plan concerns the three ongoing WFP development activities (MERET, School Feeding and HIV/AIDS) and is designed to:

a) Put in place the necessary capacities and conditions for the implementation of a RBM&E system through training and capacity building for Implementing Partners (undertaken in late 2003). This should lead to the mainstreaming of RBM&E within WFP Sub-Offices and counterpart' systems;
b) Include as part of the exercise systematic collection and analysis, starting from 2004, of performance data including the regular collection of outcome indicators as defined by the Log-frame elaborated for each project;
c) Report on the annual performance of the RBM&E exercise and of the results attained.

100. The mission was able briefly to review the ongoing exercise and is in a position to make the following comments:

a) The overall exercise is well structured. Particularly interesting and promising are the involvement of Implementing Partners (IPs) in the exercise and the objective of mainstreaming the system within the counterparts' monitoring systems. This would represent a very important step forward with respect to the sustainability of the system and ownership by local stakeholders when compared to past approaches based on externally-led M&E;
b) Similarly the envisaged plan to integrate the Participatory Evaluation Profiles (PEP) undertaken by the communities (see paragraph 89) in MERET within the Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) global system is challenging and interesting and indeed in line with the Enabling Development Policy principles;
c) Discussions at regional and district level with IP staff also indicated that the RBM&E training activities and plans so far implemented are highly appreciated and that demand for this kind of capacity-building activity clearly exceeds the supply since many IP staff would like to extend the approach to all their activities and not only to WFP-supported ones;
d) The mission also reviewed the results chains prepared for the three projects and found them generally well prepared with outputs, outcomes and impact level results in line with the EDP principles (though lacking nutritional indicators in the case of MERET and School feeding[40]). For instance: in the case of School Feeding the main envisaged outputs are the putting in place of an incentive system for girls, the constitution of gender-balanced project committees, the establishment of complementarities with other activities addressing education quality and the strengthening of local counterpart capacities. The expected outcomes (by 2006) are increased school enrolment and attendance and increased Government and community capacity and commitment to support school feeding; whilst the expected impact is that households in food-insecure areas will invest more in education, especially that of girls;
e) In the case of MERET the list of outputs includes strengthening of community participation, establishment of partnerships, improvement of land productivity and creation of income generating activities. The MERET's stated expected outcome is

Study of the MERET project undertaken in 2002; The Joint WFP/MoE Study on the results of the School Feeding; The School Feeding Baseline exercise initiative; The Participatory Evaluation Performance Profiles undertaken as part of MERET.

[40] However in the mission's view MERET is likely to have a positive effect on nutrition (see section 3.3.1) because of the diversified diet and the increased access to food resulting from diversified and increased agricultural production (as stated by several beneficiaries, see Annex 4) and most probably this should be considered in the results chain.

simply the improved food security for household heads, particularly female headed ones in food-insecure areas;

f) Nevertheless the challenge of collecting the data and information necessary for identifying results at outcome (and impact) level remains daunting given the limited cash resources at the disposal of the projects and the difficulties of the exercise in a context such as that of Ethiopia. The review of the RBM&E exercise at the end of 2004 could provide valuable lessons.

101. The MERET impact assessment exercise was undertaken by WFP and MoA in 2002 on the basis of a random sample of ten woredas and about 100 sites and therefore findings are based on rather solid statistical ground. It should be noted that the indicators collected (see section 3.3.1) were essentially at outcome level and based on people's livelihoods. It is the opinion of the mission that the study does indeed contribute to demonstrating results achieved by MERET though it remains a one-off exercise.

102. With respect to school feeding, the two exercises undertaken at country level (a WFP baseline survey in 2001 with yearly follow-up and a MoE/WFP study in 2003) provide some solid and concrete indication of the results attained (see discussion in section 3.3.2). The limitation of the MoE/WFP joint exercise is linked to the fact that it is a one-off exercise whilst, in the case of the baseline surveys, efforts have been more systematic. However the latter has externally been led and depended on external funding sources, therefore sustainability remains to be seen.

Key findings on 'demonstrating results'

- At present the collection of the data and information needed to allow analysis of the results - particularly at outcome level - of WFP development interventions is not systematic
- However, one-off exercises conducted by WFP and Implementing Partners (IPs) in recent years provide clear indications of WFP results with respect to the EDP strategic objectives
- The Country Office has now embarked in a comprehensive effort to mainstream a Result-Based Management (RBM) approach in all its activities. The overall exercise is well structured. Particularly interesting and promising is the involvement of IPs in the exercise and objective of mainstreaming the system within the counterparts' monitoring systems. This would represent a very important step forward with respect to the sustainability of the system and ownership by local stakeholders, when compared to past approaches based on externally-led M&E
- Result-Based Monitoring & Evaluation (RBM&E) training activities and plans so far implemented are highly appreciated by IPs and the demand for this kind of capacity building activity clearly exceeds the supply capacities since many IP staff would like to extend the approach to all their activities and not only to WFP-supported ones

3.2.4 Gender mainstreaming

103. Within the EDP there is a wide approach to gender, encompassing relations between women, men and children and the need for case-by-case understanding of these relations. There is not much evidence in the Country Programme that such a view has been fully taken into consideration since the focus is essentially on women's participation in projects activities and

benefits. In fact, great attention is given to women's participation in school committees or in training activities at local level and to the gender composition of the direct beneficiaries of the various interventions. Furthermore each annual work plan includes an objective in terms 'of commitment to women'. For instance in the case of the School Feeding Project (2004 work plan) the objective is: *to provide oil to 12,000 girls under the girls' initiative, develop and implement strategies to encourage participation of girls, encourage meaningful participation of women in school feeding committees and measure gender indicators*. Relevant are also the efforts made within MERET to promote activities mainly designed to benefit women (e.g. water supply, small-scale income generation activities).

104. Gender issues are tackled in the different WFP training programmes, e.g. the organisation of a 3-day training course on gender in 2002/03. Many efforts are made by the Country Office to mainstream gender in its activities; clear examples are provided by the set-up of a gender unit and the designation of a gender focal point in each unit. Yet gender mainstreaming is, in the evaluators' views, a worthwhile but very time-consuming process which starts with personal changes in attitudes and mentalities. It appears that WFP development unit staff are generally concerned about this issue but constrained by other priorities linked to the day to day management of project activities. It is also to note that most of the national authorities met during the field visits knew about gender issues and were able to explain to team members the various related measures put in place at project level.

Key findings on gender mainstreaming

- Gender mainstreaming is a priority of the Country Office and several measures have been put in place to this end. WFP and IP staff generally acknowledge the need to strengthen women's participation in project activities but are often constrained by other priorities
- The approach adopted that focuses on increased women participation is rather limited if compared with that advocated by the EDP with respect to gender, namely the relations between women, men and children

3.2.5 HIV/AIDS mainstreaming

105. In May 2000, the WFP's Executive Board agreed that WFP, in collaboration with new and existing partners, should explore ways of using food assistance to prevent and mitigate the devastating effects of HIV/AIDS. An HIV/AIDS Unit, under the Policy and Strategy Division, was established only in June 2003. These measures were undertaken by WFP after formulation of the EDP, which did not deal specifically with the HIV/AIDS issue and therefore should not be evaluated with respect to its effectiveness in helping mitigate the effects of HIV/AIDS. Nonetheless, activities that envisage the use of food assistance to mitigate the effect of HIV/AIDS, though still at a pilot scale, are now part of WFP development programming at global level.

106. In Ethiopia WFP's approach to HIV/AIDS is essentially based on: i) implementation of a stand-alone project to assist households and individuals affected by HIV/AIDS; ii) mainstreaming of HIV/AIDS considerations into all activities included in the Country Programme, this ideally also incorporating inclusion of an HIV/AIDS related indicator in VAM; iii) engagement in partnerships with other UN agencies (UNICEF, UNAIDS, UNDP, etc.) wherever relevant (to note that since November 2003 WFP is a full-fledged member of UNAIDS). The approach is expected to be incremental, starting with HIV prevention activities in selected pilot project areas (within both the MERET and School Feeding activities). To date,

project *woredas* in which mainstreaming will be carried out have been selected and workshops or discussions to identify relevant action have taken place with potential counterparts and project beneficiaries. Actual mainstreaming interventions have, however, not yet begun.

107. WFP expects to assume a facilitation role, assisting project implementers to gain access to information, potential sources of support and networks so that they have adequate capacity to plan and implement HIV prevention activities. The focus is thus both on encouraging decision makers and counterparts of WFP activities to recognize that HIV/AIDS is relevant to their work, and also on building local capacities to ensure effective implementation of HIV/AIDS focused activities. Activities to be undertaken may be categorised into three broad areas:

- Mainstreaming HIV/AIDS in all counterpart training so as to promote HIV/AIDS considerations in vulnerability analysis and related mitigating measures;
- Capacity building of HIV/AIDS clubs in WFP-assisted schools;
- Provision of training on HIV/AIDS and related issues for community members participating in WFP projects.

Key findings on HIV/mainstreaming

- Very little has so far been achieved in terms of implementation and, given the negative effects that the HIV/pandemic has on food security, more efforts and attention should be paid to the putting in place of the envisaged measures
- WFP's approach to HIV/AIDS is based on implementation of a stand-alone project, on mainstreaming HIV/AIDS considerations in all activities included in the Country Programme, and on engaging in partnership with other UN agencies. The proposed approach is comprehensive and relevant

3.2.6 Resourcing

108. The measures described above, as well as implementation of the Country Programme (CP) according to the Enabling Development Policy principles, have required a large amount of resources. Resourcing issues will therefore now be considered and are discussed along the following points:

- The resourcing (and related challenges) of the CPs and of its specific components/activities;
- The utilisation and the level of availability of non-food resources;
- The type of commodities utilised and timeliness of resources delivered.

Resourcing of Country Programme (CP) and use of non-food resources

Table 12: Ethiopia Country Programmes - Total Direct Project Costs (amount in US$)

	Country Programme 1998-2003	Country Programme 2003-2006
Approved budget	143,809,211	62,087,943*
Confirmed contributions	107,924,125	24,050,041*

Sources: SPR 2003 on Ethiopia Country Programme (1998-2003); SPR 2003 on Ethiopia Country Programme (2003-2006).

109. The table above illustrates the level of resources approved and confirmed contributions of the CPs. As it can be noted, in the 2003-2006 CP the level of annual resources allocation was drastically reduced (in framework of the global diminution of development funding allocations) when compared with the previous CP. Discussions with Country Office and IP staff, as well as the documentation review, indicate that this reduction was not due to a lower level of "development" needs but rather to a drastic drop of the level of WFP development funding for Ethiopia. Indeed it should be noted that the process of consultation with all regional and national

stakeholders undertaken in 2002 for the formulation of the CP was based on the assumption that the level of development resources would have remained unchanged and it was only at a the last moment, before finalisation of the CP document, that the need to reduce the resource level (by 47%) was communicated to the Country Office (CO). The cut in the level of available resources has led to a drastic reduction of CP coverage, a reduction partly mitigated by the WFP CO decision to allocate (though in a much shorter time-frame) Emergency Operation resources to "development" activities such as school feeding.

110. A crucial role in the implementation of Country Programme activities and in the putting in place of the measures envisaged by the EDP was played by the cash resources (Other Direct Operational Costs – ODOC and Direct Support Costs - DSC) made available along with the development food. As it can be noted from the table below, the level of actual allocation of ODOC to development activities in 2001 and 2002 has been lower than planned and this has made implementation of non-food activities difficult. This is also stated in the Plan of Operations agreed with the Government (MERET page 13): "*based on 1998-2003 CP experience only 40-50% of total planned non-food resources may be made available*". However since 2002 and for the coming years such problems are expected to be substantially reduced following the programming efforts made by WFP Operation Department Programming Service to ensure Country Offices with at least the same level of 2002 ODOC/DSC irrespective of the annual tonnage.

Table 13: Total Country Programmes expenditures (US$)

	2000		2001		2002		2003		2004
	Plan	Actual	Plan	Actual	Plan	Actual	Plan	Actual	Plan
DOC	31,717,619		31,717,619	24,847,000	31,717,619	20,118,446	14,016,866	18,071,347	14,016,866
ODOC	1,903,057		1,903,057	911,070	1,903,057	855,785	762,355	757,067	762,354
DSC	3,171,761		3,171,761	1,219,199	3,171,761	1,653,222	1,505,120	1,559,526	1,505,120
Beneficiaries	921,200		921,200	2,165,707	921,200	1,626,392	991,022	1,701,031	991,022
Gov't Contribution	6,130,000		6,130,000	-	6,130,000	-	3,043,115	-	2,945,574

Source: WFP Country Office.

111. At the country level the allocation of cash resources to development (and PRRO) has been proportionally higher than for EMOP (when compared to annual tonnage) as illustrated in the table below (2003 as been taken as an example but trends are confirmed also for other years). Furthermore it has been reported that the costs of some activities necessary for the implementation of WFP development activities are actually covered by the DSC allocation of the EMOP. This is the case for example of the costs of WFP Sub-Office monitors, the costs of VAM activities and other costs at Country Office level (procurement, logistics).

Table 14: WFP Ethiopia Summary of Operating Costs for the year 2003

Programmes	Internat. Staff Salaries	Local Staff Salaries	Total Salaries	CO[(a)]/SO[(b)] Costs Other than Salaries	Total Costs	% of Costs	2003 Tonnage in %
ITSH		300,000.00	300,000.00		**300,000.00**	3%	
EMOP	2,738,350.00	1,412,270.00	4,150,620.00	3,254,800.00	**7,405,420.00**	69%	80.5 %
PRRO	281,100.00	349,210.00	630,310.00	578,700.00	**1,209,010.00**	11%	6.1%
DEV	425,255.00	274,510.00	699,765.00	838,260.00	**1,538,025.00**	14%	13.4%
PSA	183,900.00	59,715.00	243,615.00	41,950.00	**285,565.00**	3%	
Total	**3,628,605.00**	**2,395,705.00**	**6,024,310.00**	**4,713,710.00**	**10,738,020.00**	100%	

(a) CO = WFP Country Office; (b) SO = WFP Sub-Office.
Source: WFP Country Office.

112. Indeed, all the Country Office (CO) and Sub-Office (SO) staff interviewed are of the opinion that, in the absence of EMOP resources, it would not have been possible to implement the Country Programme and related accompanying measures at the current level. However, the lack of a management accounting system within WFP CO does not allow clear attribution of overhead costs to different WFP operations (EMOP, Development and PRRO) and therefore the real costs of managing development activities cannot be fully determined. Furthermore it is important to emphasise (see Table 13) that there is no indicator accounting for the Government contributions to implementation costs which in same cases (e.g. MoA staff working in support of MERET) are quite substantial.

113. An analysis of the ODOC allocations indicates the role that such a resource plays in the implementation of the different projects. For instance, in 2003 (see Table 15), 30% of MERET ODOC were to be allocated to staff training and 45% to non-food project complementary inputs such as agricultural tools and small construction works. However only 10% of School feeding and 12% of HIV/AIDS ODOC resources were allocated to training, whilst allocation for project complementary inputs was equivalent to 45% for both projects. Some comments can be made here:

a) ODOC provides important resources for the funding of non-food items necessary to proper and successful implementation of Country Programme activities;
b) In the case of Ethiopia, ODOC resources have been allocated essentially towards capacity building activities and the provision of non-food items at the project level and this is in line with EDP principles;
c) ODOC allocations are globally proportional to the annual tonnage of the three projects and therefore the amount of cash resources at the disposal of School Feeding and HIV/AIDS projects is much lower than in the case of MERET. This is translated among other things in a significantly lower level of investment (in both absolute and percentage terms) in capacity building activities, as confirmed by field interviews findings;
d) Field findings have confirmed the importance of cash resources at project site level to complement activities (e.g. materials for constructing wells). However it is to be noted that this represents indeed an extremely small amount. For instance, if in the case of MERET this amount were to be spread among all project sites covered, it would represent less than 500 US$ per site. Therefore in the frame of ODOC overall allocation, cash resources to complement food at project level could only serve the purpose of piloting some initiatives. On the other hand, the impact of ODOC on the implementation of capacity building activities is more widespread and pervasive.

Table 15: WFP Other Direct Operational Costs PLANS 2003 (in US$)

Items	MERET	School feeding[41]	HIV/AIDS
National consultants and temporary assistance	28,535	12,000	-
Non WFP staff training	178,340	10,000	7,000
Recurring expenditures	40,020	10,800	17,000
Vehicles and other equipment for counterparts	78,470	20,000	6,000
Project complementary inputs	274,838	43,000	25,000
TOTAL	**600,204**	**95,800**	**55,000**

Source: WFP Country Office.

Commodities delivered

114. Table 16, in the following page, illustrates the type and amount of food commodities used over the last 3 years in Country Programme implementation. Food commodities distributed include wheat for MERET; famix (a locally produced fortified food); wheat and Corn and Soya Blend (CSB) for the Urban project; and salt, oil, biscuits, famix (till 2001) and CSB (from 2002) for School Feeding. It should be noted that in the case of school feeding two main changes have

[41] In the next academic year EMOP will cover an additional 400,000 students and related ODOC thus providing an opportunity for expanding capacity building efforts.

occurred: i) the biscuits distributed at school were dropped from the food ratio as too costly; ii) famix was replaced by imported CSB since the latter was part of the USAID grants in the framework of the Global Food for Education Initiative. This last change is not in line with EDP principles that encourages support for local production of Fortified Blended Foods. It should also be noted that, as illustrated in section 3.3.2, school children generally appreciate CSB less than famix.

Table 16: Ethiopia - Development Operation – Commodity distribution

Year	Project #	Project Title	Actual distribution, Mt							
			Wheat	Oil	Famix	CSB	Biscuits	Salt	Sorghum	Total
2000	05869.00	Urban women's Fortified Food Facility			784.85					784.85
2001	10004.0 Act 1	Ethiopia CP 1998 - 2003/Urban Food Asst.	2,341.69	244.68	375.94					2,962.31
2001	10004.0 Act 2	Ethiopia CP 1998 - 2003/Part.Rural.Land Rehab	49,748.00	121.00						49,869.00
2001	10004.0 Act 3	Ethiopia CP 1998 - 2003/Improv.Ed/School Feed		91.00	5,075.00		5,242.00	51.00		10,459.00
2002	10004.0 Act 1	Ethiopia CP 1998 - 2003/Urban Food Asst.	1,464.00	116.00	1,178.00					2,758.00
2002	10004.0 Act 2	Ethiopia CP 1998 - 2003/Part.Rural.Land Rehab	52,123.00						5,000.00	57,123.00
2002	10004.0 Act 3	Ethiopia CP 1998 - 2003/Improv.Ed/School Feed		303.00		6,340.00		105.00		6,748.00
2003	10004.0 Act 1	Ethiopia CP 1998 - 2003/Urban Food Asst.	660.00	36.00	278.00	427.00				1,401.00
2003	10004.0 Act 2	Ethiopia CP 1998 - 2003/Part.Rural.Land Rehab	37,054.00							37,054.00
2003	10004.0 Act 3	Ethiopia CP 1998 - 2003/Improv.Ed/School Feed		250.00		7,789.00		123.00		8,162.00
2003	10208.0 Act 1	Ethiopia CP 2003 - 2006/Meret	20,739.00							20,739.00
2003	10208.0 Act 2	Ethiopia CP 2003 - 2006/School Feeding		217.00				31.00		248.00
2003	10208.0 Act 3	Ethiopia CP 2003 - 2006/Urban HIV/AIDS	144.00	254.00	200.00	22.00				620.00
	Total		**164,273.69**	**1,632.68**	**7,891.79**	**14,578.00**	**5,242.00**	**310.00**	**5,000.00**	**198,928.16**

CP = Country Programme.
Source: WFP Country Office.

115. Part of the food distributed comes from local purchase, whose levels are determined by donor allocation and local market availability. For instance the reduction of the level of local purchases in 2003 can be partially attributed to a reduction of donors' allocation for this kind of operations.

Table 17: % of Local Purchase over total WFP Food Distribution in Development Activities 2001-2003

Year	Total Food Distribution (MT)	Local Purchase (MT)	%
2001	63,290	20,000	32%
2002	66,629	14,588	22%
2003	68,224	3,790	6%

Source: WFP Country Office.

116. The issue of the timely delivery of food aid at project level is discussed in detail in section 3.3. At the country level it should be noted that no major problems or delays were reported, at

least over the last two years. This is due essentially to: i) the existence of the Ethiopia Emergency Food Security Reserve from which it has been possible to borrow grain once commitments are confirmed; ii) WFP internal borrowing (from EMOP to Development and vice versa).

Key finding on resourcing

- The reduction of the level of resources at WFP's disposal for its development programming as envisaged by the 2003-2006 Country Programme seriously limits WFP's to address chronic food insecurity in terms of coverage. The problem has been partly mitigated by the allocation (though on a much shorter timeframe) of EMOP resources to "development" activities such as school feeding
- A crucial role in the implementation of Country Programme activities and in the putting in place of the measures envisaged by the EDP has been played by cash resources made available (by WFP) along with development food. Poor predictability of non-food resource levels has however made the implementation of non-food activities difficult
- More cash resources are required for managing development activities than for emergencies. At the country level the allocation of cash resources to development has been proportionally higher than for EMOP. Furthermore it has been reported that the costs of some activities necessary for implementation of WFP development operations are actually covered by the Direct Support Costs allocation of the EMOP. However, the lack of a management accounting system within WFP Country Office does not allow clear attribution of overhead costs to different WFP operations and therefore the real costs of managing development activities cannot be fully determined. An important contribution is provided by IP but the level of such contribution is not monitored by WFP
- An analysis of Other Direct Operational Costs allocations indicates the role that such resources play in the implementation of the different projects, particularly with respect to capacity building. ODOC allocations are globally proportional to the annual tonnage of the three projects and therefore the amount of cash resources at the disposal of School Feeding and HIV/AIDS projects is much lower than in the case of MERET. This is translated into a significantly lower level of investment in capacity building activities
- Different types of food commodities have been used in Country Programme implementation. A locally produced blended food (Famix) has been replaced by imported Corn and Soya Blend provided by USAID. This last change is not in line with the EDP principles that encourages support for local production of Fortified Blended Foods
- Local purchase is also undertaken for grain, though this practice is constrained by limited cash resourcing by donors

3.3 THE MAIN RESULTS OF THE ENABLING DEVELOPMENT POLICY AT THE LOCAL/COUNTRY LEVEL

This chapter deals with EQ 3 (results at local and country level) and EQ 4 (sustainability of results). Findings are first analysed by single project through an analysis of the mechanisms of the food distribution, the beneficiaries of the interventions and the results achieved at outputs (food distributed and assets created), outcome and impact levels. Three separate sections then analyse the results achieved with respect to efficiency criteria, their coherence with the EDP 5 strategic objectives and sustainability perspectives of sustainability.

3.3.1 MERET

Beneficiaries

117. The MERET beneficiaries, as reported by the Standardized Project Reports (SPRs), are presented in the table below. In the SPRs the term 'participants' refers to community members that participate directly in project activities, while the SPRs use the term 'beneficiaries' to refer to the estimated number of people consuming the food rations distributed by WFP on the assumption that there is only one participant per household and that the average household size is six members as illustrated below (to note also the drastic reduction in the number of participants in 2003 attributable to the reduction of Country Programme resources). During the field visits, with all the limitations due to the reduced sampling, the mission tried to answer the following questions: "*Who are the beneficiaries and who are the participants in the interventions?*" and *"What are the bases for estimating beneficiaries' numbers?"*

Table 18: MERET participants/beneficiaries 1999-2003[42]

Activity: PARTICIPATORY RURAL LAND REHABILITATION			
Year	**Participants/Beneficiaries**	**Planned**	**Actual**
1999	Direct participants	198,198	280,818
	Total Beneficiaries	1,189,188	1,684,908
2000	Direct Participants	237,838	375,059
	Total Beneficiaries	1,427,028	2,250,354
2001	Direct participants	237,850	310,575
	Total Beneficiaries	1,427,100	1,863,450
2002	Direct participants	237,838	211,567
	Total Beneficiaries	1,427,022	1,269,402
2003	Direct Participants (Project n. 10004)	79,896	137,237
	Total Beneficiaries (Project n. 10004)	494,366	848,311
	Direct Participants (Project n. 10208)	44,941	77,531
	Total Beneficiaries (Project n. 10208)	254,674	460,800

Sources: SPRs 1999 and 2000 on Participatory Rural Land Rehabilitation (Project n. 2488/04); SPRs 2001, 2002 and 2003 on Ethiopia Country Programme 1998-2003(Project n. 10004); SRP 2003 on Ethiopia Country Programme 2003-2006 (Project n. 10208).

118. At project site level, participants are selected by the Local Level Participatory Plan (LLPP) committee on the basis of two criteria: poverty and capacity to work. Nevertheless, in the case of MERET, another 'operational' criterion is also considered. In fact, the watershed management approach employed by MERET implies that in most cases (e.g. in the case of field terraces), the MERET-supported activities need to be implemented concurrently in a certain area of the watershed, irrespective of the level of wealth of the individual farmers who own land in the areas covered. In other words, albeit on a rotational basis, all able-bodied villagers participate in MERET activities at least when undertaking Soil and Water Conservation activities (SWC) and other activities on their land. It is also to note that "wealthy" farmers in the MERET areas are quite rare and all participants are, as confirmed by field observations and interviews, to be considered as food-insecure, although with differing degrees of severity. This is in line with the

[42] In 2003, operations foreseen under the Ethiopia-Country Programme 1998-2003 (Project n. 10004) and the Ethiopia-Country Programme 2003-2006 (Project n. 10208) have been run concurrently. Nevertheless, in order to show their respective outputs, data related to the two Country Programmes are reported separately.

2002 MERET Impact Study (undertaken by WFP and MoA) findings that 85% of MERET resources at community level go to the 'most vulnerable'.

119. Women participants account for about 40% of the total. This information was confirmed by direct assessments during the field visits and by reports made available by the Ministry of Agriculture. There is however an aspect that needs to be kept in mind with respect to women participation: women prefer activities (based on LLPPs) that do not imply 'heavy work'. For example, access to fodder and firewood, which means improved closures, homestead plantations and fruit trees, spring development, nursery activities etc., are not 'heavy', especially when compared with terracing, pond and road construction. Therefore, low participation in food-for-assets activities does not necessarily imply low attention to women's priorities.

120. Issues related to the inclusion of the poorest community members in MERET as participants or beneficiaries were discussed at all project sites with Local Level Participatory Plan committee members as well as with other villagers. In general the poorest or most vulnerable households are considered those households with little or no access to land. In several discussions it was reported that members of these very poor *'struggling'* households benefit less (if they benefit at all) from the assets created by MERET. Therefore in general the project committees and the communities at large try to ensure greater involvement (when compared to other community members) in MERET activities particularly in creation of assets of general interest such as check-dams and access roads.

121. With respect to the calculation of the actual number of beneficiaries of MERET it has been observed that in several cases (though on a rotational basis) more than one member of a household participates in project activities and therefore the calculation of food aid beneficiaries by multiplying the number of participants by six is somehow artificial. This also takes into consideration the fact that part of the food received is often redistributed among community members. On the other hand, as discussed in the next section, the main benefits of MERET should not be related to the food distributed but to the assets created, and therefore actual MERET beneficiaries include the great majority of the population living in the watershed area, which clearly exceeds the number of households participating in MERET in a given year. In any case by looking at MERET total beneficiaries coverage, it should be noted that this project deals with the food security problems of approximately 20% of the 5 million estimated (by the Food Security Coalition) chronic food-insecure in Ethiopia.

Key findings on MERET beneficiaries

- Field visits highlight that in the case of MERET, landless households (or households with very few assets) benefit from MERET essentially through their direct participation in food-for-assets activities
- Households with a minimum of assets at their disposal (land, livestock, etc), while also participating in food-for-assets activities, receive the most important benefits from the assets created by the project while also benefiting from the food distributed
- The calculation of the number of beneficiaries remains controversial. The mission considers the calculation of beneficiaries based on the people living in the watershed area could integrate the current systems of calculating beneficiaries on the basis of the food rations distributed
- Clearly, given the nature of the MERET project, vulnerable people unable to work (e.g. chronically sick, handicapped) do not benefit from the project, at least not directly

Project outputs

122. Project outputs for MERET indicated in the SPRs refer to the number of beneficiaries receiving food rations and to the assets created with the support of the food distributed. For the purpose of this report, the mission has first examined the issue of the food distributed in terms of its delivery mechanisms and appreciation by beneficiaries. This is followed by an analysis of the assets created (type, quality, appreciation by beneficiaries), whilst the last section is an attempt to analyse the relationship between the assets created and the food distributed.

Food distribution and beneficiaries' appreciation

123. In the case of MERET, the food delivered to beneficiaries consists exclusively of wheat. A 'payment' of 3Kg per day, based on specific work norms, is provided to each participant for a period of time not exceeding 90 days. It is to note that this approach somehow contradicts Enabling Development Policy indications that consider food essentially as a form of support to households rather than a payment. Food is normally available in the woreda capital where it is transported from the Agreed Delivery Points established by WFP, under the direct responsibility of the Ministry of Agriculture. There, food is collected once a month directly by beneficiaries or by somebody delegated by them.

124. MERET activities take place during the dry season, when agricultural activities are less demanding in terms of work-force and when the need for food aid to fill household consumption needs is highest. For instance in the case of Amhara, activities take place between March and June/July and food is distributed between April and August whereas the harvest period (long rains) is in October. Interviews at community level, but also at regional and woreda level, indicate that over the last two years no major problems have been reported with regard to timely delivery of food aid, with the only exception of the community visited in the Southern region that received the food in March, a month which in that area coincides with the harvest. On the other hand two years ago there was a general problem in food supply due to late donor commitments. The problem was solved through borrowing from the Strategic Food Security Reserve but food still arrived late at community level (often close to harvest time).

125. Wheat is generally appreciated by beneficiaries, though the quality of supply is reported to be extremely variable, either because it is the staple food of the area as in some communities of North Wollo, or because of its high market value. In one community women said that they would prefer sorghum because it is part of their staple food and is better for *njera* (a local staple food). Complaints were raised by members living in communities located far from the woreda capital, since it was reported that the costs of transporting food to their villages was very high (up to 15% of the total value).

126. The issue of whether cash transfers could be considered a valid alternative to food aid was discussed with beneficiaries and key informants such as the woreda staff. But no clear cut answers were provided. In general government staff seems to favour the use of cash.

Food aid or cash?

Asking to food aid recipients whether they prefer food or cash may be considered as a 'leading' question since beneficiaries may answer 'food' simply for fear of losing the assistance. However when the two alternatives are presented in 'monetary terms' by asking farmers to compare what they could buy with an amount of money equivalent to the value of the food they receive the discussion becomes more lively: "*well maybe if I go today with that amount of money to the market I would be able to buy more food, but prices change very fast, instead with the MERET system I'm always sure to get the same quantity of food and to meet my family's needs*" said a woman in Meket Woreda. Another woman in Kallu Woreda said: "*with cash I could be able to buy more food, but I'm not sure that all the cash I receive will go into food since my husband may have other ideas and what we really need at home during the months before harvest is food*". However in a community in Ambasel very far away from the distribution point a farmer said: "*to transport food here from the distribution point I have to pay 20% of its value, cash payments for us will be a much better option since there is a local market not far from here*"; whilst a woman in Kallu Woreda said: "*I'm very happy with the wheat I receive but sorghum is our staple and so I sell part of the wheat and maybe if given cash I could buy more sorghum*".

This was particularly underlined in Meket Woreda in North Wollo where there is an ongoing Save the Children - UK project that uses cash to support Employment Generation Schemes (EGSs). At the community level (see Annex 4) the great majority of people interviewed indicated that food aid was to them the best option on the basis of two main observations: i) availability of food on markets considered erratic; ii) the value of the 3kg of wheat that in certain areas was considered as roughly corresponding to local daily wages for unskilled labour and higher than what is normally paid by EGS (5 Birr). Other people interviewed, however, were said to prefer cash either for the greater freedom that a cash payment could provide in purchasing a series of basic goods or because of the cost and the difficulties faced in transporting sacks of wheat to remote areas.

Assets created

127. Under MERET, food is used to support the creation of a long list of assets that can be subdivided in two broad categories: i) assets of general interest designed to ensure the overall improvement of the community natural resource base (soil and water) such as check dams or to improve access to markets and other services (e.g. access roads); ii) assets designed to increase production directly on farmers' land used for field terraces, shallow wells or compost making. Activities are undertaken by community members with the supervision of MoA local staff who has received the necessary training. Furthermore the use of detailed but user friendly manuals greatly facilitates the task of assets creation.

128. From direct observation by the mission and interviews at the field and district level (e.g. beneficiaries, MoA and NGOs staff), it can be said that the quality of the assets created is generally very good and of higher quality than that of the assets created through EGS. During the field visits it was also observed that assets such as field terraces and check-dams were well maintained. Maintenance was reportedly done by the communities without any form of payment. During the field visits communities were also asked to express or rank their preferences regarding the assets created. Responses varied from site to site but with some common patterns. In fact, all community members expressed their highest appreciation of those activities that helped to retain soil and water and increase soil productivity. A very strong degree of preference has also been expressed for homestead development activities recently introduced by MERET, for instance compost making and development of shallow wells for irrigation purposes.

Farmers' views on the assets created

All assets created through MERET are important for us but the most important ones are the field terraces because they help to retain soil and increase productivity" said a woman in Kallu. "*Thanks to that check-dam we have 'recovered' land and saved our home that otherwise would have been washed away*" a woman in Meket Woreda. In Ambasel a farmer said: *"I visited the field terraces created by my cousin in another Peasant Association (created through EGS), ours are really much better and my cousin would like MERET to cover his community".*

129. Based on discussion with beneficiaries and key informants the following considerations can be made on the actual role of food aid in assets creation:

a) Community members were involved in Soil and Water Conservation activities also prior to the start of the MERET, though on a smaller scale and with lower technical know-how;
b) The assets created are considered as very relevant to people's livelihoods, and community members stated that they would continue to undertake MERET type activities necessary to increase land productivity, particularly on their own land, also in absence of food aid;
c) However, the communities covered by MERET are generally considered food-insecure and resource poor and, in the absence of transfers such as the one provided by MERET, households would be forced to seek other sources of revenue (mostly through migration) to meet their consumption needs and would not invest in their own land;
d) In such context food aid is perceived as an indispensable support for assets creation but also as a form of payment for the work undertaken, particularly when it is done on

communal land (some farmers complained that the MERET work norms were in fact too hard).

Project Outcomes

130. The MERET 2003-2006 log-frame envisages four outcomes: i) strengthening of households and community decision-making on their own development; ii) strengthening of the technical and organisational capacities of participants and implementing partners; iii) rehabilitation of land and creation of productive assets; and iv) creation of income generation opportunities. Clearly in the absence of clearly defined and quantifiable targets and given the relative short period of implementation, effectiveness can only be partially assessed (see section 2.2).

131. The impact assessment study undertaken in 2002 reported a series of results and benefits that could be attributed to the MERET. The results at outcome and impact levels are summarised in the following table. As illustrated in the next paragraphs, some of the main findings of the impact study have been cross-checked by the mission during the field visits.

Table 19: MERET Impact Study

Main Findings on Food Security and Livelihoods
A 40% decrease in food shortage duration down from 5 to 3 months per year
60% reported an increase in the number of meals eaten per day
72% experienced an income increase from sale of different agricultural products generated from activities supported by the project
73% had more money to spend on education, health and clothing
84% reported a 150-400 kg increase in crop production per year per household
85% indicated an improved ability to cope with drought
88% advised their livelihood situation had improved from "*struggling" to "doing okay" or "doing well"*

Source: Government of Ethiopia/WFP MERET Impact Study (2002).

132. During field visits the issue of the linkage of benefits to project implementation was discussed with all concerned stakeholders. The results of the focus group discussions and individual interviews are reported in Annex 4. In general the benefits of MERET can be attributed either to the food distributed or to the assets created and these are discussed separately. **Food aid** has reportedly played (and continues to play) an important role in assets protection. All community members reported that, thanks to food aid, they are not forced to deplete their asset base, particularly with regard to livestock. Indeed several farmers in Amhara region reported that in 2002, when the delivery of food was delayed till harvest time, they were forced to sell part of their livestock to buy food. Food aid is also contributing to a decrease in the level of seasonal migration in search of employment. This, according to community members, has also indirectly contributed to improving the health situation of the community since people often have to migrate in areas where malaria is endemic.

133. The main benefit that can be attributed to the **assets created** by the project is increased agricultural production. This result was in fact reported in 11 of the 12 sites visited. The only site where agricultural production did not reportedly increase was in North Wollo and this was attributed by beneficiaries to the total lack of rains over the last two years. Better agricultural production was generally attributed to increased soil depth and water availability as well as to land reclamation as a consequence of MERET activities. Farmers reported an increased level of agricultural production estimated to vary from one third to double. Such production increases can be estimated at 2-4 months of increased coverage of household food needs.

134. Another benefit reported by almost all communities is the increased availability of pasture (due to higher water table or enclosure areas) and water (through the construction of water ponds), which is translated into: i) increased livestock productivity; and ii) reduced labour and

time since farmers no longer have to walk long distance in search of water and pastures. In one project site in Amhara region it was also reported that during the 2002 drought, livestock was kept in good health while the animals of the neighbouring communities either died or were sold at very low prices.

135. The development of shallow wells for small scale irrigation activities was considered as another very important activity in all communities where it was implemented. Farmers and women's groups, benefiting from the development of a pond or a shallow well on their land, reported important increases in their level of income and improved diet. On the other hand, it should also be noted that in general only few farmers in each community have so far benefited from irrigation development and in most cases these are model farmers. This is due to the lack of the cash resources required to complement the food-for-assets activities as well as to the limited capacity of the water tables. Nonetheless, according to various community members, and women in particular, the small scale irrigation schemes have ensured an increased and more diversified availability of vegetables at local level which have benefited the community as a whole.

We have a balanced diet
"Since I started irrigation we eat much more vegetables at home, last week my daughter came back from school where she was taught about 'nutrition' and she told me: 'father do you know that we have a balanced diet?' " said a famer in Meket Woreda. A woman in Kallu Woreda said: *"I do not have irrigation on my land but since many of my neighbours do, now vegetables are cheaper and more varied".*

136. Other reported results at outcome level, attributable to the assets created are as follows: i) increased income from sale of timber and firewood as a result of area closure or community re-forestation; ii) better and cheaper access to markets and health services as a result of feeder road construction; iii) reduced crop damage by monkeys that now find sufficient food in re-forested areas; iv) honey production; v) lower dependency on external loans. Furthermore, on a more global level, it has been reported that the lessons from MERET and Local Level Participatory Plan Approach (LLPPA) are often being replicated in neighbouring communities by MoA staff. Clearly some of these benefits can be considered unintended or unexpected since they were not indicated in the various project plans.

137. Other key outcomes noted by the mission of the MERET activities, in line with the Enabling Development Policy principles, are the planning and technical capacities created at community level as a result of the LLPPA and capacity building activities that indeed provide a basis for a Community Driven Development Approach that goes beyond the scope of MERET as well as to the ongoing decentralisation process.

Project Impacts

138. Table 19 (see previous page) illustrates the findings of the MERET Impact Study with respect to the results achieved at impact level. Results at impact level were also analysed during the field visits. According to farmers' and other stakeholders' views these results are essentially twofold: an increased level of food-self sufficiency and a decreased level of vulnerability.

139. One way to establish the level of food security of a household or community in Ethiopia is to determine how many months of household food needs are covered by households' own production. Clearly this is only one indicator of food security, since most rural households may have other off-farm sources of income such as petty trade and short-term employment. In the community visited it can be estimated that households have reduced the gap between own production and consumption needs of 3-5 months per year through increased agricultural production, livestock production and income generating activities. It is therefore possible that a large proportion of community members can be now considered, at least in normal yeas, as food self-sufficient.

140. The assets created by MERET have not only contributed to increased production but also to income diversification. In fact it was reported by different beneficiaries that vegetable

sales profits were invested in livestock. Furthermore increase in water, soil and pasture availability can substantially mitigate the effect of droughts. This was also mentioned by several farmers in Wollo with respect to the 2002 drought when communities supported by MERET were reportedly less affected by the drought.

141. It should also be noted that an interesting Cost-Benefit analysis of MERET is currently being undertaken by a FAO multidisciplinary team on a WFP contract. The study is based on a sample of 11 watersheds that have been randomly selected. In each watershed a detailed questionnaire has been utilised essentially to assess project impact at household level. Data are still being elaborated and assembled but preliminary findings indicate that the financial internal rates of return can be estimated at between 10% and 40%.

Key findings on MERET results

- Food aid is generally delivered in time and in the quantities necessary to address food shortages at household level. The EDP assumption that food aid should not be considered as form of payment but rather as a support in the transition to more sustainable livelihoods is not always reflected in farmers views that often perceive food aid as a remuneration
- Food aid delivered to support MERET activities also plays an important role in assets protection
- In general beneficiaries prefer food to cash as a form of transfer because of the volatility of market prices, but some others would rather consider cash payment as more flexible
- The assets created by MERET are of good quality and highly appreciated by users who generally undertake their maintenance
- Field findings broadly confirm the 2002 impact assessment study results with respect to outcomes and impacts: there are good indications that production and income have increased, people are better able to cope with drought and the overall livelihood situation has improved even though they do not yet consider themselves as fully food-secure
- In fact the MERET intervention alone cannot secure sustainable food security at community level since long term food security and resilience to shocks would require an substantial level of assets accumulation promoted through increased partnership and implementation of other, complementary interventions
- Nevertheless it can be concluded that MERET beneficiaries coverage contributes to address the food-insecurity problems of approximately 20% of the chronic food-insecure targeted by the Food Security Coalition and that the results have been attained at reasonable costs (according to the preliminary findings of a ongoing Cost-Benefit Analysis)

3.3.2 School feeding

Beneficiaries

142. The SFP targets 5 food-insecure regions (Afar, Amhara, Oromia, Somali and Tigray). The project sites have been selected in areas identified as highly chronically food-insecure by the VAM[43] as well as by Public Authorities. Within the food-insecure areas, the Regional Authorities selected schools in rural areas that could benefit from the programme. Logistical constraints are such that schools near roads are generally selected. In most cases the schools participating in the

[43] The VAM data are not collected in the Somali and Afar regions.

ongoing programme are those involved in the previous programme, with the exception of urban schools, no longer eligible under the new programme (2003-2006). The table below indicates that in 2003 the coverage of the project was reduced due to the reduction of Country Programme resources.

Table 20: School Feeding Project actual beneficiaries[44]

Year	Boys	Girls	Total	% girls
1997	34,132	30,268	64,400	47
1998	54,984	44,988	99,972	45
1999	76,767	63,000	139,767	45
2000	115,082	94,160	209,242	45
2001	156,689	129,000	285,689	45
2002	158,000	129,000	287,000	45
2003 (Project n. 10004)	202,805	146,858	349,663	42
2003 (Project n. 10208)	6,272	4,542	10,814	42

Sources: WFP standardized project report 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002 and 2003.
Note: The main beneficiaries of the SFP are boys and girls from primary schools located in food-insecure areas. While their number is increasing every year, the proportion of girls seems constant around 42-45%. Observations made in the field highlighted a similar trend, with the % of girls varying between 44% and 49%.

143. According to a DFID study[45], more than 5.1 million children are out of school, with gender disparities in rural areas. Child labour, cultural practices (such as early marriages), distance from school and poverty are generally indicated as the main causes of low enrolment and attendance rates. This was confirmed by field discussions that could not however confirm whether children from the poorest households were actually reached by the programme.

Key findings on beneficiaries

- Beneficiaries are boys and girls from primary schools located in rural food-insecure areas but generally close to main roads
- The geographically based targeting system does not ensure that children from the poorest households are benefiting from the programme

Project outputs

144. According to the School Feeding Project (SFP) monitoring and evaluation matrix, 5 outputs are expected from the 2003-2006 programme. Although the programme's implementation is still at a very early stage, some observations can already be made for each of them. However, as in the case of MERET, in the absence of clearly defined targets and related indicators and given the relative short period of implementation, effectiveness at outputs and outcomes level can only be partially assessed (see section 2.2).

145. Output 1*: Full food ration is received and distributed at schools in a timely manner which contributes to relieve short term hunger*. Over the last 7 years the total amount of food distributed every year varied between 1,488 MT and 10,459 MT.

[44] In 2003 operations foreseen under the Ethiopia-Country Programme 1998-2003 (Project n. 10004) and the Ethiopia-Country Programme 2003-2006 (Project n. 10208) have been run concurrently. Nevertheless, in order to show their respective outputs, data related to the two Country Programmes are reported separately.

[45] CIE, 2003, 'Out-of school children in Ethiopia. Report for DFID'.

Table 21: SFP food aid distributed yearly (in MT)

Year	MT
1997	1,488
1998	3,791
1999	4,818
2000	7,274
2001	10,459
2002	6,748
2003	8,168

Sources: WFP Standardized Project Report 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002 and 2003.
Note: This includes all types of food distributed.

146. The composition of the ration changed over time. During the previous programming period it was composed mainly of biscuits, famix, wheat and oil. Since 2002 the ration is composed of Corn and Soya Blend, oil and salt. Generally, the children do not appreciate the CSB; when asked about their preferences during the school visits, all favoured the ration received before 2002.

We prefer famix
Tebebe is a grade 4 boy and is part of the School Feeding Committee in Kurkure Genda (Ambasel Woreda): "*Till two years ago we received famix and biscuits, famix was much better than CSB and we could take biscuits at home to be eaten later. We really do not like CSB and so we add 'berbere' for taste*". The Headmaster in Chorissa (Kallu Woreda) said: "*Children do not like CSB, they eat it because they are hungry, but girls very often do not finish their plates*".

147. As important as the type of food received is the regularity with which it is distributed. Field visits have shown that delays of between 1 and 3 months in food distribution were recorded both last year and this year. This is mainly due to the transfer of responsibility from WFP to the BoE for the transport of food from the agreed delivery points to the schools (from 2004-2005 Government obligations to contribute to Internal Transport, Storage and Handling (ITSH) has been waived). There are several reasons for these gaps: i) transport of food is not a normal activity for the Bureau of Education (BoE) and some time will be required to integrate all aspects of this activity (budgeting, tendering, timing, etc.); ii) the BoE budget is reported to be tight and mostly spent on salaries; iii) at regional level, this activity is not necessarily considered as a priority when preparing the budget. As illustrated in section 2.2, the current reporting and monitoring system utilised by WFP does not permit to clearly determine whether full rations are regularly received. Nevertheless no problems of this nature were reported during the visits.

148. Output 2: *An incentive system for girls is introduced and implemented in selected schools.* A specific initiative has been developed in the Afar, Somali and Oromia regions, where the girls' enrolment rate is particularly low, to provide the families of 10,000 girls with a food incentive in return for the girls' attendance. The incentive should normally amount to 5% of the annual food cost for a typical rural family.

149. Output 3: *Community based, gender balanced committees are established, trained and managing regular distribution of food.* All the schools visited during the field visits have committees in charge of supervising the food distribution process. These committees are generally headed by the school director and composed of teachers, parents, and student (all those visited included at least one woman). Although all school directors received training in this area, food storage is uneven from one school to another. While some schools visited stored properly all food and non-food items (mainly pots) received, in others storage was definitely sub-standard.

150. Output 4: *Complementary activities addressing education quality, community sensitisation on the benefits of education, gender, HIV/AIDS and other relevant issues* are established at schools through internal linkages and external partnership. It is too early in the process to comment on this output. All that can be said is that such activities were not reported in the schools visited.

151. Output 5*: Capacity of counterparts to promote and implement the SFP is strengthened.* Training was provided to local officials and all the school directors involved in the programme. However the field visits showed that the training results varied a lot from one school to another with respect for instance to storage management and food preparation (showing the importance of personal motivation in success in programme implementation).

Main outcomes

152. The SFP monitoring and evaluation matrix foresees two main outcomes:

Outcome 1*: more children (girls and boys equally) are enrolled, attending and remaining at assisted schools.* Assessments of the SFP undertaken by WFP and MoE in 2001[46] and 2003 show that enrolment rates in schools assisted by the programme are increasing more than in other schools. This has been cross-checked and confirmed by the information (and school records) collected by the mission in the schools during the field visits. In the same direction, the 2001 assessment reported decreased dropout rates and increased attendance rates. Although no quantitative data could be collected during the field visits, the same trends were reported everywhere.

Table 22: % increase in enrolment rates

Year	Schools assisted by WFP	Visited schools records	Other schools
1999/2000	20.12%		16.2%
2000/2001	18.36%	Between 18 and 31%	15.45%
2001/2002	16.36%	Between 16 and 32%	11.36%
2002/2003*	4.36%	Between 2 and 18%	-1.2%

* Low enrolment rate mainly due to drought.
Sources: MoE and WFP, 2004, 'Improving education through school feeding in Ethiopia (1994-2003), power point presentation; Field observations.

153. Exchanges with teachers during the field visits have also shown converging trends. It is indeed reported everywhere that students' concentration is improving. Where food is distributed before classes start, timeliness improves and repetitions of classes tends to decrease. On the other hand, any disruption in food distribution negatively affects student performance.

154. Outcome 2: *Government and communities demonstrate increased capacity and commitment to addressing education with the support of school feeding.* The second Education Sector Development Programme (ESDP)[47] states very clearly that to improve access, stabilise attendance, reduce dropout rates and alleviate short-term hunger so that children can attend classes attentively, School Feeding Project (SFP) shall continue and be expanded in areas where there is serious food shortage, and that the feeding programme will serve as an incentive to go to school. At regional level, however, budget priorities do not necessarily reflect public authorities' commitment to school feeding, due not only to budgetary constraints but also to the priority given to other initiatives such as construction of new schools. At community level, on the other hand, the fact that communities fully contribute to the costs of food preparation and to supervision of the school feeding activities is a clear sign of the priority given to such activity.

Projected impacts

155. According to the SFP monitoring and evaluation matrix, the expected impact of the SFP is investment by households in food-insecure areas in the education of children, especially that of girls. The WFP 2001 assessment of the SFP concluded that: "*the project met its educational objectives by increasing enrolment rates and decreasing dropout rates in primary schools, particularly for girls. The impact was slightly higher in Amhara region although differences among all regions considered were marginal*". In the same line a DFID study[48] recognises that: "*school feeding has had an important impact on schooling opportunities*

46 WFP, 2001, 'Improving education through school feeding. Eth 4929.01. Impact assessment of school performance and nutrition'.
47 FDRE, 2002, 'Education Sector Development Programme II (ESDP-II). Programme action plan'.
48 CIE, 2003, 'Out-of school children in Ethiopia. Report for DFID'.

in areas where it is operating. Moreover, it has a positive impact on nutritional status, which in turn improves academic performance. The evidence suggests that school feeding is not used as a substitute for meals at home, as the nutritional status of those receiving school feeding is higher than those in school with no school feeding". Apart from these two studies, however, there was no evidence from the field visits that would allow the mission to identify any impact attributable to school feeding, such as increased level of household investment on education.

Unintended effects

156. The increased enrolment and attendance rates observed have also in some cases an adverse effect on pupil/teacher ratios, availability of books, classrooms sizes, etc. To date, these issues have not been addressed. Although the MoE is fully aware of the problem there is no specific action taken to provide the schools where the SFP is implemented with an additional budget to accommodate the increased number of students. In fact at the moment the Regional Education Bureaux and Woreda Education Offices[49] are faced with tremendous resource constraints to cover recurrent costs as well as investments. However this situation may gradually improve with the resumption of donors' support to the Education Sector Development Programme (see paragraph 62). Another unintended effect is increased enrolment in the SFP-assisted schools through dropouts from nearby non-assisted schools seeking to benefit from the programme. Observations made during the field visit confirmed that some of the students met were indeed coming from nearby schools, but they are not the majority[50].

Key findings on school feeding results

- Rations are not provided regularly over the school year (gaps from 1 to 3 months are regularly observed)
- The type of food provided since 2002 (with the shift from locally purchased food to imported Corn and Soya Blend from the USA) is less acceptable to the beneficiaries
- Positive trends have been observed with regard to enrolment rates, school attendance, etc. However it is not clear what percentages of the increased enrolment rates is the result of children coming from nearby schools or of children that would have not gone to school in the absence of school feeding
- Teachers' perception of improvements in students' ability to learn is positive overall
- Education quality remains problematic since the increased level of enrolment is not balanced by improvements in the numbers of classrooms, teachers and school books
- Whilst government is politically committed to the programme, at regional and local levels, serious budgetary constrains are to be recorded
- Local communities are fully committed to the school feeding programme and cover all the costs of food preparation

3.3.3 HIV/AIDS

157. The project has recently started to replace the old urban project, discontinued because of several problems linked to targeting and over-complex implementation mechanisms. Therefore

[49] For instance the Woreda Education Officer in Kallu Woreda declared to the mission that he had to wait for the retirement (and death) of some teachers in order to cover WoE share of the costs of the food transported to the school and that the employment of new teachers or the purchase of books was not foreseen in this year budget.

[50] Data available at WFP Country Office but not yet compiled indicate that in 2003 the phenomenon of children coming from other school was minimal.

results are not yet assessable, and furthermore the start of implementation has been seriously constrained by the restructuring of the Addis Ababa Administration under which HAPCO falls.

Beneficiaries

158. Targeting of beneficiaries under the HIV/AIDS activity is based on an assessment of poverty profiles and the distribution of the poor in Addis Ababa whereby it was determined that the inner city held the largest number of poor and food-insecure households. Accordingly, the Arada and Addis Ketema sub-cities have been identified as the target areas for the HIV/AIDS activity.

159. Once a geographic selection is made, the selection of beneficiaries is based on poverty criteria (income <1 US$/day or <200 Birr/month) and whether they are chronically ill with symptoms of AIDS, whether they are orphans (a child that lost one or both parents to AIDS or both parents due to any cause), whether they are willing to serve as home-based volunteers, or whether they are pregnant women and nursing mothers participating in Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission of HIV (PMTCT), depending on the project component. Due to stigma and the focus on the chronically ill, only the most critical cases of AIDS among People Living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHAs) have been included in the project.

Table 23: Urban Food Assistance[51]

Beneficiaries 1999-2003			
		Planned	**Actual**
1999	Total Beneficiaries (Project 5403)	14,626	11,274
	Total Beneficiaries (Project 5869)	8,394	6,952
	Total	23,020	18,226
2000	Total Beneficiaries (Project 5403)	10,771	7,088
	Total Beneficiaries (Project 5869)	15,000	11,854
	Total	25,771	18,942
2001	Total Beneficiaries (Project n. 10004)	41,052	16,568
2002	Total Beneficiaries (Project n. 10004)	37,000	29,990
2003	Total Beneficiaries (Project n. 10004)	41,230	29,990
	Total Beneficiaries (Project n. 10208)	38,766	1,930

Sources: SPRs 1999 on Projects n. 5403 and 5869; SPRs 2000 on Projects 5403 and 5869; SPRs 2001, 2002 and 2003 on Ethiopia Country Programme 1998-2003 (Project n. 10004); SPR 2003 on Ethiopia Country Programme 2003-2006 (Project n. 10208).

Outputs

160. It has been argued above that, under the HIV/AIDS activity, food is being used strategically not only to bridge the food gap faced by food-insecure households but also to improve the nutritional status of HIV/AIDS infected adults, and to provide food to dependants (infants, children, elderly, and the chronically ill) who have lost their primary carers and may therefore face difficulties in accessing food. Since the assistance is linked to nutrition, the type of food provided is quite important. It is, however, unclear if the food ration (wheat, vegetable oil and famix) is appropriate in terms of nutritional content, acceptability (due to unfamiliar tastes and inadequate knowledge of preparation methods) and absorption depending on whether it is to be taken by the sickly, infants, children or adults. There may in fact be benefits in substituting the current ration with more traditional high value foodstuffs such as milk and pulses for adults while

[51] In 2003, operations in this area foreseen under the Ethiopia-Country Programme 1998-2003 (Project n. 10004) and the Ethiopia-Country Programme 2003-2006 (Project n. 10208) have been run concurrently. Nevertheless, in order to show their respective outputs, data related to the two Country Programmes are reported separately.

maintaining faffa and famix for the sickly and infants. Nevertheless, implementing this may unduly increase the complexity of the project.

161. Since the HIV/AIDS project is new, results have not yet been achieved. Furthermore it should also be noted that the project has been faced with implementation problems (see 2003 SPR results) attributable to the restructuring of Addis Ababa administration under which HAPCO operates. Nevertheless, it is expected to contribute to a key development objective by addressing food insecurity of poor households affected by HIV/AIDS; arguably one of the most vulnerable sections of urban society in Ethiopia.

162. However it has also been reported during field interviews that Implementing Partners (IPs) tend to use WFP food to extend the coverage of their activities to other beneficiaries rather than complementing as envisaged by the project design the non-food support that they are already providing with nutritional support. This problem is attributable to the overall scarcity of the resources at the disposal of IPs when compared to the actual need of their constituency.

Key findings on the HIV/AIDS project

- Project implementation has only recently started and therefore results are not yet visible
- The introduction of the HIV/AIDS project led to a sharper focus in the identification of WFP urban project beneficiaries. SPRs results indicate that the project is faced with implementation problems since it has not achieved the expected target
- Potential results (welfare and development) are likely to contribute to address a set of HIV/AIDS related problems
- Owing to an overall resource scarcity, food aid tends to be used as a stand-alone resource by IPs rather than as a complement to other measures

3.3.4 Efficient use of resources at project level

163. Efficiency-related questions have partially been addressed with respect to the global level in section 3.2.6 and with respect to the timely delivery of inputs under the sections covering the description of results at project level. Here efficiency is discussed with respect to the results achieved at the project level against two main criteria: i) integration of project activities; ii) costs of the inputs or food delivered when compared to alternative forms of transfer.

164. Important efforts have been recorded with respect to integration of the different WFP development projects' operations. For instance, a series of initiatives is currently in place to expand synergies and collaboration between the MERET and the School feeding projects. These include:

a) The implementation of School Children in Participatory Planning ("LIJ"-PPA), based on a simplified model of the Local Level Participatory Plan Approach (LLPPA) and used, on the one hand, to create awareness from primary school onwards on the importance of environmental issues and their links with food security, and, on the other hand, to identify ways and means to integrate MERET and school feeding activities;
b) Funding with MERET resources, as also already observed during the field visits, of several assets (roads, water points) useful to improve the quality of (and access to) education.

165. Efforts to utilise MERET lessons and approaches in the implementation of 'Effective' Employment Generation Schemes (EGSs) funded with Emergency Operations (EMOPs) resources should also be noted. In fact, Ministry of Agriculture staff trained by MERET often utilise the skills acquired and the tools developed in the design of EGS activities in the geographic areas under their responsibility. Furthermore the utilisation of WFP staff and resources (for instance in monitoring and supervision activities) across the different WFP operations should also be noted.

166. Debates on whether food aid can be considered as an efficient tool for transfers to food-insecure households, particularly when compared with cash assistance, have been recurrent in Ethiopia and are now again on donors' and Government's agendas, as illustrated by the plans presented by donors such as the EC to provide cash support instead of food aid for EGS. A recent study, *The Evaluation of Cash for Relief Project in South And North Wollo zones*, undertaken by the Ethiopian Economic Policy Research Institute and funded by Save the Children - UK has tried to analyse the efficiency of cash with respect to food (in terms of costs for the assistance to 100,000 relief beneficiaries). The preliminary results[52] show, on the basis of the sample utilised, that cash aid can cover more people with the same amount of money than locally purchased food aid (by 7%) and imported food aid (by 40%).

167. The mission tried to analyse the issue of efficiency with respect to the actual costs of food delivery (limited to wheat). Several difficulties are confronted in this analysis and need to be spelt out:

a) First the wheat utilised in the Country Programme is provided according to three modalities: i) in-kind direct from the donor country and therefore outside WFP management; ii) purchases by WFP on the international markets but often with some conditionalities attached by donors (e.g. on the type of commodity or of its origin); iii) purchases by WFP on the local markets when cash is made available to this end by donors. Furthermore, purchases are often made in different parcels over the course of the year with different unit prices, and this makes comparisons more difficult. For instance the cost per MT of the wheat purchased in Ethiopia in 2002 varied between 180 and 217 US$;
b) As a rule of thumb, however, it is possible to estimate the average cost of the wheat distributed by using the budgeted costs included in the Country Programme: in the case of MERET, the total envisaged budget of 35,322,427 US$ for a total of approximately 135,000 MT. The price per MT is estimated to 141.7 US$, the costs of ocean freight per MT is 54.28 US$ per MT and the Landside Transport, Shipping and Handling (LTSH) is 66 US$ per MT. Therefore the average cost per MT at the Extended Delivery Points is 262 US$. This cost does not include ISC, DSC, ODOC and ITSH[53];
c) Grain prices on local markets are extremely volatile and vary considerably from region to region. As illustrated in Table 24 (see the following page), in Dessie (South Wollo/Amhara) prices fluctuated between 108 (March 2002) and 195 Birr per quintal (September 2003) or 127 $ to 229 $ per MT, whilst in Mekele (Tigray) they varied between 135 Birr (February 2002) and 246 Birr (March 2001) or from 158 $ to 289$ per MT;
d) A further complication is linked to the calculation of the cost of transport from the Extended Delivery Points to the different stores existing at woreda level. In fact, these costs vary considerably according to distance and are partly covered by Implementing Partners, with no proper records at WFP level;
e) Therefore it is clear that all efficiency analyses based on averages have to be considered with great caution and regarded as indicative.

52 The report is still at a draft stage.

53 Indirect Support Costs (ISC), Direct Support Costs (DSC), Other Direct Operational Costs (ODOC), Internal Transport, Storage and Handling (ITSH).

Table 24: Monthly Wholesale Price of White Wheat (Birr/qt) by region in 2000-2003

Year	Month	Addis Ababa	Nazreth	Dessie*	Mekele	Year	Month	Addis Ababa	Nazreth	Dessie*	Mekele
2000	Jan.	181.8	175.3	185.5	220.5	2002	Jan.	112.0	100.3	122.8	140.0
	Feb.	177.3	175.3	184.5	223.5		Feb.	106.3	97.0	110.5	135.0
	Mar.	184.8	185.8	201.2	227.8		Mar.	107.5	101.0	108.5	145.0
	Apr.	210.0	209.5	215.8	238.8		Apr.	117.5	105.3	117.0	157.5
	May.	206.3	197.0	215.0	239.8		May.	121.0	117.4	120.0	186.0
	June	208.4	204.0	201.6	239.4		June	132.5	122.5	138.8	190.0
	July	206.3	195.8	213.0	230.0		July	155.0	145.0	151.5	201.3
	Aug.	206.0	198.4	223.6	226.0		Aug.	178.0	164.6	181.0	209.6
	Sept.	203.8	188.7	206.7	233.3		Sept.	171.3	171.5	170.0	214.5
	Oct.	192.5	189.5	185.8	224.0		Oct.	180.0	178.0	168.4	202.0
	Nov.	172.8	155.2	182.0	220.0		Nov.	190.0	180.0	170.0	210.0
	Dec.	171.3	155.0	181.5	215.0		Dec.	193.8	185.0	176.5	197.5
2001	Jan.	161.3	152.0	187.5	212.5	2003	Jan.	200.0	180.0	186.0	186.0
	Feb.	171.3	143.0	176.5	226.3		Feb.	198.8	183.8	170.0	182.5
	Mar.	150.0	138.3	171.0	241.3		Mar.	188.8	180.0	170.0	202.5
	Apr.	150.0	133.5	173.3	246.8		Apr.	189.0	181.0	169.2	208.0
	May.	134.0	132.8	160.4	229.0		May.	197.5	193.8	165.0	203.8
	June	123.8	111.8	151.3	224.0		June	205.0	205.3	173.3	218.8
	July	117.5	110.0	141.0	221.3		July	208.0	201.0	179.0	240.0
	Aug.	131.0	113.4	152.8	218.0		Aug.	217.5	183.3	191.3	235.0
	Sept.	113.8	112.8	152.8	186.3		Sept.	207.5	191.5	195.5	217.5
	Oct.	111.3	106.3	145.8	151.5		Oct.	198.0	179.0	184.0	206.0
	Nov.	109.0	103.0	139.4	153.6		Nov.	180.0	147.5	176.3	188.8
	Dec.	117.5	107.5	127.0	143.8		Dec.	150.0	135.6	171.4	169.0

*Dessie is only 25 km away from Kombolcha (for which no data is available).
Source: Ministry of Agriculture and own elaboration.

168. On the basis of the data reported above, however, some observations can be made. First, when food is available on the local markets, local purchases appear more cost efficient than purchases made on the international markets, at least if the basis of the average 262 US$ reported in the Country Programme budget is taken into consideration (last year the local purchase cost of wheat has varied between 216 and 223 US$ per MT - or 18% less than the average budgeted price). The analysis of such data would seem to confirm, though to a more limited extent, the findings of the Ethiopia Economic Policy Research Institute, indicating that grains purchased locally are 33% cheaper than the imported ones.

169. The average estimated costs of 262 US$ per MT (or 222 Birr[54] per quintal) at the level of the Extended Delivery Points (Kombolcha/Dessie, Mekele, Nazareth) may provide an indication regarding the use of cash as an alternative and possibly more efficient way of transferring resources to poor farmers. In practice, if we take into consideration the wheat wholesale prices in markets around WFP Extended Delivery Points areas such as Kombolcha and Mekele and if we compare the price of 222 Birr for quintal with the monthly prices recorded over the 2001-2003 period, it is possible to make the following observations:

a) In the case of Dessie/Kombolcha a price of 222 Birr per quintal would be higher than local market prices in 100% of the cases, by an amount varying between 13% and 100%;

[54] On the basis of a rate of exchange: 1 US$=8.50 Eth Birr.

b) In the case of Mekele the same price of 222 Birr would be lower than local market prices in 16 out of 36 records.

170. At the community level the calculation of the cost of wheat delivered requires some further elaboration, since costs of transport (ITSH) from the Extended Delivery Points to the woreda distribution centre need to be taken into account. These can be estimated, as an average, as approximately 50 US$ per MT. Therefore the actual cost per quintal can be considered around 260 Birr, whilst in the case of Amhara region reported prices at community level varied between 180 and 220 Birr per quintal.

171. The calculations presented above should be considered very theoretical but can still indicate that in purely efficiency terms cash transfers would be, in most cases, more cost-efficient than food-aid based transfers, although this conclusion is sensitive to location and seasonal differences. Nevertheless, without entering into the cash and food debate with respect to their appropriateness in reaching the "right people", it should be noted that: i) the implementation of cash-based safety nets would require institutional capacities that at the moment are not in place in Ethiopia; ii) there is no sufficient evidence of the effects of cash based safety nets on food markets prices, also considering that Ethiopia's food balance sheet is and will remain negative for quite some time.

172. Nonetheless, given the importance of the efficiency issues, the mission considers that WFP should pay more attention to the issue and should consider the possibility of setting up a monitoring system to be able to compare that, at least on a sample basis, the actual costs of local purchases versus international purchases and in-kind donations and the Alpha Value[55].

Key findings on efficiency at the project level

- The ongoing process of integrating WFP projects such as MERET and school feeding, and of WFP development programming with other operations, contributes to an overall increase of efficiency
- The analysis of efficiency in terms of food aid costs is extremely complicated because of conditionalities attached to food aid purchases that limit comparability and because of the wide market price fluctuations in Ethiopia. Nonetheless, local purchases appear more cost efficient compared to imported food aid
- At the community level it appears that in most cases grain market prices are lower than the average cost per unit of food aid and therefore cash transfers may be considered as potentially more efficient
- Yet there are extremely wide variations in grain prices from market to market and it should be noted that the implementation of cash-based safety nets would require institutional capacities that at the moment are not in place
- Furthermore there is not yet sufficient evidence of the effects of cash-based safety nets effects on food markets prices also, considering that the Ethiopia's food balance sheet is and will remain negative for quite some time
- Nonetheless, the mission considers that WFP should pay more attention to efficiency issues and that, the cost of food aid, at least on a sample basis; should be constantly monitored to allow comparability with other delivery options so as to favour policy decisions also on the part of donors

[55] Alpha value: the local market prices - usually retail prices - of the same or similar food items out of WFP food basket (or of the entire food basket) divided by the overall costs to WFP or the donor to deliver this food (free-on-board food costs + ocean freight & insurance + internal transport, storage and handling).

3.3.5 Consistency of the results with the EDP strategic objectives

173. As discussed in section 3.1.2 and presented in section 3.3.1 (outputs and outcomes), MERET results can be considered consistent with the EDP in respect of assets creation (ownership by beneficiaries, and relevance to food security, of the assets created). With respect to the 5 areas of focus MERET has to address priority 3 (*make it possible for poor families to gain and preserve assets)* and priority 5 (*enable households which depend on degraded natural resources for their food security to make a shift to more sustainable livelihoods)*, according to a level distribution of resources described in Table 25 (see the following page). However this subdivision appears somehow artificial. First because it is not clear why MERET activities are not also considered as contributing to area of focus 4 (*mitigate the effects of natural disasters in areas vulnerable to recurring crisis)* as they apparently were in the 2488 project as indicated by the mid-term evaluation results (page 40). Furthermore MERET activities can hardly be put in boxes. In fact while some activities are more pertinent to areas of focus 3 (feeder roads, community ponds, spring development) and others to 5 (field terracing) they are all designed to attain the desired outcomes and most activities serve both roles as in MERET areas they are complementary and mutually reinforcing.

174. In practice it can be concluded that MERET is fully consistent with the EDP strategic objectives since it addresses priority areas 3 and 5 (and 4). However, in a context such as Ethiopia where poverty, natural resources degradation and vulnerability to disasters are strictly correlated, the rationale to sub-divide assets-creation-related initiatives into 3 discrete areas seems somehow artificial.

175. School feeding activities are in line with areas of focus 2 (*enable poor households to invest in human capital through education and learning)*, yet it should be noted that the nutritional objective that was part of the previous phase of the project has been dropped, most probably because difficult to achieve under the present circumstances.

176. The HIV/AIDS Activity is classified as addressing EDP priority 1 (*enable young children and expectant and nursing mothers to meet their special nutritional and nutrition-related health needs)* although the main target group of the nutritional activities (the HIV/AIDS patients) is another vulnerable category, and indeed it addresses an important developmental issue within Ethiopia: urban food insecurity related to HIV/AIDS. However, it is unclear, as currently designed with bed-ridden patients as its main target, whether the Activity has an essentially welfare nature or is actually contributing to engaging marginalized households and individuals in the development process. In fact, addressing HIV/AIDS in ways that go beyond relief to help affected households remain productive remains a challenge.

177. The greatest impact in terms of 'enabling development' is perhaps the indirect benefit accruing to dependants from assistance provided to household heads ill with AIDS and the direct support to children orphaned by the disease. In particular, providing food to HIV/AIDS affected households is likely to help children and young adults from such households to remain in school and, as their nutritional needs are addressed, to maintain good performance and (for older members) to engage in skills training where such opportunities are available.

Table 25: Resource allocation by FAAD / EDP areas of focus

	WFP country dev. exp. (000 $)	as % of WFP country dev. exp.	WFP country dev. exp. (000 $)	as % of WFP country dev. exp.	WFP country dev. exp. (000 $)	as % of WFP country dev. exp.
Ethiopia	**2001**		**2002**		**2003**	
FAAD 1: Health, nutrition & MCH	871	3.2	106	0.6	655	3.7
FAAD 2: Education & training	11,813	44.	5,022	26.6	4,641	26.3
FAAD 3: Asset creation	3,660	13.6	5,500	29.2	3,147	17.9
FAAD 5: Sustainable livelihoods/ NRM	10,408	38.8	8,222	43.6	8,067	45.8
Other	76	0.3		0.0	1,108	6.3
TOTAL DEVELOPMENT	**26,828**	**100.0**	**18,849**	**100.0**	**17,620**	100.0

Source: Own calculations based on country data provided by ICTI, ICT Division, WFP.

Key findings on consistency of results with the EDP strategic objectives

- WFP projects' results are consistent with the EDP strategic objectives
- In the context of Ethiopia the rationale to sub-divide assets-creation-related initiatives into 3 discrete areas seems somehow artificial
- The HIV/AIDS intervention may be considered as also addressing strategic objective 2
- Area of focus 1 (nutrition) should deserve more attention in a context such as Ethiopia

3.3.6 Sustainability of results

178. With respect to the sustainability of MERET, as defined by the DAC, the following observations can be made. First the quality of the assets created is generally of high standard, thus requiring less maintenance work that, in any case, is provided by the community irrespective of food aid. Therefore the benefits deriving from these infrastructures are likely to continue in the absence of the project.

179. Furthermore the timely delivery of food aid has been highlighted as a key factor in protecting people productive assets (see for instance the role of food aid in MERET in reducing livestock sales during drought) and therefore in ensuring the overall sustainability of the livelihoods systems, whilst these are being strengthened through the creation of new productive assets.

180. The results of capacity building activities at community level, such as surveying and work supervision, provide a further guarantee of the maintenance (if not the expansion) of the assets created. This applies also to the capacity building activities that the MERET has undertaken for the Ministry of Agriculture staff at Peasants Associations, woreda, regional and national levels. However the possible positive effects of such training with respect to sustainability at the community level is seriously affected by continued government staff turn-over, while at the community level the lack of management training is also a factor of concern.

181. At a more global level, it is to note that MERET is fully and autonomously implemented by the MoA with a minimum support from WFP and that MERET type activities are being undertaken by MoA staff also in the absence of WFP food (see for instance the re-orientation of EGS activities). The fact that the Joint Government Multi Donor Strategic Framework for Safety Nets highlights the need for a joint support to labour intensive public works and private assets creation, identified though community participation and to be supported either through food aid

or cash transfers, is a further guarantee of the overall long term sustainability of such kind of undertaking, that may however still require long term external support from the donors community.

182. Nonetheless a notable problem of MERET is the lack of clearly defined, even if long term, exit strategies. Critics of MERET indicate that the project has been working in the same areas for over 20 years, thus creating dependency. This analysis, in our view, does not correspond to reality. In fact, whilst it is true that WFP-supported food-for-work activities have been going on in some woredas for over 20 years, it should also be noted that while the approach has clearly changed, the areas and communities covered have also changed. In fact, in the areas visited, WFP-supported activities have been implemented for periods varying from 3 to 7 years which in a 'developmental context' seems to be a reasonable duration.

183. Various WFP reports mention the possibilities for specific communities to graduate out of food assistance and certain communities are said to be nearly ready for this graduation. Yet no mechanisms or indicators are so far in place to guarantee implementation of clearly defined exit strategies. The mission considers that an exit strategy does not necessarily mean a strategy finalised at the completion of MERET-type activities, but rather an approach that would allow communities to progressively graduate out of food aid by maybe moving to cash transfers whilst MERET activities and resources are instead allocated to other communities in need.

184. The use of food aid to support **education and HIV/AIDS-**affected households should not be seen as an instrument limited in time but rather as permanent feature of Ethiopia's health policies. Indeed, school feeding programmes and food based safety nets are now part of the GoE strategies for the education and HIV/AIDS sectors. In such a framework, a WFP exit strategy should be seen essentially in the context of the need to encourage strengthening of government and community commitments(to provide capacity building and to establish milestones for a gradual and realistic phasing out). It is to note however, that - contrary to MERET - progress in capacity building of local institutions has been so far rather limited although good results have already been achieved at community level in the SFP. Furthermore the issue is partly addressed by the School Feeding Project that has the specific outcome: *"Government and communities demonstrate increased commitment and capacity to address education with the support of school feeding"* but will most probably need further attention, particularly in the elaboration of milestones.

Key findings on sustainability

- Several measures (e.g. capacity building) have been put into place to increase the chances of sustainability of the activities undertaken with satisfactory results particularly in the case of MERET
- In the context of Ethiopia, phasing out should be seen as a long term strategy. Furthermore the use of food aid to support education and HIV/AIDS-affected households should not be seen as an instrument limited in time but rather as a permanent feature of Ethiopia's social policies
- Nonetheless clearly spelt-out exit strategies with related milestones need to be elaborated by the Country Office

4 CONCLUSIONS AND ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

4.1 CONCLUSIONS

185. WFP has long-standing experience in undertaking activities of a 'developmental' nature in Ethiopia, and an analysis of the context in which the Enabling Development Policy has been designed, as well as of several EDP directives, is linked directly or indirectly to the Ethiopian experience. The mission considers that the WFP Country Programme in Ethiopia is **consistent** with the EDP; that key necessary measures (e.g. strengthening stakeholders participation, demonstrating results etc.) to its proper implementation have been (or are being) put in place; and that many of the EDP principles have also been applied with satisfactory results, albeit less systematically, to other WFP operations (such as Emergency Operations - EMOPs).

186. Furthermore, WFP development programming can be considered as **relevant** to national and international priorities and to the main key interventions in the area of food security. At project level, the **results achieved** are globally satisfactory with respect to the EDP strategic objectives, beneficiary needs and national priorities, although with some differences between different projects. **Sustainability** at project level is also globally satisfactory thanks to the attention given to capacity building activities. The overall vulnerability context under which WFP operates, however, remains a 'threatening factor' to the process. Furthermore the mainstreaming of food aid based measures (in line with WFP CP approaches) in GoE development and safety net strategies may favour the overall long term sustainability of the results being attained. Finally, the mission considers that systematic application of EDP key principles to WFP development programming can be considered as a contributing factor to the 'developmental' results achieved by WFP in Ethiopia.

187. A number of **factors for success** have been identified by the mission that could be useful for drawing **lessons** for an overall improvement of WFP programming at global level. These are:

- The dialogue with all partners undertaken by the CO that has facilitated, on the one hand, better integration of WFP-promoted interventions within broader policy frameworks and, on the other hand, mainstreaming of innovative approaches to address vulnerable groups' circumstances (e.g. the Joint Government Multi-Donor Strategic Framework for Safety Nets);
- The strong ownership by public institutions of WFP supported activities (e.g. the role of Ministry of Agriculture in MERET);
- The strong participation of beneficiaries in the project cycle (e.g. the Local Level Participatory Plans in MERET) which has increased the relevance and sustainability of the assets created;
- The appropriateness of the food assistance provided since the delivery of food is generally timely and helps beneficiaries to address existing food gaps efficiently;
- The implementation mechanisms based on a consolidated delivery system (e.g. the experience of GoE in implementing food-for-work activities and in delivering food aid); the capacity of the CO to build on lessons learned (e.g. the evolution of MERET from food-for-work for large infrastructure development and forestry to the introduction of participatory approaches for identification of activities with a specific focus on livelihoods);
- The synergies existing between the different WFP operations that make possible addressing different aspects of existing food-security-related problems in Ethiopia.

4.2 ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION AND RELATED RECOMMENDATIONS

188. The basic purpose of the Ethiopia Study was to contribute evidence-based elements to the overall evaluation process through assessment of EDP-related principles, activities and results in a specific country context. The elaboration of specific recommendations to improve WFP development programming in Ethiopia was therefore not considered a priority when preparing the study methodology. Nonetheless, the mission would like to present a few recommendations and issues for consideration for WFP management and WFP donors that could provide avenues for improvement in WFP programming in Ethiopia.

189. In fact a number of issues related to WFP's activities in Ethiopia, and aimed at improving the impact of development interventions, deserve further attention by WFP, donors and other stakeholders. These are: i) the challenges posed by the chronic food insecurity situation and the role of food aid in such a context; ii) the challenges with respect to targeting; iii) the need to strengthen partnerships; iv) the definition of exit strategies; v) the measures to ensure and monitor efficiency; vi) the resourcing of the development-oriented measures.

190. Each year between 5 and 12 million people receive food aid in Ethiopia as a response to the annual emergency appeal of the Disaster Prevention Preparedness Commission (DPPC). The measures put in place by the Government and donors in response to the problem are essentially of a short-term nature and are therefore unable to address the root causes of structural food insecurity. Recent initiatives such as the Food Security Coalition have helped to put on the Government's and donors' agendas the need for more structured and co-ordinated measures in order to tackle **chronic food insecurity**; nevertheless so far short-term measures remain predominant. In the framework of the initiatives to address chronic food insecurity, the use of **food aid** remains somehow controversial. The mission considers that a large share of the Ethiopian population will need support, at least over the medium term, with some forms of transfer aimed at protecting or developing its assets and ensuring that basic nutritional requirements are met. These transfers could be either of a welfare and unconditional nature to protect the most vulnerable categories or of a 'conditional' nature to support more development-oriented activities.

191. In such a context, food aid is to be considered as one of the possible forms of transfer. In some cases such as school feeding or nutritional support to HIV/AIDS patients, food assistance can hardly be replaced with other forms of transfer, while in the case of public works or household asset creation the 'advantages' of food aid are open to debate and, at least in some cases, cash transfers could be more cost-efficient and give beneficiaries more flexibility. Nonetheless, the mission believes that food aid will still play, at least over the medium term, a key role in addressing chronic food insecurity issues, including asset creation activities. This takes into account the country's current food deficit and market failures as well as the fact that, whereas Ethiopia has a solid system in place for food aid distribution, similar systems for other forms of transfer are not sufficiently developed.

192. **Targeting** the food insecure populations was the overall concern of WFP in Ethiopia well before the introduction of the EDP. The mission considers that the Country Programme's main target group, 'the chronically food insecure', is perfectly in line with EDP principles and national priorities. However, whilst the CP operates in food-insecure areas to the benefit of food-insecure people, it is not clear whether this always translates fully into actions in favour of the most vulnerable people or the most vulnerable communities since the 'developmental' nature of the CP, equity, resource constraints and other considerations (e.g. Implementing Partners' capacities and interest, working with farmers with a minimum of assets, site accessibility) appear to influence the targeting process.

193. The mission considers that further attention should be paid to targeting; more specifically it recommends increased coverage of the remotest areas within food-insecure districts and

adoption or strengthening of measures aimed at addressing the circumstances of particular categories of vulnerable groups such as women (e.g. by strengthening the incentive system for girls' school attendance), poor children unable to attend school, or the chronically ill (e.g. though the mainstreaming of HIV/AIDS-related initiatives). It is to note that the implementation of this kind of measures may require a higher level of cash resources (e.g. to undertake activities in very remote areas) and this should be taken into account by donors and WFP management. Clearly not all the recommended actions should necessarily be undertaken under the ongoing CP but rather be part of a broader strategy that includes other WFP operations (e.g. safety nets) so as to cover vulnerable categories whose circumstances cannot be addressed by interventions of a strictly developmental nature such as MERET.

194. The strengthening of **partnership** has been one of priorities of the WFP Country Office (CO). Nevertheless, while the degree of partnership achieved with government institutions can be considered as broadly satisfactory (although constrained by lack of resources), the same cannot be said in relation to other donors and development agencies. Indeed, the lack of structured and systematic partnership arrangements at project level is the most serious constraint to the achievement of long-term and sustained food security and has hampered the translation into practice of the basic EDP principle whereby food aid in development cannot be used as a stand-alone resource.

195. The mission considers that a sound partnership strategy should go beyond **implementation** considerations such as the search for cash resources to complement ongoing WFP interventions, which appear to have been the main focus of WFP CO partnership efforts in the recent past. It therefore recommends paying greater attention to **strategic** alliances in order to seek to integrate WFP initiatives within a broader framework for collaboration. To this end, WFP's contribution to the definition of an overall framework for collaboration between Government and donors, with respect to actions aimed at reducing chronic food insecurity such as the safety net strategy, seems to be a step in the right direction.

196. In the context of Ethiopia, WFP **exit strategies** should be considered in a long term perspective and the use of food aid to support education and HIV/AIDS affected households should not be seen as an instrument limited in time but rather as a permanent feature of Ethiopia's social policies. Nonetheless, clearly spelt-out exit strategies with related milestones need to be elaborated by the WFP CO. This may include for instance the identification of criteria to decide when it will be possible to phase out the assistance from MERET sites that can be considered to have 'graduated' and to move on to new sites. This will enable among others things to increase the coverage of WFP supported interventions.

197. Furthermore the mission considers that definition of a clearer national policy framework for the use of food aid in a developmental context, outlining *inter alia* the conditions needed for phasing out food assistance, is required and that this would encourage the definition of more realistic exit strategies on the part of different stakeholders while sharpening the focus of the measures designed to address chronic food insecurity problems.

198. Several issues can be raised with regard to the **resourcing** of WFP 'developmental interventions'. The first relates to the global level of resources provided and most notably to the drastic reduction of resources for the 2003-2006 Country Programme. The reduction is not linked to lower levels of 'developmental needs' in Ethiopia but rather to a global decrease in the availability of development resources for WFP. This has been translated into a considerable reduction of CP coverage and, whilst it has been noted that a large share of the 'chronic food insecure' caseload is currently covered by WFP with emergency resources, the limitations of such types of short term transfer should also be stressed and be closely considered by the donors supporting WFP intervention in Ethiopia

199. The mission estimates that a proportionally higher level of cash resources has been used by the WFP Country Office for the management of development activities than for emergencies, and that higher levels of overheads are justified according to the approach used and the results achieved. Furthermore, the fact that sharpened targeting and other accompanying measures to enhance the developmental results of WFP activities (e.g. strengthened capacity building) require more cash resources should also be highlighted and be considered by donors.

200. However, policy decisions with respect to support for WFP development programming could be facilitated and strengthened by improved monitoring and analysis of **efficiency issues** with respect to: i) overhead costs of project implementation; ii) different procurement arrangements utilised by WFP; iii) other forms of public transfers such as cash. At present the lack of a managing accounting system and the difficulties associated with data collection in the Ethiopian context (e.g. wide fluctuations of local grain prices) makes an analysis of efficiency difficult. Therefore, the mission considers that WFP should: i) pay more attention to efficiency issues and constantly monitor the cost of food aid, at least on a sample basis, in order to allow comparability with other delivery options; and ii) clearly identify actual cash needs for support of development programming.

201. To conclude, the mission considers that in a context such as Ethiopia where the distinction between emergency and non emergency situations is blurred, a delivery system based on three discrete programme categories (emergency, recovery and development) may not be fully appropriate. What is needed to strengthen WFP's contribution to addressing the longstanding food security problems of the country is a **programming approach**. This should be based on longer-term commitments by donors and an enhanced level of resource predictability (both food and non-food items), with an appropriate balance and the necessary synergies between social protection, recovery and development activities.

A few key points to conclude

Key factors for success identified by the mission:

- Strong dialogue with all key stakeholders;
- Programme ownership by public institutions;
- Strong participation by beneficiaries in the project cycle;
- Appropriateness of food assistance to most of the contexts in which WFP operate;
- Implementation mechanisms based on a consolidated delivery system;
- Capacity to build on lessons learned;
- Synergies between different WFP operations.

Key problems identified by the mission that deserves attention by WFP and Donors:

- Inadequate level of partnership with key donors;
- The most vulnerable people or communities are not always reached by WFP development interventions;
- Lack of exit strategies;
- Insufficient capacity to demonstrate results and monitor efficiency in such a way as to facilitate informed policy decisions;
- Allocation of donor resources to different WFP operations (with an emphasis on emergency measures) inappropriate to addressing food security problems of an essentially structural nature.

Key recommendations:

WFP should:

- Improve partnership arrangements both at project level, through strengthened collaboration with donors, and at a more strategic level, through mainstreaming of food aid and WFP assistance within wider frameworks for the reduction of chronic food insecurity;
- Pay further attention to the monitoring of efficiency related issues so as to facilitate informed policy decisions;
- Define a more pro-active targeting approach to reach those vulnerable categories still not adequately covered (e.g. out-of-school children);
- Spell-out clearly-defined exit strategies.

WFP donors should:

- Support the adoption of a more flexible and long-term approach to WFP assistance so as to respond to a country context where the distinction between emergency and non-emergency situations is blurred;
- Support as far as possible local purchases of food aid so as to increase the relevance and efficiency of WFP interventions;
- Consider that sharpened targeting and other accompanying measures to enhance the developmental results of WFP activities would require more cash resources.

GoE should:

- Define a clearer national policy framework for the use of food aid in a developmental context, outlining *inter alia* the conditions needed for phasing out food assistance.