

**POVERTY REDUCTION IN ETHIOPIA
AND THE ROLE OF NGOs:
QUALITATIVE STUDIES OF SELECTED
PROJECTS**

Deryke Belshaw and Erin Coyle

**Report of a Consultancy Assignment carried out
by the Overseas Development Institute, London,
on behalf of the Christian Relief and Development Association,
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia**

November 2001

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. This study took place in the context of a full Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) being prepared by the Government of Ethiopia to cover the three-year period 2002/03-2004/05. The preparation timetable was running over the period July 2001 to May 2002. The Poverty Reduction Strategy is expected to also cover relevant aspects of governance, decentralisation and capacity building.

2. The objective of this study was to select and 'groundtruth' the impact of probable poverty-reducing projects implemented in Ethiopia by a range of NGOs, international and local. This 'qualitative' study of a purposively selected sample of NGO projects was intended to complement a more descriptive quantitative review of the overall range and impact of poverty-reducing NGO projects. Essentially, this study was searching for convincing demonstrations of good practice across the major poverty reduction activities.

3. During a short preliminary visit to Ethiopia, the types of project which would be expected to make a significant and sustainable impact on poverty reduction had been identified (section 4).

4. A sample of 14 NGOs and 28 poverty-reducing projects was selected for field visitation within a two days out-and-back radius of travel from Addis Ababa. The sample was selected to reflect rural areas in the northern, central and southern highlands, as well as urban projects in Addis Ababa and smaller townships. It also included a balance of international and Ethiopian NGOs and a mix of religion-based and secular/humanitarian NGOs. Reliance in data collection was placed variously on key informants and project beneficiaries.

5. The pattern within the sample with respect to projects' poverty reduction focus and information sources was as follows:

**Numbers of Sample Projects by Poverty-reducing
Function and Source of Information**

Poverty-Reducing Function	Project management and beneficiaries	Project management only	Total
1. Food security	3	4	7
2. Income-generation (savings and credit schemes)	7	-	7
3. Access to social services	4	3	7
4. Orphan and street children care	1	3	4
5. Environmental protection	2	1	3
Totals	17	11	28

6. Where relevant and feasible, projects had gender equality objectives built into them. For example, the majority of credit and savings scheme members were women, the focus on women being seen as going some way to redress the dominance of male benefits received in the form of land, livestock and education-based livelihoods. Time was insufficient, however, to permit an overall assessment of the degree of countervailing impact achieved by NGOs in the gender area;

7. In section 3 the nature of the global PRS approach is reviewed and in sub-section 3.3 a number of substantive and procedural issues arising in Ethiopia are identified and discussed. Foremost amongst these issues are: (i) the fact that the dominant crop production strategy targets the non-poor amongst the family farm category (the most numerous group facing chronic and transitory food insecurity, i.e. the most severe form of income poverty); (ii) the absence of individual land use security in the northern and

central highlands which prevents investment in land improvement and agricultural intensification; (iii) the probability that the results of the 1999/2000 household expenditure survey will become available only a month or so before the scheduled end of the PRSP process, so reducing the quality of the first three-year plan if the present timetable is kept to or if plan iterations are not introduced.

8. The body of the report (sections 5-9) summarises the main poverty-reducing features of 28 projects (information about AfD'S water pipeline project was restricted to engineering aspects only). A considerable weight of evidence is assembled, much of it from beneficiaries themselves, of innovative approaches with significant impacts in terms of poverty reduction. Half of the projects had direct impacts (14 projects in categories 1 and 2). The remainder had indirect or preventive impacts in improving access to social services, improving community health or individuals' future access to livelihoods or through reducing the rate of deterioration in the natural or built environments (14 projects in categories 3, 4 and 5).

9. In the concluding section, it is recommended that the NGO sector press for:
- (i) a review of pro-poor land and agricultural development policies;
 - (ii) capacity-building assistance for government and NGOs in tropical crop and livestock technology, using south-south technology transfer routes, especially in the following areas:
 - Agro-forestry (alley cropping, multi-storey cropping, taungya and silvo-pastoralism system)
 - Water-harvesting and micro-irrigation
 - Inter-cropping and green manuring
 - Ratooning techniques (semi-arid areas)
 - Horticulture and pomology
 - Diversified small-stock (pigs, ducks, geese, rabbits).
 - Other forms of appropriate technology
 - (iii) capacity-building assistance for NGOs in low-cost monitoring and evaluation procedures to identify impacts on poverty reduction and best practice;

- (iv) engagement in the PRSP process with a view to monitoring the effects of woreda-level participation and, if necessary, advocating annual iterations of the three-year plan to bring in a larger proportion of woredas omitted in the first round (approx. 417 out of 532).

CONTENTS

<u>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</u>	ii
<u>CONTENTS</u>	vi
<u>ACRONYMS</u>	viii
<u>1. TERMS OF REFERENCE (TOR)</u>	13
1.1 <u>Context</u>	13
1.2 <u>Objectives</u>	14
<u>2. METHODOLOGY</u>	14
2.1 <u>Constructing the Project Sample</u>	15
2.2 <u>Data Collection Methodology</u>	16
2.3 <u>Limitations of the Study Methodology</u>	16
<u>3. THE POVERTY REDUCTION STRATEGY PAPER (PRSP) PROCESS</u>	18
3.1 <u>The International Context</u>	18
3.2 <u>Analysis of International Progress in Poverty Reduction</u>	22
3.3 <u>Ethiopia: specific issues</u>	23
<u>4. OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS OF POVERTY-REDUCING ACTIVITIES</u>	28
<u>5. FOOD SECURITY</u>	33
5.1 <u>Improved Access to Land and Markets</u>	33
5.2 <u>Irrigated Food Production</u>	34
5.3 <u>Integrated Rural Development</u>	36
<u>6. INCOME GENERATION</u>	38
6.1 <u>Background</u>	38
6.2 <u>Savings and Credit Schemes</u>	39
6.3 <u>Income Generation via Modified Traditional Community-based Organisations</u>	45
<u>7. ACCESSING SOCIAL SERVICES</u>	49
7.1 <u>Background</u>	49
7.2 <u>Health</u>	51
7.3 <u>Domestic Water Supply</u>	53
7.4 <u>Non-formal education</u>	54
<u>8. ORPHANS AND OTHER VULNERABLE CHILDREN</u>	60
8.1 <u>Background</u>	60

8.2	Case studies in primary care	61
8.3	Case study of non-primary care	65
9.	ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND REGENERATION	67
9.1	An Improved Soil and Water Conservation Project	67
9.2	A Township Flood Protection Project	68
9.3	An Urban Regeneration Project	68
10.	MAJOR FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	69
ANNEX 1	ITINERARY	76
A:	Preliminary Visit	76
B:	Main visit	76
ANNEX II:	REFERENCES CONSULTED	81

ACRONYMS

ACCESS	Appropriate Cost-Effective Centres for Education within the School System
ACORD	Agency for Cooperation and Research in Development
ADLI	Agricultural Development-led Industrialisation
AfD	Action for Development
AIDS	Auto-immune Deficiency Syndrome
BoA	Bureau of Agriculture
BoPED	Bureau of Planning and Economic Development
CBO	Community-based Organisation
CHA	Community Health Agent
CRDA	Christian Relief and Development Association
CRS	Catholic Relief Services
CSA	Central Statistical Authority
CSAE	Centre for the Study of African Economies (University of Oxford)
EECMY	Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus
EMRDA	Ethiopian Muslims Relief and Development Association
EOC/CFAO	Ethiopian Orthodox Church – Child and Family Affairs Organisation
EOC/DICAC	Ethiopian Orthodox Church – Development and Inter Church Aid Commission
ERSHA	Ethiopian Rural Self-help Association

ESRDF	Ethiopian Social Rehabilitation and Development Fund
EU	European Union
FBO	Faith-based Organisation
FGE	Federal Government of Ethiopia
FSCE	Forum on Street Children – Ethiopia
FY	Financial Year
GTZ	Gemeinschaft für Zusammenarbeit
HHICE	Household Income, Consumption and Expenditure Survey
HIPC	Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (Initiative of the IMF)
HIV	Human Immune-deficiency Virus
IBRD	International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (World Bank)
IEC Centres	Information, Education and Communication Centres
IHA-UDP	Integrated Holistic Approach – Urban Development Programme
IIED	International Institute for the Environment and Development
I-PRSP	Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
KHC	Kale Heywot Church
KIRDP	Kutchra Integrated Rural Development Project
LEISA	Low external input sustainable agriculture
MEDAC	Ministry of Economic Development and Co-operation
MFI	Micro-finance Institution
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation

OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
ODI	Overseas Development Institute
PA	Peasant Association
PPP	Purchasing Power Parity (method for calculating national GDPs)
PRGF	Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility
PRS	Poverty Reduction Strategy
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
PRUS	Poverty Research Unit at Sussex (University)
SG2000	Sasakawa Global 2000
SIP	Sector Investment Programme
SNNPR	Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Region
SNV	Dutch Volunteer Organisation
SRDF	Social Rehabilitation and Development Fund
SWAPS	Sector-wide Approaches
TOR	Terms of Reference
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Childrens' Fund
USCC	United States Catholic Conference
WHO	World Health Organisation (of the United Nations)
WISE	Women in Self Employment
WVE	World Vision Ethiopia

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The study team wish to thank all NGO staff, whether at agency or project level, who gave up time from their overfull working days to brief us in their offices and, in a smaller number of cases, to accompany us into the field to talk to project beneficiaries and to assess project activities and outputs.

We are also extremely grateful to those beneficiaries who deepened our understanding by using part of their working day to describe the differences a project had made to the quality of their own – and their family members' – lives.

Particular thanks are due to the following senior NGO staff who designed the overall study framework, approved the financial arrangements, drew our attention to important source material and commented on the first draft of our report:

Ato Fekade Tsegaye	Deputy Director, Christian Relief and Development Association (CRDA), Ethiopia
Ato Fikre Zewdie	Director, ActionAid, Ethiopia
Mr Clive Robinson	Country Representative, Christian Aid, Ethiopia

Useful discussions were also held concerning the general development context and the objectives and practice of government with Ato Melaku Bekele. He is part of the senior management of the official Social Reconstruction and Development Fund and is currently seconded to read the M.A. degree in Development Economics at the University of East Anglia.

Lastly, but certainly not least, we are most grateful to Wzt. Adey Abebe, Head of Information, CRDA, for her patience and expert knowledge both in the selection of agencies and projects to visit and in the oversight of the timetable of meetings, travel and accommodation – with frequent changes to a complex scheme. We wish to record

our grateful thanks also for the courtesy and stamina of our CRDA drivers. The mission could have been a helter-skelter scramble but, with the help of so many colleagues, the required information was assembled with the minimum of discomfort and, we think it can be argued, at a high-level of cost-effectiveness.

POVERTY REDUCTION IN ETHIOPIA AND THE ROLE OF NGOs: QUALITATIVE STUDIES OF SELECTED PROJECTS

Deryke Belshaw¹ and Erin Coyle²

1. TERMS OF REFERENCE (TOR)

1.1 Context

The main features of the context of the study mission reported here were as follows:

- (1) Ethiopia continued to face a critical poverty situation for the majority of its population. The average per capita income of US \$100 per year placed the country as the 206th poorest in the world; the lowest listed in the then current *World Development Report* (World Bank, 2000). A poverty survey carried out in 1995 estimated that 31 per cent of the population were receiving less than US \$1.00 per day (the international datum line of absolute income poverty) and that 72 per cent were below the US \$2.00 per day level. The results of the 2000 household survey are expected in early 2002;
- (2) The Government of Ethiopia has prepared an Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper covering the period 2000/01-2002/03. This is to be replaced by a full Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) incorporating participatory procedures for all key stakeholders. The main components of the Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) are expected to deal with, in addition to Poverty Reduction itself,

¹ Professor Emeritus of Development Studies, University of East Anglia; consultant, Overseas Development Institute.

² Research Officer, PRSP Monitoring and Synthesis Project, Overseas Development Institute

Governance, Decentralisation and Capacity Building measures. The PRS is due to become operational with effect from July 2002;

- (3) Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) have been assisting the people of Ethiopia with charitable, relief and development activities, especially since the major famine of 1983/85. The initial period was dominated by international NGOs, but the number of Ethiopian-based organisations has been accelerating since the early 1990s. At mid-2001, there were around 195 NGOs registered with the Christian Relief and Development Association (CRDA), with a further 10-12 NGOs operating outside the forum and network provided by CRDA.

1.2 Objectives

The objective of this study was to select and ‘groundtruth’ the impact of probable poverty – reducing projects implemented in Ethiopia by a range of NGOs, international and national. This ‘qualitative’ study of a purposively selected sample of NGO projects was intended to complement a more descriptive quantitative review of the overall range and impact of poverty-reducing NGO projects. Essentially, this study was searching for effective demonstrations of good practice across the major poverty reduction activities (see section 4). The projects to be visited were selected in collaboration with CRDA and the NGOs themselves. In assessing each project, major reliance was placed on key informants and project beneficiaries rather than project and institutional documents. The majority of the selected projects tend not to have been independently reviewed at the ‘grass-roots’ level (see the discussion of review methodology in the next section). To the extent that this study has identified good practice for a range of project activities, it will also enable the NGO sector to further contribute to the PRSP objectives.

2. METHODOLOGY

The methodology employed in this qualitative survey can be separated into two components. These relate to, firstly, the configuration of the sampling framework of

NGOs, their areas of activity by region, and their projects (if more than one) within a selected region and, secondly, the techniques employed for eliciting information about the probable level of impact on the aspect of poverty being addressed by the project.

2.1 Constructing the Project Sample

A total sample of 202 NGOs, consisting mainly of NGOs registered with the CRDA plus 10-12 non-members, provided the initial sampling population. From this list, NGOs were eliminated with the following characteristics:

- Any NGO which had begun operating in 1997 or later, i.e. a minimum of at least five years duration was viewed as necessary for significant impact on poverty to have been attained;
- The NGOs' activities were principally of the charity or welfare type, where the criterion of self-reliance or financial sustainability would be difficult to fulfil. It was assumed that sustainable poverty reduction requires the probability that a significant element of raised value-productivity of the labour of beneficiaries will be secured in the short- or medium-term (see section 4 below).
- Given the short time available for fieldwork, projects located further than one day's journey to the north or south of Addis Ababa. In practice, this eliminated projects in SNNPR lying south of Wollaita Zone, projects lying to the north of South Wollo Zone of Amhara Region i.e. north of Dessie, and projects in Oromiya Region lying further to the west (Wollega) or east (Arsi, Hararghe) of the Addis Ababa environs. The primary purpose here was to include projects working in both the southern enset-based farming system and, in the central and northern highlands, the annual cereal cropping plus livestock farming system. Although projects in the 'urban regions' of Harar and Dire Dawa were excluded, urban projects in other medium-sized towns (Dessie, Debre Zeit) feature in the sample.

This process of elimination left a sampling frame of 64 projects. On this was imposed a set of positive selection criteria reflecting the need to include in a final sample of up to 20 projects, which seemed feasible in the time available, representatives of:

- International NGOs operating from a religious basis;
- International NGOs operating from a secular/humanitarian basis
- National NGOs with a religious basis, including if possible at least one Muslim NGO;
- National NGOs with a secular/humanitarian basis.

2.2 Data Collection Methodology

The project-level studies tried as far as possible to place weight on, firstly, field visits to the project site, where components were visible and project staff could act as key informants and, secondly, the use of open-ended questionnaires or check lists addressed to volunteer or randomly selected beneficiaries on their fields, in their homes or at least in their home village or township. These project visits were made at short notice or sometimes even, because of telephone breakdowns, without prior warning. Despite some disadvantages for project staff, this had the benefit of preventing intensive preparation of project sites or briefing of beneficiaries by project staff prior to the arrival of the project team.

2.3 Limitations of the Study Methodology

It will be clear that the purposive selection method followed was dictated by the objectives set out in the TOR and by the time available for fieldwork. It is not possible to state whether, for example, the observed practices represent the norm for all similar NGO projects not selected for study. A second question concerns the balance of NGO activity relative to types of poverty situation. As NGO assistance is supplementary to governments' activity a better criterion is to ask how far NGOs are covering the gaps left in the overall pro-poor development strategy. For example, one could question the appropriateness of the location and coverage achieved by the NGO sector as a whole.

The present spatial pattern reflects the impact of historical factors, especially which areas were accessible to international NGOs operating from Addis Ababa and in Tigray in the civil war period in the 1980s. Consequently, some areas are relatively under-served. A planned poverty-oriented relocation of NGO activity, phased over time, would help to address better the objectives of the PRS process. A comprehensive database which would permit such observations has not yet been compiled in Ethiopia (or elsewhere in Sub-Saharan Africa, to our knowledge).

Further, other important aspects of the project identification, design and appraisal process could not be studied systematically. These include the degree of beneficiary participation in decision-making, beneficiary empowerment and transfer of the project to beneficiary ownership. Progress here would reflect, in part, the impact of advocacy activity by NGOs. This area is a high priority for further study. Also, although several examples of women's strong participation in projects were observed including, in the case of Women in Self-Employment (WISE), an NGO devoted entirely to correcting gender imbalance, the study design was not sufficiently focused on the gender aspect of NGO development work to warrant generally applicable statements.

If more time had been available in the fieldwork schedule, the views of local government officials concerning the effectiveness of the selected NGO projects could have provided an external view, as well as revealing something about the degree of collaboration or rivalry between NGOs and the state at decentralised levels – PA, woreda and zone. In this respect, in some regions development activity is carried out by parastatal NGOs which are closely integrated with regional governments. Such instances include the Oromo Development Association, the Tigray Development Association and the Relief Society of Tigray. Similarly, but with national coverage, there is the Social Rehabilitation and Development Fund which is located in the Prime Minister's Office. The possibility of improved collaboration between these organisations and the NGO sector should be explored by all parties.

3. THE POVERTY REDUCTION STRATEGY PAPER (PRSP) PROCESS

3.1 The International Context

(1) Background

Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) are a World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) initiative, introduced in September 1999. Countries seeking debt relief under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative, and indeed further concessional lending from Washington, must prepare a PRSP. Countries seeking faster debt relief must prepare an Interim PRSP (I-PRSP), showing their plans for the full PRSP, although there is some confusion over whether this is supposed to be a draft PRSP or a plan for creating a PRSP. The (I)PRSP must then be endorsed by the Joint Staffs of the Bank and Fund, and HIPC debt relief may follow.

As of early December 2001, over 40 countries have prepared I-PRSPs, with eight additional countries having completed their first full PRSP. Approval of the (I)PRSP by the Joint Staffs is not automatic, although none has been rejected so far. Several bilateral donors, including the UK, are bringing their aid strategies in line with PRSPs and are placing considerable faith in the possibilities that PRSPs represent. As such, the importance of the PRSP and its creation process cannot be underestimated.

(2) What is new about PRSPs?

PRSPs are intended to provide assurance to the international aid community that debt relief funds released under HIPC will be used to benefit the poorest members of society. They are also intended to act as a national planning tool and condition for lending that will eventually replace Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs). These different aims are not always well-integrated in the (I)PRSP, and many countries are unsure what is expected of them and how the (I)PRSP affects their relationship with the Bretton Woods Institutions in Washington.

This confusion is exacerbated by the fact that not only is there a sharper focus on poverty reduction; there are also new questions of process that need to be addressed. PRSPs are to be 'country-owned' in that national governments, and not Washington, are responsible for the PRSP drafting process and subsequent iterations. It is also a condition of the PRSP process that government must consult with civil society (including the representatives of the poor) in a participatory manner. The expectation is that the resultant strategy will have the (greater) support of many sectors of society and will thus be implemented more effectively. Furthermore, the consultative, participatory process should be integrated into subsequent iterations of the Paper.

Although there is no blueprint for the PRSP, the World Bank's PRSP Sourcebook suggests that countries should aim to include a poverty diagnosis, details of the policies that will be implemented to address poverty, and details of monitoring and evaluation methods to check that these policies are working. The process by which the PRSP is created will have implications for these questions, as well as each being an important issue in its own right.

(3) Initial international experience

Experience across various countries in Africa, Latin America, Asia, and the transition economies shows several common weaknesses of (I)PRSPs. It is immediately apparent that these problems are not unique to any one country, and iteration should allow initial gaps or errors to be corrected. Change does not come all at once, and some of the changes that the PRSP process initiates may take much time to reach their full potential.

The speed with which many countries have created their (I)PRSPs is a direct result of the conditions for debt relief under the Enhanced HIPC Initiative. Countries must adhere to their (I)PRSP for some time in order to gain debt relief and, although this amount of time is not fixed, it is clear that the IMF and World Bank must be satisfied with the country's progress before they will announce that debt relief can begin. This has led to a desire for haste on the part of governments. This in turn has had understandable

consequences for both the quality of the participatory process undertaken, and for the quality of the final PRS document.

(4) Participation

Those participating, or hoping to participate, in the PRSP process can seek to be involved on a number of levels, whether by engaging with specific content issues, or by seeking to have input at different stages of the process. One ODI working paper, for instance, recently highlighted five distinct stages at which civil society may wish to become involved: the early diagnostic work, the formulation of the Strategy itself, the approval of the Strategy in parliamentary or other processes, the implementation stage, and the ongoing monitoring and evaluation work (Norton and Foster, 2001).

Not all members of civil society have strengths in all these areas. Furthermore, it is often difficult for civil society participants to foster a strategic overview given the essentially disparate nature of the non-governmental community, the difficulties with attempting to ensure some degree of 'representativeness', and the fact that many different types of actor seek to be involved. For instance, the bilateral donor community often has a strong interest in influencing the PRSP process, in ways which may or may not be internally cohesive and may or may not include overt support to NGOs working in the country. Many countries have experienced great difficulty in achieving a participatory process that satisfies civil society actors; although it is not always clear whether civil society expectations are justified, it is often clear that there is still progress which can be made.

(5) Content of the PRSP

The difficulties experienced with participation in many countries are paralleled in faults in the PRS documents observed so far. These 'content' questions are all areas in which the various actors in the process can provide inputs.

- **Diagnosis** – There is often analytical weaknesses in the poverty diagnosis, more serious in some cases than others. Some papers disaggregate 'the poor' into categories that are useful for policy-making. Others refer simply to 'the urban

poor' or 'women' – undisaggregated – as vulnerable groups. There is often a lack of geographical specificity, and there is almost never a useful causal analysis.

- **Loyal Links** – Most PRSPs lack specific links between analysis, policies and poverty reduction outcomes. Even where the poverty diagnosis is highly disaggregated, there is little attendant tie to specific policies, and even rarer are indications of the expected result.
- **Omissions** – There is a long list of commonly omitted areas, such as 'gender' or 'corruption'. Some countries have prepared PRSPs that appear to miss the central poverty problem entirely; others omit topics that could be integrated later in the process.
- **Budget** - PRSPs sometimes fail to link into the national budget, thus endangering proper resourcing of the PRS. There are often other national planning tools that go unmentioned and unincorporated.
- **Transparency** – There is often little in the way of transparent decision-making, in terms of options visibly considered and discarded, reasons for policy choice, and reasons for expecting that the policy selected will have impact where previous policies did not. Plan appraisal procedures to be applied by the IMF/World Bank are somewhat vague.
- **Participation** – The participatory process of PRSPs is often seriously neglected within the final document itself, with the Paper failing to set out how it is intended to institutionalise the participatory consultation mechanism.
- **Monitoring and Evaluation** - Monitoring and evaluation procedures are often inadequate, inappropriate, or too resource intensive, with a relative lack of attention on monitoring 'upstream' or input indicators.

Despite these early experiences, the PRSP initiative holds a great deal of potential. Consultation with civil society is now a condition of multilateral aid in many cases, with many bilateral donors following suit. In some cases the potential of the initiative is being slowly realized. In other cases, a significant break with the past is yet to be seen. However, the iterative nature of the PRSP process leaves open the possibility that significant change will still occur in the future.

3.2 Analysis of International Progress in Poverty Reduction

The PRSP process in Ethiopia is part of an international programme designed to halve dollar poverty over the 25 year period 1990-2015. This is one of the international development targets that arose from the UN Social Summit held in Copenhagen in 1995. It has been endorsed as the guiding principle of aid by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development in 1996 and more recently by the G7 Finance Ministers and the UN Economic and Social Council. Nevertheless, there has been considerable disagreement about both the disaggregated targets and how to measure progress in achieving them.

A recent authoritative statement by the Policy Research Unit at Sussex University stresses the importance of policy changes that are favourable to poor rural people (PRUS, 2001):

“The best method of checking progress [in the reduction of global poverty] is to use the 1990 and 1998 estimates of dollar-a-day poverty in the 2000/2001 World Development Report. Dollar poverty incidence in the total population of developing and transitional economies was 29.0 per cent in 1990 and 24.0 per cent in 1998. Global extrapolation – applying the global rate of poverty reduction to all countries – to 2015 would give poverty incidence of 16.1 per cent – close to the UN target of halving incidence to 14.5 per cent. But this assumes each region, and each country within them, achieved the same poverty reduction rate in the 1990s, whereas in fact poverty reduction rates differed widely between regions and countries...

“The correct method of extrapolating poverty reduction rates uses regional and, wherever possible, country poverty reduction rates, together with population projections from the 2000 Human Development Report...

[However]“if each *developing region* is projected to change poverty incidence at the same annual rate in 1998-2015 as in 1990-1998, global poverty incidence in

1990-2015 will have been reduced by only a fifth, considerably short of the target of halving 1990 poverty levels...

“It is then possible to perform a regional or national economic modelling exercise, and seek to estimate likely changes in rates of economic growth, income distribution, and hence PPP dollar poverty incidence. However, such methods require heroic assumptions, and/or pose forbidding requirements for information – and for understanding of quantified, durable, multi-country growth and distribution changes and transmission mechanisms.....

“...it would seem unduly optimistic to assume that, *without substantial changes in policy*, the climate for poverty reduction...will be much more favourable for the poor in 1998-2015 than was the case in 1990-98...

“Policy changes, [therefore, are needed] especially action by developing and developed countries to increase food output and employment, and poor people’s access to land and water, [which] can get developing world poverty reduction back on track for the 2015 target.”

There is no compelling reason, in our view, why the need for such policy reforms should not apply equally strongly to Ethiopia, especially given its heavily agrarian economic structure, the many technological and market opportunities in this sector which have been neglected or barred to date, and the concentration of extreme poverty amongst the rural population.

3.3 Ethiopia: specific issues

(1) Content Issues

Taking together the interim PRSP (Federal Government of Ethiopia, 2000) and the Plan of Action for compiling the full PRSP for implementation from FY 2002/03 (Federal Government of Ethiopia, 2001), a number of content issues arise which are likely to reduce their poverty-reducing effectiveness and will be of concern, therefore, for collaborating NGOs. The main issues appear to be:

- The stress placed by the Government, under its Agricultural Development-led Industrialisation Strategy (ADLI), on a modernisation package for the production of food grains, using seasonal farm credit for the purchase of improved seed and inorganic fertilisers. These reached 2.8 million farming families in 1999/2000, producing 49 per cent of 'national major crops output' (FGE, 2000:11). But the number of households participating was only 37 per cent of the estimated 7.5 million farming families in the country, according to the same document. High potential agricultural areas are selected in preference to those with medium and low potential and even then, it is commonly reported, coercion is used by agricultural officials in their attempts to reach pre-set coverage targets. If that is the case, the contribution of the package to farm incomes would seem to be marginal, taking into account risks of crop failure (as in 2000/2001) and low grain prices (as in 2001/2002). Furthermore, the approach is a narrow sectoral one. The massive needs for improved infrastructure, especially for rural transport, and marketing arrangements are neglected. It is hard to disagree with Seyoum that 'it remains doubtful if ADLI ... has benefited the large majority of resource poor farmers' (2001:7) and therefore that 'it would be useful to undertake a critical review of ADLI and other development policies of relevance to poverty reduction ...' (2001:10).
- By the same token, alternative farming intensification products – such as root crops and leguminous oilseeds and vegetables for improved food security – and techniques – especially water harvesting, drip and micro-irrigation, agro-forestry, 'folding' grazing livestock, intercropping and in drier areas ratooning methods for crops such as sorghum and pigeon peas– are conspicuous by their absence. A LEISA (low external inputs sustainable agriculture) strategy could both raise soil organic matter content (lowering risk of crop failure from moisture stress) and reduce the foreign exchange content (arising from the use of imported inorganic fertilisers) of staple food production.
- Also missing is any reference to the options for using the gains, to be shared with Egypt, from storing Blue Water Nile water at high altitude. This would reflect

reducing the greater loss of water by evaporation from Lake Nasser. A particularly appealing option is to use associated hydro-electric power production to pump water via reticulated irrigation networks to enhance the productivity of large numbers of peasant farms in the central and northern highlands. This would obviate construction costs of irrigated settlements on off-plateau locations and the greater health costs due to the more hostile climatic and disease environments found at lower altitudes. This most valuable possibility would require major donor investment within a new multi-national Nile Waters Agreement. Detailed design studies would be needed, of course, to identify the costs and benefits of alternative pipeline configurations and their substitution by water harvesting and micro-irrigation techniques, amongst others, in settled areas where pumped water is more expensive to provide.

- In the northern and central highlands, the long term decline in cereal crop yields due to falling organic matter content of soils, which reduces soil moisture retention levels and raises the risk of crop failure or lower yields. These effects follow from extensive deforestation and the substitute use of animal manure and crop residues for cooking food for the household. In the southern highlands, however, the presence of perennial crops in the farming systems (coffee, chat, enset) confers *de facto* household land tenure rights on the infield area, with a tendency to rising soil fertility and organic matter content over time (Eyasu et al., 1998). On the other hand, the absence of secure rights to land prevents investment in fuelwood or beneficial farm intensification techniques in the central and northern highlands. This obstructs the possibilities of improving food security and farm cash incomes in these areas (Yeraswork, 2000). Securing such rights does not require the issuing of freehold title deeds; leasehold title for 49 or even 25 years renewable would be sufficient (thus protecting present family members' and future generations' interests in land). A further compromise could restrict such land rights to an infield area, leaving the use of the remaining outfield to the traditional post-harvest communal grazing practices. Outfield areas could also be used for the creation of new farms, mainly as infields, for landless young would-be farmers, if desired, although the

resulting invigorated investment in land with secure rights may reduce the demand for the creation of new farms (e.g. Tiffen et al., 1994). These policy reforms seem potentially most significant from a poverty reduction perspective but only the vaguest reference to land tenure – apparently to enable business firms to buy land from peasants – and related farm intensification possibilities are to be found in the two current official PRS documents.

- The most valuable export commodity, given the very low international prices for coffee, is chat. This is a hallucinogenic drug although it is not proscribed by WHO. But with its production spreading across Oromiya Region and the SNNPR, concern has been expressed about its anti-social effect on young consumers who are at risk of becoming addicted or having their motivation to study and work reduced. It is surprising that there is no mention of either the benefits or costs of increased chat production in the two PRS documents.
- The business sector is described both as ‘the private sector’ and as the ‘engine of growth’; this seems to refer to the urban formal sector outside government. In distinction from the public sector the term ‘private sector’ normally includes all members of the small-scale agricultural sub-sector (probably 40-45 million people out of 64 million), as well as private firms, usually family-run, in the informal urban sector. It could be strongly argued that the neglected small-scale family businesses in the countryside and in the towns are the true potential engines of growth, given the vast potential for expanding low-cost products and services in both. The most supportable role for the business sector would seem to lie in exploiting internal economies of scale in supporting upstream and downstream activities – input supply, credit, agri-business and wholesaling, processing, import-export, etc. – rather than attempting to directly compete in activities suitable for small production, retail and workshop activities.

(2) Process Issues

In a note of 11.5.01 (WB/IMF 2001) on the PRSP/HIPC negotiations for Ethiopia, the World Bank and IMF stated:

In March 2001 the Boards of the Fund and World Bank considered an Interim-PRSP, a Joint Staff Assessment, and an updated preliminary HIPC document. The Fund Board also approved a three-year PRGF arrangement. It is expected that a decision point document can be presented for Board approval in the fall of 2001, provided Ethiopia (i) makes satisfactory progress in consulting civic groups and development partners in the course of preparation of a full-fledged PRSP, (ii) completes the first review under the PRGF arrangement, and (iii) improves the specificity of some completion point triggers.

'Decision point' means that the IMF/WB decide whether the country can receive debt relief under the HIPC initiative, and creditors then commit to releasing funds at the 'completion point', which floats according to the progress the country has made; debt relief does not automatically appear after a certain amount of time spent adhering to the policies. The Fund and the Bank announced on 12 November 2001 that Ethiopia had reached its decision point and would benefit from a 47% reduction of its public debt.

At mid-2001 the World Bank conducted a series of eight conferences on PRSP methodology with planning staff in Ethiopia. Four other NGO representatives were invited but attendance in Ethiopia is reported to have declined after the first two sessions. By November 2001, staff from the Central Statistical Authority (CSA) were working jointly with economists from the Centre for the Study of African Economies (CSAE) in analysing the data from 1999/2000 Household Income, Consumption and Expenditure Survey (HHICE). Civil society consultations are ongoing as of early December 2001.

The key problems in the ongoing PRSP process appear to be the following:

- According to the provisional timetable (FGE, 2001), the three consultative forums at district, regional and national level are due to be completed before the availability, in February 2002, of the poverty analysis based on the HHICE. Nor is it clear how

far published data will be available in disaggregated form down to zonal and district (woreda) levels where they could provide a useful template for poverty reduction proposals coming from the 5000 participants at district level. It seems that the full value of the HHICE data can only be obtained if there were to be a 2002/03 iteration of the PRSP exercise. But this is not currently envisaged. A growth and HIV/AIDS study referred to in the action plan may also be appearing after the consultation forums are completed. A minority of districts (and their PAs) are participating: only around 115 out of 532 districts. Will proposals from the 115 be appropriate and extendable to excluded districts? On what basis? Can excluded districts be incorporated – by substituting for or adding to the original 100 – in subsequent iterations? The zone could be a useful level at which to incorporate district proposals into an area development strategy, but its role in the PRSP process is obscure.

- The roles that NGOs are expected to play as ‘convenors’ alongside other CSOs in lower level consultations and as ‘facilitators’ in the national level consultation are obscure (FGE, 2001). Presumably they will be made clear over time?
- The relationships between plan activities and expected impact on income poverty of various kinds in different locations, with different causality, have not been researched in advance, so that initially resource allocations and component activities will have to proceed on a trial and error basis. Provision for adequate monitoring and evaluation arrangements, therefore, should be an important aspect of the first three-year PRSP. The useful ongoing role of NGOs in these tasks, inside or outside the plan administration framework, needs to be identified and resourced.

4. OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS OF POVERTY-REDUCING ACTIVITIES

The main focus of the PRSP exercise is the reduction of absolute or income poverty, measured in the proportion of people subsisting on less than US\$1.00 person per day (the head count ratio). Income is usually defined in terms of (imputed) value of food consumed, the value of consumption obtained through cash expenditure or borrowing, and the value of public goods (education, health, water) where full cost is not charged to the user. The study team has not seen the Ethiopian consumption survey methodology set out, but economic logic suggests that NGO-assisted activities can reduce income poverty in the following ways:

- (1) By assisting in raising food productivity per unit of land and labour (and reducing percentages of post-harvest food losses) significantly above a historical (e.g. start of project or pre-disaster) baseline level;
- (2) By increasing the stock of realisable assets (part of food entitlement) above an arbitrary (etc.) baseline; this reduces future vulnerability to food insecurity.
- (3) By increasing money income by sales of surplus product or by increase in labour days remunerated and/or through rising average rate of remuneration per time unit; it is assumed that market demand for product can absorb increased supply without a more than corresponding decline in the relevant product prices (domestic income terms of trade do not deteriorate).
- (4) By increasing access by poor people previously excluded from use (by financial charges, distance, etc.) of subsidised education, health and potable water facilities. There is an inbuilt assumption that enhanced skills, health and time saved from manual drudgery can be put to productive use in appropriate income-generating employment, if a contribution to income poverty reduction is to result. This assumption needs to be checked out against local experience.

- (5) Progress in methods (1), (2) and (3) above can be accelerated by increasing the quantity of capital per worker. It is frequently over-looked that in agrarian societies the investment of labour in such activities as tree planting and water harvesting, and the construction of irrigation and drainage channels, terraces, improved food stores, etc., are useful forms of capital formation. For such investment to occur, a secure expectation of asset ownership and rights to associated output and income flows must be present.

- (6) In the long term, increased length of education for girl children may be expected to lead to deferred average age of marriage, to declining fertility and a falling rate of population growth from the present high levels. The provision of subsidised electricity in rural areas may cause a more rapid decline in the growth rate, for obvious reasons. The impact of the HIV/AIDS pandemic, however, seems likely to have even faster-acting implications for demographic structure and change over time in Ethiopia.

- (7) Finally, the impact of NGO-assisted projects may be greater (a) where gaps have been left in terms of activities by government agencies or other NGOs, and (b) where innovations in income generating techniques and products are introduced, demonstrated and widely disseminated through NGO activities.

Welfare, relief, charity, rehabilitation only to pre-disaster levels or to subsistence-only levels, while important to poor people's survival, do not seem to strictly qualify for measurement as progress in poverty reduction over a medium/long-term period. The qualitative study, therefore, takes a strict line on the necessary impact of NGO-assisted activities. This needs to lead to sustainable increase in real incomes arising from increased value productivity of livelihoods of poor households and individuals, and from reducing barriers to access to income-enhancing public goods previously closed to them.

The relationship between the NGO-assisted projects visited and assessed on the ground by the study team and the selected categories of poverty-reducing activity are summarised in Table 1 below. In the starred projects one or more individual beneficiaries were interviewed. In these and the other projects key informants, mainly project managers, were interviewed, usually on site. A total of 28 projects were visited, half urban and half rural, and beneficiaries interviewed in over half the projects.

**TABLE 1: LOCATION AND POVERTY-REDUCING FUNCTION OF
NGO PROJECTS REVIEWED IN THE QUALITATIVE SURVEY: ETHIOPIA, SEPTEMBER 2001**

Note: * Full qualitative survey methods applied with beneficiary participation.

Poverty Reducing Function	Northern Areas (Wollo Zone)	Central Areas (Oromiya, Addis Ababa, Afar Regions)	Southern Areas (Wollaita Zone)	Total
Food Security	WVE Antsokia I and II Infrastructure (rural) WVE Medium-scale irrigation (rural) WVE Poor people's plots (urban)	KHC Drip irrigation (rural) RV Canal irrigation (rural) *	ERSHA/KIRDP various (rural) SOS Sahel livestock scheme (rural) *	7
Income generation (savings and credit)	WVE Antsokia I (rural) * FSCE (urban) *	RV (rural) * WISE (urban) * ACORD (urban) * Propride (urban) *	AfD beekeeping (rural) * AfD trading centre (rural) *	7
Health	-	-	-	1
Water	-	KHC Debre Zeit (rural) * ACORD (urban) *	AfD villages pipeline (rural)	3
Non-formal education	FSCE (urban) * HOPE (urban)	EMRDA (rural)	-	3
Orphans and street children	FSC (urban) * HOPE (urban) EOC-CFAO (urban)	KHC Debre Zeit (urban)	-	4
Environmental protection and regeneration	WVE Flood protection (urban)	IHA-UDP regeneration (urban) *	SOS Sahel bunding (rural) *	3
Totals	11	11	6	28

5. FOOD SECURITY

5.1 Improved Access to Land and Markets

Case Study: World Vision Ethiopia - Road and bridge construction for Antsokia I and II Projects (and associated innovatory components)

In specific locations, efficient use of fertile land for cultivation and/or grazing may be prevented by difficulty of access for humans and animals e.g. where there are barriers in the form of wide, deep and/or fast-flowing rivers. At the same time, surface transport may be unable to get close to settled areas, raising transport costs for surplus produce and purchased consumer goods which have to be carried by animal or head-loaded with attendant risk of loss or damage. In rural Amhara Region, World Vision Ethiopia has developed two of its multi-sectoral area development projects around two road projects which link under-utilised land and remote villages with the main highway and market centres where trading activity is concentrated. These are the Antsokia II Project in Kemissie Woreda in Oromia Zone and the Antsokia I Project around Majeti in Gemza Woreda. Bridges over obstacle rivers and roads on raised dikes crossing periodically flooded land have opened up tens of thousands of hectares for cultivation and dry season grazing, strengthening the food security and cash income systems of thousands of small farmers and pastoralists. From 1990 onwards, associated activities have stressed (a) agro-forestry systems on mountainous slopes above the flood plain (37 tree species, 20 million seedlings); (b) a small-scale irrigated horticulture project on 60 ha for 400 landless families (240 landowners and 160 sharecroppers); and (c) a rapidly expanding microfinance scheme for landless families (see Section 6.1 below).

Problems have arisen with maintenance of bridges and roads. At the time of the visit water was flowing down the centre of the road from Majeti, as the drainage ditches were filled with silt. At Kemissie one of the bridges had had two small spans swept away by floodwater, exposing people – especially the elderly and children – to the hazard of being swept away as they attempted to wade across the rapidly flowing river. The regional road authority had been reluctant to take on responsibility for the roads and

bridges but after several years delay, it has finally agreed to do so. World Vision development activity is due to be phased out in 2002, for relocation to other area development projects. It appears to collaborate closely with regional government departments, but not yet with churches or other faith-based organisations (FBOS). In Kemissie Woreda 90 per cent of the population is Muslim.

Improved road access in rural areas is stressed in the Interim – PRSP (FGE 2000). The problems of maintenance over the medium-term suggest two possible improvements on current practice: (1) Higher standard specifications for vulnerable sections, especially bridges, at the point of (re) construction; and (2) mobilisation procedures for stakeholders for regular labour-intensive maintenance – road surfaces, ditches, etc. without relying on food or cash for work arrangements. Local governments, CBOs and NGOs working to the same maintenance procedures would help resolve this problem.

5.2 Irrigated Food Production

(1) Case study: Kale Heywot Church, Debra Zeit

An integrated project with food security and water components was developed from an initial project for orphans. There was an orphanage that had not been allowed to take in any more children after it was first built, meaning that it had capacity for nearly 90 children but only housed 57. This was due to government policy on institutionalized care. However, it also provided family-based care (through child sponsorship) to 1 517 other children (see section 8 on orphans).

The project is based on 40 hectares of land, with a poultry farm producing about 10 000 eggs a day, two ha of drip irrigated vegetable gardens, etc. This provides initial food self-sufficiency for the Centre, employment to the community (around 150 people are employed), a training centre and a source of seedlings. Used technology (mainly drip irrigation equipment) is sold to local farmers. Drip irrigation technology should be an excellent route to both food security and income generation, depending on the area irrigated per household. It also

provides cost recovery for the Centre. The Director claimed that all sales proceeds went back into the scheme. The Integrated Development Centre serves an estimated 60,000 people. (The domestic water project is described in section 7.2 below).

(2) Case study: Rift Valley Women and Children's Development Project

This is located in Adame Fulu Jidu, Kombolcha Woreda, Oromiya Region. It is an agricultural rehabilitation project, irrigating 125 ha benefiting 250 households. One site was visited where 50 ha are to be irrigated from a canal, sourced at Lake Ziwai and from a perennial river. The farmers have only been involved for one month. RV is trying to prevent farmers selling their land to private investors; by providing irrigation they hope to make the land more attractive to farmers and better able to support their needs.

Not all farmers in the catchment area of the project owned land that could be irrigated by the canal. The farmers formed a cooperative, and decided that they would exchange land amongst themselves such that all farmers would own $\frac{1}{4}$ ha of irrigated land, and each would work the land themselves. Those who had previously owned more land in the irrigated area would instead have $\frac{1}{4}$ ha of irrigated land plus additional rainfed land outside the irrigated area. Thus they would ensure that poor farmers had access to the benefits of irrigation.

The farmers kept insisting that they were brothers (possibly they belonged to a diro – an informal social insurance institution, the local equivalent of an idir), and did not understand questions asking how they convinced those who were near the irrigation site to give up their land for others. Perhaps they realised that squabbles over land would delay the scheme.

Another RV project (which had been going for two years) was visited where nine ha were being worked by 40 farmers using a communal water pump from the river supplying the irrigation ditches. Each farmer had just over $\frac{1}{4}$ ha of irrigated

land, and land elsewhere. Asked how they overcame the difficulty with working two pieces of land; they replied that family labour was adequate. The farmers were very enthusiastic about the scheme, and claimed that their land was 'evergreen'; even in times of drought they could feed their families. They also had a guard for the pump, and knew how to start it themselves, but so far had not been trained to maintain it. RV plans to install a further two pumps in the area.

5.3 Integrated Rural Development.

Case study: The Ethiopian Rural Self-help Association (ERSHA)

Development activity began in 1997 in two kebeles of Gamu Gofa Zone of SNNPR under the direct management of the Dutch government agency SNV. Since January 2000 the project has been assisted by ERSHA. The new five-year development plan is covering six kebeles. The programme aims to target poor families and to institute gender equality in its activities. It appears to be successfully innovating in a range of direct income-generating and appropriate social services activities for a land-surplus agrarian area in the southern highlands. The major activities are:

- (1) Butter-making on a year-round basis, the dairy cows being fed on exotic and indigenous grasses and on hay in the dry season. A tsetse fly challenge necessitates drug protection for cattle. Dairy cattle numbers grew under a revolving credit fund, which also covers the cost of the anti-trypanosomiasis drug regime, in one pilot village. The economic sustainability of this enterprise appears dubious;
- (2) Small-scale irrigation: one 40 ha scheme benefiting 114 farm households which is managed by the local community. Temperate vegetables are produced out of season for food and cash;
- (3) Perennial crop seedlings (avacado, mango and coffee) are being demonstrated, though without use of the appropriate agro-forestry systems

(alley cropping and, under irrigation, multi-storey cropping). Farmers' response to date was reported as 'inadequate', suggesting the need for technical and financial redesign of the packages;

- (4) Forty goat credit groups with nearly 900 members have been established; also seven 'meskel banks' based on traditional idirs (funeral mutual aid groups) and one grinding mill credit group. A one-year moratorium on loan repayment has been out-lawed by the new credit legislation;
- (5) Nineteen community water committees run and maintain springs, hand-dug wells and 4½ kms of pipeline (over 8000 beneficiaries of cleaner and more accessible domestic water supplies);
- (6) An adult literacy programme with local people trained as teachers;
- (7) A rural road and bridge construction programme, but similar problems to WVE's (see section 5.1 above). One collapsed bridge, separating six kebeles from the main road and markets, had been unrepaired for 16 months at the time of the visit;
- (8) The project is completing a baseline survey as a basis for future impact assessments.

The project management claimed good working relationships with zonal/district government and with local communities. Due to travel days, the study team was unable to follow the field itinerary arranged by Management and thus could not benefit from beneficiary experience and insights. The project seemed to be piloting some useful income-generating activities targeted at poor, usually cattle-less, families. These either introduced them to high value, e.g. out-of-season crops or enabled them to re-enter the cattle-based economy but via new technology to higher value marketed surplus (butter), if revenues will carry the costs of protective drugs. Improved health and labour savings from investment in domestic water schemes can contribute to poverty reduction through rising value productivity of labour (land surplus and diversified agriculture).

6. INCOME GENERATION

6.1 Background

Micro-finance or micro-enterprise development has been an increasingly important area of development activity in developing countries since the late 1980s. The main innovating institutions in this area have been both national and international NGOs with access to funds provided by private foundations and their own supporters in developed countries. Recently some NGOs have been converting their activities into small-scale banks with the object of providing a fuller range of financial services to their clients, as well as increasing the share of local savings in their on-lending portfolio. In Ethiopia, the policy environment was altered by Proclamation No. 40 of 1996. This prohibited NGOs from engaging directly in micro-finance activity; the objective is to encourage locally-owned business companies, cooperatives or parastatals to undertake this activity rather than allowing NGOs to monopolise it. This objective is understandable, although the interests of private business firms, on the one hand, and poor loanees and depositors on the other, may diverge more widely than when 'non-profit' organisations (NGOs) were involved. For example, flexibility of repayment terms may be less in the event of unavoidable misfortune (see the WISE case study below). Also, the total funding available may be significantly less under the 1996 Proclamation than otherwise would have been the case. The impact of this legislation is clearly a priority area for careful evaluation.

The sustainability of a project is central to considering its success. Indeed, as more NGOs in Ethiopia move towards development work from relief work, the question of the long-term future of the project becomes crucial. Equally, donors are becoming less tolerant of projects that do not have an eye to the future.

Community participation is generally acknowledged to be the key to a sustainable project. Most of the NGOs visited in the course of this study defined their successful projects as those which the community had taken over and were running successfully

themselves, or those in which the community was expected to do so eventually. This applied to NGOs that work in all areas – for instance, one of SOS Sahel’s successful projects was the grass bunding project which has been managed by the local farmers for some months now with minimal SOS Sahel involvement. Several NGOs claimed that their most successful support activities were in the savings and credit area. Here, as stated, programmes are required by law to operate independently from the supporting NGO.

Some NGOs have a record of working very closely with existing CBOs, or initiating a new CBO (such as an interest group) to deal with development. Many NGOs aim to phase out in order to hand over the responsibility for the project to the community if government responsibility is not appropriate. In addition, however, it was claimed, e.g. by the Integrated Holistic Approach – Urban Development Project (IHAUDP) that there are various policy hurdles to be faced in attempting to transfer resources to the local community upon phase out. Not least, CBOs are not always empowered legally to handle their own development activities, and are not always supported fully by the development community.

6.2 Savings and Credit Schemes

(a) Case study: WISE

Women in Self Employment run a savings and credit (S & C) programme as well as a small health education and sanitation programme. A visit was made to beneficiaries with Wzt. Serkalem Perhanu (Project Coordinator) and office briefing with Wzt. Tsigie Haile (Director).

WISE cover 14 kebeles in two woredas in Addis Ababa (some recently urbanized areas). WISE is the only NGO operating in all ten ‘urban’ kebeles in Woreda 19. There are 2 500 beneficiaries in total; 1 500 active members of the S&C scheme.

Women must save at least EB one a week for eight weeks before they can join. Loans are in five annual amounts: EB 500, 1000, 1500, 2500, 3000. A successful loanee would climb from the lowest to higher levels.

WISE have also built some shops for women to trade from, providing roof, floor and end walls; the community had to provide the partitions and doors using credit from WISE. These women traders needed new premises to trade from because it is so difficult to obtain land, the nearest markets were full, and while as illegal hawkers (roaming traders) the women faced police harassment. Eventually, the women will pay rent to the kebele for the shops, but this has not started yet. If a woman vacates the shop, she must give her place to another woman involved in WISE. The Annual Report (WISE, 2001) states: 'The ability to secure permanent market premises, which was extremely remote to almost all, has helped to secure employment and generation of income.'

Sustainable community participation involves devolving authority and trusting the community – this has worked well for WISE. Cooperatives are informed about WISE's intention to phase out, though there is not always a standard fixed time. Ownership is enhanced through monthly meetings and involving the members in tasks at different levels. Many schemes have now become independent. Some groups are cooperatives, others are served by a microfinance institution; some are not yet legalized due to a government backlog in processing applications.

They do not operate on a collateral or peer group pressure basis, because they believe the very poor will be marginalized. Instead, there are strict follow-ups by WISE and coop leaders, clear regulations on repayment, rewards for high repayment performance, offsetting of arrears against savings, naming defaulters publicly, and, as a last resort, those who default are sued at the kebele Social Court. There is a danger that this approach could lead to faster capital erosion and thus prevent future customers from borrowing, but WISE did not indicate that this is an issue.

WISE encourages existing participants to invite poorer women to join – leaders of the cooperatives participate in recruitment via traditional social insurance groups such as idirs. Key informants are confident that it keeps the scheme from becoming middle class.

WISE trains members in business planning and record keeping; 1109 participants to date. This is considered successful but attempts to introduce literacy and numeracy training were not so successful. WISE also provided subsidised tools. The Annual Report records a survey showing most are making proper use of tools (though a few have sold them, rented them, or lent them).

One beneficiary stated that she broke her leg after getting her first loan, but that she didn't have to worry about repaying until she was better (6 months). She said, 'WISE is my home.' She believed she would not have been able to delay repayments in this way with a private creditor.

Another beneficiary stated that she would not have been able to get a loan elsewhere. The profits from her shop help her to keep her 10 children and send them to school – her husband is pensioned. She has invited 10-15 women (poorer than herself) to join the scheme, and they have all accepted. She said: 'It definitely decreases poverty, and the training gives us confidence to work. It means people can solve their problems with their money.'

The Annual Report states that a beneficiary questionnaire showed similar responses; 86 per cent said profit had improved, 78 per cent said savings had increased, and 52 per cent said family diet had improved. Money has been used to meet household expenses, family health expenses, and education expenses. The survey included responses showing that the lives of some previously surviving as beggars had been utterly changed – they were now able to run their own business after credit and training.

The Annual Report states that the number of withdrawals from the scheme was high, due to reasons of health, change in location, and inability to pay back loans but that most members withdrew only when their savings matched their outstanding loan; the individual loan repayment rate was 97 percent. A high intake rate has compensated for these withdrawals, but the extra workload for WISE has been considerable.

(b) Case study: The Rift Valley (RV)

Rift Valley Women and Children's Development Project in Adame Fulu Jidu, Kombolcha Woreda, Oromiya Region. This NGO has eight projects of which one is a savings and credit programme; 1200 beneficiaries are organised into 34 groups of around 35 members each. About 90-95 per cent of beneficiaries are women. They also receive business training, including training in diversification. Women must repay their first loan and save 20 percent of its value. Several beneficiaries were interviewed, all members of one group. There were originally 20 members, but are now 150; their friends could see the benefits. One beneficiary said that she could not have expanded her previous business without this credit. Another said that the credit has allowed her to have control of her land, which was important because her (deceased) husband's land was not under her control – it reverted to his family. The wife (especially a second or less senior wife) may be left with nothing. This credit scheme allowed her to gain control of a piece of land and decide its use for herself; a valuable source of independent security.

The loan is offered against collateral, which is a problem for the poor. There have been defaulters, so now the others are wary of those who may not pay. Asked how they deal with the problem of incorporating poor people who do not have access to collateral or who might not be trusted by the group, they divided the poor into 'deserving' and 'undeserving'. If a poor person showed themselves willing to work and be active, then they would be willing to give them a chance. But they knew some people who had wanted to join the scheme but were refused because they had not shown that they were willing to work hard enough. When it was suggested that they try giving such persons a very small loan (perhaps less than EB 100, which appeared to be the usual amount for a first loan) to test them, they seemed to think it might be a possibility.

(c) AfD's Beekeeping Credit Scheme

AfD's multi-sector programme is located in Boloso Sore Woreda of Wollaita Zone, SNNPR. The study team visited one beneficiary of the beekeeping project, which has 25 participating groups with 5 to 20 members in each group. The technical innovations are (a) a German design of hive which usually yields 25 kgs of honey per hive, and (b) the separation of honey from the wax using an extractor. Increased family income from honey was spent on clothes, supplementary food and medicines. Of six young children, two boys are in primary school. Honey sales are now the leading income generating activity, lifting the family above the poverty line.

(d) Case study: SOS Sahel's Livestock-based Credit Scheme

The study team visited a beneficiary of SOS Sahel's savings and credit scheme in Kindo Koisha Woreda in Wolaita Zone. The farmer (a resettled soldier) and his wife (with four young children) have five hectares of land but were dependent on their own labour which was vastly inadequate. Through one kid (goat) received from the scheme, the sale of progeny over four years enabled the acquisition of two oxen, allowing cultivation of the available farmland, and an in-calf heifer. The scheme had compensated the family for the loss of the first kid (killed by a wild animal). One kid was returned to the scheme, to be given to another new member.

Poor beneficiaries are selected by the community development committee. The project has been able to lift poor farm households which only had land and labour assets above the national poverty line (2.2 quintals of grain p.a. per person or 2200 kcal per day per person). In the case visited, only one of the four children is in school. A new problem has arisen in the woreda due to the incursion of tsetse fly; no immediate solution is in prospect, so that animal-based farm traction is under threat. The economics of power tillers (single axle tractors), with expansion of ginger cultivation or another paying cash crop, needs urgent investigation.

(e) Case study: AfD's Rural Trader Credit Scheme

Also part of AfD's multi-sectoral programme in Wollaita Zone, SNNPR, this is a large general savings and credit cooperative with 218 members organised in eight groups across four kebeles. The great majority of members are women. The team interviewed four landless beneficiaries from a larger group. Their experiences ranged from a member in his first year, who had received a small loan for trading in 'easy' commodities (coffee and timber) to two members in their third year who had acquired assets (a donkey cart; a tea shop), had savings in the cooperative and had invested some of their profits in improving their domestic accommodation. Loans were charged a low 10.5 per cent interest rate per annum.

The cooperative paid 6.5 per cent interest on savings (members were required to save at a rate of between EB 4 and 20 per month) and held total savings of EB 38 000 in the district's commercial branch bank. The impression given was one of vigorous expansion over a short period (four years) providing sustainable livelihoods for poor beneficiaries showing aptitude and application.

(f) Case study: World Vision Ethiopia's Rural Trader Credit Scheme

Two beneficiaries were interviewed in Majeti Town in the Antsokia I project area. The scheme had 357 members drawn from six kebeles; the great majority are farmers. They formed part of a much larger micro-finance programme run by Wisdom Ltd., a micro-finance company in association with World Vision Ethiopia. Members have to deposit savings worth 15 per cent of the loan received. Groups guarantee the repayment of loans, but all loans to date had been repaid at the due date. Interest of 12.5 per cent per annum is charged on loans. One beneficiary had expanded his farm enterprise through specialising in onion production which then financed acquisition of oxen (5) and milking cows (10). He now has a highly profitable farm operation. At age 28 he has yet to have any children.

The second beneficiary had seen equally rapid expansion of his trading enterprise. After four years his annual loan had grown from EB 350 to EB 3500, with savings of EB

1500 (6.0 per cent p.a. interest received). The scheme was running successfully with many more applicants than funds available. A policy issue is whether the successful loanees should not be phased out of the scheme to revolve the loan fund onto new, poorer applicants

6.3 Income Generation via Modified Traditional Community-based Organisations

Case study: ACORD, Addis Ababa

One NGO works exclusively with CBOs with the goal of sustainability. The Agency for Co-operation and Research in Development (ACORD) has focused on this issue since it became established in Ethiopia in 1995. It attempts to enhance one of Ethiopia's traditional community-based organizations as a development institution in its own right.

ACORD focuses exclusively on idirs, traditional community groups that provide their members with support in times of need, particularly material, logistical and compassionate support for the bereaved at funerals (Dejene Aredo, 1993). Most Ethiopians are members of at least one idir, if not more, and the typical idir has a degree of social capital that ACORD believes can be mobilized for development goals. The idirs have their own structure, management systems, financial systems, and methods of electing leaders. Furthermore, they are geographically located, meaning that their membership includes both the poor members of a community as well as the better off, although it is clear that some idirs will themselves be better off than others. The members of an idir often know each other and the histories of the various families very well.

ACORD takes part in some pure general advocacy exercises, such as workshops, publicity, competitions, all attempting to make the development community aware of the potential of the modified traditional community-based organization. After successful projects in Dire Dawa and Shashamene, ACORD now carries on specific work with 53

idirs in Addis Ababa, covering eight kebeles in three woredas. The woredas and kebeles were selected on the basis of a poverty ranking survey; within each kebele, idirs were asked to volunteer for the scheme. According to key informants at ACORD, this process of self-selection ensured that the poorest idirs would come forward – the wealthier idirs had little interest in the project.

Idir members were then trained in the management of savings and credit schemes. Although not all members of an idir became members of the scheme, many did, and were organized into peer groups of between five and ten people to provide each other insurance. Each member had to save EB 3 a month (or EB 1.50 for poorer members) for six months, and then make a one-off contribution of EB 10.00. ACORD would then supplement the money so raised (by up to a ten-fold sum) in order that the idir could then begin to loan money to its members. Initial loans are between EB 300 and 1 000, as determined by the community – some now have loans of EB 4 500. The scheme is then managed by the idir, and ACORD monitors its progress.

Although there have been questions about whether a community credit and savings scheme will continue to help the poorest members of the community once it is established, the idirs apparently have very secure systems that ensure the poor are brought on board. There are occasionally difficulties where an idir does not want to lend to one of its poorest members because of distrust and a suspicion that the money will not be repaid; this is usually due to some well-known characteristic of the person. At this point, ACORD will facilitate a meeting between the relevant parties and a conclusion will be reached; typically a small loan is disbursed as a test of the ability to work and repay. However, key informants were of the opinion that the opposite situation is more likely: a poor person will not want to join the scheme because she believes she will not be able to work and repay, and the idir effectively forces the person to take a small loan in order to show this person that she can succeed and that the community will support her.

ACORD also provides various kinds of training to idir members, including entrepreneurship, leadership, gender awareness, accountability, and bookkeeping. It is this training that provides the backbone of the scheme, and provides the idir with the ability and motivation to organize itself for various purposes beyond its traditional limits. Once an idir has received some training, it begins to identify its priority needs. The members themselves are involved in the planning of the projects from the beginning, and subsequently in resource-raising and implementation.

It is true that ACORD does provide additional financial resources as well as technical advice and facilitating meetings with government officials where necessary. The financial support is clearly necessary in many cases, though this may run counter to the sustainability objective. One group of idirs has been able to build a concrete bridge replacing a wooden one that was often under water or damaged; this new bridge will connect around 10,000 people more safely to the local market, schools and clinics. Another group of idirs have finally received the financial support they needed (in addition to their own resources) to construct a long-promised water pipeline extension, which serves 600 people, saves the women at least four hours a day in water carrying time, and means they no longer put themselves in danger by walking into an area notorious for rape.

However, the training aspect of the scheme is at least as important as the financial support – one idir from outside the target area heard of ACORD's work and came forward for assistance. With some training and technical support (and little else), the idir has built a kindergarten, now expanded to grades one and two, and plans to extend it to grade 6 and eventually into a formal school. It has also organized its youth members into an anti-AIDS club which meets once a week, and formed a savings and credit club. They have created employment for their members, created more market opportunities by opening a shop where members can sell their goods, and provide the educational facilities free to the needy.

In all the idirs visited, members stressed that they now felt better able to organize the community towards common goals, although they were not always sure that they would be able to succeed in their aims without the financial support of ACORD. ACORD has plans to train the idirs in fundraising, although this is an alien concept and may face considerable difficulties.

However, it was clear during the visits that these idirs had essentially already identified their common needs before they became involved with ACORD. This meant that ACORD did not have to convince these groups to take on a 'development role', but provided only material and technical assistance. ACORD staff admitted that changing people's expectations of idirs, both within and without the group, is by far the most difficult part of the job, and has presented various hurdles. There has sometimes been a distinct reluctance on the part of the idir to involve itself in 'development', which has in the past been synonymous with nationalization of local assets. This experience was confirmed by IHA-UDP; although they do not work with idirs specifically, their work with communities has shown that the poor themselves often have a limited vision of their own capacities for change, a limitation which requires a great deal of work to overcome. However, they have also made considerable progress in this area (see section 9).

ACORD has worked hard to convince idirs that they have the potential to become development actors, just as it has worked to convince government at various levels that idirs are not 'backward' traditional groups, but can initiate and implement projects as well as contribute resources. It is worth noting that another NGO, IHA-UDP, has had considerable setbacks in their relationship with government over this issue, with government vacillating on the issue of whether the relevant CBO is a legitimate group.

ACORD's work has also involved changing the expectations of the community and government as to the role of the NGO, particularly in undermining the 'dependency culture' that expects NGOs to simply build roads and clinics. Furthermore, this has at times meant facing criticisms from other NGOs. Some NGOs have felt that idirs should be left to carry out the traditional tasks that they do so well. These NGOs speculated

that, if the idir was disturbed by ACORD's work, the idir might break down and the valuable traditional role would be lost. That there has been a change in the role of the idir is apparent. One idir member said that her role had changed dramatically – she and the other women in her idir were no longer expected to provide emotional support at funeral times by sitting and grieving for seven days, but instead have a more productive role that contributes to the community's decision-making process and material needs. Another woman commented that her role in the community had been positively affected by the training she had received, and she was now a more active decision-maker. Other idir members said that they were now motivated to prioritise and plan for other community projects, and yet the traditional funeral support role was also being carried out.

7. ACCESSING SOCIAL SERVICES

7.1 Background

In Ethiopia, most social service facilities are sparse and poorly equipped. Often it is the very poor who suffer this lack most severely, either failing to have their needs serviced or travelling to distant sources or centres. In the health sector NGOs have responded to the poor's exclusion in a variety of ways – sometimes setting up a centre where none exists, sometimes taking over the running of a neglected clinic or health post, sometimes training members of the community in basic health principles and encouraging them to train other community members. One case is examined here.

In urban areas, exclusion from health facilities is often accompanied by a lack of proper sanitation facilities. Given the high density of low income urban housing, the health problems of the community are often exacerbated, if not caused, by lack of cleanliness and the unsanitary disposal of human and household waste. Addressing this problem, some NGOs have successfully incorporated sanitation activities into their programmes.

Access to a potable water supply is also a key element of good health. Lack of access not only means that health may be affected by pollution, but individuals spend time and resources attempting to secure a reliable supply of water. There are a number of possible ways to address this problem (such as wells, pipelines and filters), and one case is examined here. It is also worth noting that ACORD has assisted one idir in securing a pipeline for potable water (see the previous section).

Access to education may be an important component of poverty reduction, giving individuals the ability to solve their problems with more ease and enabling them to find employment more easily, as and when it becomes available. However, enrolment rates in Ethiopian schools are very low, with only 34.7 per cent of primary school age children enrolled (Terefe Asfaw, 1998). This figure decreases as the children get older: only 8.4 per cent of children eligible by age are enrolled in senior secondary school. Furthermore, the highest drop-out rates are in the first grade, and only one in ten of those who enrol in first grade will complete the twelfth grade.

Several NGOs across Ethiopia have, for the last several years, been engaged in innovative attempts to engage more children in the early years of education. The most successful have been the non-formal education centres, which specialize in providing flexible education to various marginalized groups of children. These centres do not attempt to compete with the formal education system, but rather play a 'feeder' role, whereby children are gradually enabled to take part in the formal system after a few years in the non-formal system. Three cases are examined here.

Government reaction, at first hostile, is now more positive. Ahmed Ali, of ActionAid Ethiopia, has stated: 'Many local government officials are now moving beyond officially acknowledging the potential role and importance of such innovative practices in their education strategies and long term plans. They now demand technical and financial support to initiate and integrate such practices themselves' (Ahmed Ali, 1998).

Case Study: Propride, Addis Ababa

Propride provides an example of the sort of work that several NGOs are doing in the health sector. Although Propride works in urban areas, a similar approach has also been found in rural areas, using both hardware and software approaches simultaneously.

Since 1995, Propride has worked in 16 kebeles in two woredas in some of the poorest areas of Addis Ababa. After meetings with idir leaders, local officials and the poor members of the community, some priorities were drawn up. Income generation was considered the most pressing problem, and a savings and credit scheme was introduced. (This is now a completely independent microfinance institution, serving approximately 7 000 people). The second most pressing problem was that of commercial sex workers in the area, women who were often ineligible for the savings and credit scheme because they had no fixed abode. An HIV/AIDS prevention scheme was initiated in 1996, with further health-related activities following.

There are apparently no government-financed health facilities or environmental sanitation operations in the target areas. Propride established IEC Centres (Information, Education, Communication Centres) in the administration buildings of each kebele, usually taking over one room there. This office is then used by the Community Health Agent (CHA) to hold meetings, seminars and workshops. Propride have also established two low-level health posts where the community can receive treatment for minor injuries, parasites or infections, seek advice, and be referred on to higher clinics. More health posts are planned for the future. These services are completely free of charge to the community. A medium-level clinic has also been established, and is run on a cost-recovery basis; the very poorest members of the community can use it free of charge. Approximately 7 500 people are served by these facilities.

With the help of the community, Propride selected one high-school graduate from a poor family in each kebele to become a CHA. This person was sent on a government training scheme, and receives yearly training; four have gone on to become primary health care workers, which requires six months of government training. Four women were also trained as midwives. The CHA goes door-to-door, giving advice and information to members of the community on topics such as nutrition, family planning, sanitation and HIV prevention. She also attends idir meetings and other local gatherings, plans meetings, and organises awareness campaigns. The fact that the CHA comes from the community in question is very important. Not only is it personally rewarding for the individual, they are also strongly motivated to contribute to the health of their community.

CHAs work closely with the woreda hygiene workers to improve sanitation practice, although one CHA admitted that this was uphill work. 'Even though a garbage collection service is not cost intensive, people do not want to pay a penny for proper sanitation. The message is finally getting through after five years work in this community.'

Physical sanitation facilities have also been part of Propride's effort. Seventeen latrines were built from a revolving fund started in 1998. There were initially problems with repayment of the funds, but the local woreda has recently stepped in to enforce repayment, and the programme will continue. Eventually, there should be more than ninety latrines in the target area.

An interview with a primary health worker in the poorest kebele in the area drew out the various ways in which these health posts have helped to reduce the poverty of the community. Not only has the presence of the health post helped to improve the health (and therefore security) of the community, it has also saved time and money in other ways. Before the lower level clinics were established, individuals used to go to the higher clinics with every ailment: this was expensive in terms of transport costs, doctor's fees, and medicines. Those unable to afford rush-hour transport costs were travelling at 4 am to get to the nearest health clinic. The new facilities are closer, easier to access, and cheaper. Furthermore, the 'health service seeking behaviour' of the community has altered; for instance, mothers will now bring their children to be checked at the first sign

of ill-health. This may prevent a more serious illness and save time later on, thus reducing the time burden on mothers. CHAs have also trained members of the community in how to store and use their medicines; this means that medicines are used more efficiently and expensive waste is prevented. More generally, monitoring systems are needed which can indicate cost-effectiveness in terms of impact on morbidity achieved per unit of medical resource.

The family planning services have also had an impact on the community in a way that positively prevents poverty. One beneficiary stated that she was glad to be able to stop after five children, because her husband's wage as a daily labourer can hardly support the family as it is. Another stated that the contraceptives provided by the centre prevented her having a baby while she was living with her husband's parents and was in an uncertain situation. She now has a baby that has gone through periods of malnourishment; the nutrition demonstrations mean that she is now able to prevent her child falling ill, and thus does not have to spend time and money on restoring its health.

This primary health worker agreed that changing the behaviour of the community is both the most important and the most difficult task. Practices such as female genital mutilation provide health problems throughout a woman's life, preventing productive work and being expensive to cure. Changing the attitudes of community members on issues such as this requires a great deal of time and effort, but with enormous benefits. There is also no doubt that having a variety of types of health support is important. A relatively informal and approachable front line is found in the CHA, providing free advice and only referring people on to higher clinics where necessary. This ensures that problems are caught early enough without undue expense for the individual.

7.3 Domestic Water Supply

Case Study: Kale Heywot Church, Debre Zeit

The KHC project initially taught a few people in a village (or community) to construct freestanding biosand filters (about one metre high), and provided them with the concrete

and filtration mechanisms. These filters are then produced (by casting concrete) within the community, and located within individual homes. Water that is fetched from the lake or river is then poured through the filter and comes out clean enough to drink. The filters have to be maintained, but the community is taught how to do that.

Beneficiaries said that they were all much healthier and very rarely had to go to the clinic (three hours walk away) rather than having to go every fortnight or every month. However, there was still the same time burden on the women, who fetch water from the lake (20 minutes away) five times a day. When asked why a well was not provided, the reason given was the cost – a hand dug well costs EB 30 000 to serve 300 households while these filters cost only EB 60 each (although the total cost of providing the filters comes to half the cost of a well). The filters are individually low cost, and encourage ownership. More relevant is that wells have to be dug very deep in this area, although that is not an insurmountable problem. Earlier impacts on health when cash flow is limited could justify the more piecemeal approach.

The KHC project also built and ran a health post that served nine rural kebeles, and educated community agents in each village in family planning, sanitation and community medicine. These were not reviewed by this study mission.

7.4 Non-formal education

(1) Case Study: EMRDA in the Afar Region

(a) Introduction

The Ethiopian Muslim Relief and Development Association (EMRDA) has created 20 non-formal education centres in rural areas of Oromiya and Afar Regions. This is because, according to its General Secretary, Ato Haj Adane Mamuye, although approximately half the population of Ethiopia is Muslim they are often effectively excluded from the formal education structure. This in turn is often because of the geographical location of the schools at some distance from Muslim populations,

although the government is now responding to the need for schools in rural Muslim areas.

The work with the Muslim Afar peoples is of particular importance and shows the benefits of the non-formal system in a rural area. As nomadic pastoralists, the formal fixed-site education system does not serve the Afar peoples well. Only 7 per cent of school age Afars were established in formal education before the start of the project in 1998 (according to Ato Haj Adane). This is supported by a government report that states that only 8.4 per cent of the eligible population in Afar Region were enrolled in primary school in 1996/97, as compared to 80.3 per cent of the eligible population in Addis Ababa (Ahmed Ali 1998).

(b) Project details

EMRDA builds two-classroom buildings at a cost of \$1000 in total in areas of need. These are identified as villages in which the Afar may settle for a period of six to nine months at a time. An education facilitator is then selected by the community, and retained for three years by payments of EB 180 to 200 per month from EMRDA. Ato Haj claimed that these facilitators are fully committed to their role due to the responsibility given to them by their community. This facilitator is then trained in a curriculum that is tailored to the needs of the local population, and usually covers Amharic, English, the local language, mathematics, basic development education, environmental conservation, and reproductive health, as well as other community issues and possibly the Qu'ran, depending on community requests. EMRDA staff are alert to the fact that children may only remain in one centre for a short time before moving on, although all children are accepted at the centres.

(c) Motivation to learn

The Afar community has had difficulty in the past in accepting the value of education and literacy. This problem is confronted by EMRDA with creativity. The community is encouraged to learn in three ways that merit wider attention.

First, participatory rural assessments involve the community in a discussion of their problems, and EMRDA facilitators show the community how literacy can help in managing these problems. Functional literacy is thus promoted, and the community is motivated to learn.

Second, children attending the non-formal education centres for their first lesson are requested to take teaching aids, such as alphabet wall-charts, back to their homes. Ato Haj Adane claims that parents come to the school the next morning, requesting resources so that they can learn along with their children.

Third, the local community is also motivated to learn through regular contact with members of their community who live in the town and are educated, local intellectuals.

These activities have brought about a radical change in attitude towards education and literacy on the part of the Afar community.

(d) Link to formal education

Students graduate from the non-formal centres to attend formal schools. However, the link with formal education does not operate automatically. EMRDA have been careful to establish their project in its proper 'feeder' role, and have ensured this in various ways.

First, teachers from local formal schools visit the non-formal centre once a week, and are paid EB 50 a month as an incentive, as well as being provided with a bicycle. This both helps the local facilitator if they are encountering any problems, and helps the children to phase in to formal education more easily through familiarity with the teacher. It also helps the teacher to see what progress the children are making and become familiar with their needs.

Second, the project was implemented with a phase-out strategy. It has been agreed that after three-years the regional government will establish a 4-classroom formal school where the non-formal centre was, and will meet all set up costs (estimated at \$40,000)

and running costs. In order to maintain links between the government and the community, there is a meeting every three months between the non-formal facilitator and the local woreda education specialists.

(e) Difficulties

There are a variety of problems with this scheme. For instance, it is uncertain whether children will be able to afford the expenses of formal school when they graduate from the scheme. Also, the project's impact is on a relatively small scale. EMRDA is currently supporting 812 students in eight centres in the Afar Region, in only three kebeles (out of 15) in one woreda. Given that there are six more woredas in the zone, it is clear that this scheme would have to expand massively to have significant impact upon illiteracy and poverty reduction in the Afar region. This leads to the next problem, which is that of government ability to introduce and run formal schools upon phase-out. Should the scheme expand to fill need, this problem would be exacerbated. The final problem is also unresolved: will formally educated school-leavers find enough paid employment in the Region (or, more difficult, probably, in the country as a whole)?

(f) Evidence of success

However, these problems do not detract from the innovative merits of the scheme. EMRDA has succeeded in drawing attention to a rural education need, and has creatively met the needs of a nomadic population. It is clear that the non-formal education centres are succeeding in drawing the Afar community into education, and it seems that this in turn is helping communities to deal with their problems more fruitfully. The most striking evidence of the engagement of the Afars is that some Afar men leave their women and children in one place when they move on, in order that the family may continue to receive education. Also, according to Ato Haj Adane, 12 per cent of the particular Afar community are now involved in formal education, as compared to 7 per cent at the start of the project. The overall success of the scheme is partially apparent in the fact that government consultants seek advice from EMRDA on education in the Region.

(2) Case study: Forum on Street Children Ethiopia, Dessie

(a) Introduction

In 1997, Forum on Street Children Ethiopia (FSCE) established six ACCESS centres (Appropriate Cost-Effective Centres for Education within the School System) in nine of the poorest kebeles (of 20) in Dessie, after similar schemes had succeeded in Addis Ababa, Nazareth, and Dire Dawa. The chosen kebeles were identified with the kebele executive committees and city council, and the centres are designed to meet the needs of over 750 children who either live on the streets or work on the streets despite having a home. These children are often unable to attend formal school for two reasons: personal or familial poverty, and the relatively inflexible nature of the formal school schedule.

(b) Project details

The latter problem is one that has been dealt with most creatively by FSCE, while the fact that the centres are free goes some way to addressing the first problem. Street children are often petty traders and must attend market days in Dessie, which fall on Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings. In addition, their lives are often unpredictable in other ways, depending on the nature of their business and on their residential situation. Formal school offers some degree of flexibility: it offers both morning and afternoon 'shifts' for the children, and children who attend morning shifts in one term attend afternoon shifts the next term. However, this is not sufficient to meet the needs of street children, and FSCE has responded by introducing extremely flexible schedules in their ACCESS centers. Classes are again organized in two shifts each day, but children may attend morning or afternoon shifts whenever they can. In addition, they may attend morning one day and afternoon the next, or skip one day and attend the next: options that are not available in formal schools.

ACCESS facilitators are selected from the local community and are trained and paid by FSCE. These facilitators do not receive the same level of training as formal teachers, but they receive ongoing training throughout their career and are trained in child

communication and psychology. These various elements mean that there is often a very good relationship between facilitator and pupil, with students able to explain their problems to the facilitator more easily than they would a formal teacher, according to key project informants.

(c) Links with formal education

The good relationship between ‘teacher’ and student, plus the fact that the centres accommodate the needs of the children so readily, undoubtedly contributes to the academic success of the children. Some children complete the equivalent of third grade at the centre and are admitted to formal education at the fifth grade; 126 children (77 females) went on to formal education this year. One teacher said that less than 10 per cent of her pupils decided not to go on to formal education.

Again, the links with formal education have not been easy to achieve. As in other areas, government officials at first distrusted the scheme, thinking that the children would not be of a high enough standard. The fact that children are now allowed to ‘skip’ the fourth grade is evidence of an improved relationship. There are no phase-out plans, or plans for government to take over running the schools.

(b) Difficulties

There are a certain number of difficulties with this project. Besides the problems that are evident with the EMRDA program, in terms of government capacity to absorb more students and ability of children to pay for formal education, there are also a number of other problems specific to FSCE. There is a relatively high dropout rate from the ACCESS centres: 158 students dropped out, of a total of 912 who registered, or over 17 per cent. A variety of reasons are given, including factors that are beyond the centre’s control, such as children moving to another area in search of work or food. However, some children dropped out because they expected to be fed and clothed when they registered – this is clearly a problem that could be solved by better communication or project expansion, and one that deserves attention.

(e) Evidence of success

The overall success of this approach is apparent. Over 750 children are introduced to education in a way that is integrated with their needs. One ACCESS facilitator explained that children under ten years old usually attend her school in the mornings, because they do not usually go to market but are instead hawkers (roaming traders). Older children attend in the afternoon on market days in some schools, while in other schools they attend all day on non-market days and holidays. Where there are parents, they are pleased because their children receive a free education and are still able to earn money to support themselves. In this way, FSCE has gone a considerable distance to enabling street children to integrate primary education into their lives in a way that does not endanger their income or increase their or their families' poverty.

8. ORPHANS AND OTHER VULNERABLE CHILDREN

8.1 Background

Children in poor families, or those without one or both parents, are particularly likely to suffer from poverty both in their present situation and in the future. Although this report has focused on reducing poverty, as distinct from straightforward relief or welfare provision, for children the immediate intervention can also be seen as the provision of life chances that will reduce the likelihood of their living in absolute poverty later.

In large families, the youngest children can be more difficult for the parents to support than an older child who can work or help with chores. These children may be abandoned or may run away from home, as may children who are abused at home. Also, the incidence of orphaned and half-orphaned children has increased in recent years due to the HIV/AIDS pandemic. More children than ever before are orphaned, and in poor extended families or poor neighbourhoods, the child is unlikely to find another caregiver without some intervention. In urban areas, any of these children may end up living and working on the streets.

For all these children, a lack of provision of their basic needs in the early stages may prevent their ever being able to climb out of poverty. Government has been unable to meet the needs of these children, and this situation is unlikely to improve due to the increasing incidence of HIV/AIDS. The higher profile being given to family planning is helping somewhat, but there are still many incidences of very large poor families in which the younger children are at risk.

NGOs are dealing with this problem in a variety of ways. Some are providing full care in institutional settings, some are providing day centres, others financial resources direct to caregivers. Of the education that is provided, some focus on allowing children to attend formal education while others provide some level of vocational training.

One area of government policy is important to the provision of care to children. For a number of years, the government discouraged the provision of institutional care, preferring rather that children received home-based care with a relative or community member. NGOs were thus restricted in the types of care they could provide. Now, apparently, with the increasing numbers of children orphaned by AIDS, the government is turning once again to institutionalised care. Of course, there are a variety of other services that NGOs provide that aim to set children on a self-sustaining path out of poverty, and not all of these NGOs rely on a full range of care services in attempting to do this.

8.2 Case studies in primary care

(a) Introduction

Three case studies were carried out:

- HOPE Enterprises, Dessie
- Kale Heywot Children's and Integrated Development Centre, Debre Zeit
- Ethiopian Orthodox Church – Child and Family Affairs Organisation, Dessie.

Hope Enterprises, Kale Heywot Church and the Ethiopian Orthodox Church all provide primary care for orphans and vulnerable children. The two churches run centres that

provide residential care for children, as well as acting as the headquarters for a family-based care scheme, while Hope Enterprises provides a day-centre for local children without a residential component.

(b) Residential care

The Kale Heywot Church in Debre Zeit has an orphanage established in 1988 with a capacity for 90 children in residence. However, it has been able to take in only a limited number of children over the years, since government policy on institutional childcare discouraged this. The local government has not for some time allowed them to expand their project as planned to double the number of children in residence; instead, the Centre now has only 57 children in residence despite its larger capacity and expansion plans. The recent policy change means that the expansion can now go ahead, with a new intake of children expected over the next year. It is not known whether EOC-CFAO faced the same difficulties, although it is clear from their 1998 Annual Report that the overall focus of their national programme had shifted away from institutionalised care to community-based care.

At both residential centres, the churches provide clothes, food, health care and shelter to the children, as well as paying their fees to attend the local formal school. As against Kale Heywot's 57 children in residence, EOC-CFAO has 116. It is significant that EOC-CFAO claimed that, although the children are often severely malnourished when they arrive at the centre, they have only had one death in the last two years; their care and rehabilitation is obviously appropriate for the restoration of basic health.

The welfare of the children is undoubtedly better than if they were not cared for at all, but it was not possible to judge visually how well the children are responding since it was the annual long holiday at the time of visit. KHC, for instance, sends children to stay with families in Addis Ababa for the holiday to experience family life, while providing the family with EB 120 per month to look after the child. Hope Enterprises also reduces its services to the children during the July and August long holiday, but ensures they return once a week for a meal and to keep in touch with the centre.

(c) Home-based care

As mentioned, the focus of both the Church programmes has moved away from institutional care to community- or family-based care, where children live in a family home with the caregiver. KHC provides community-based care to 1,517 children across a variety of southern kebeles, with a plan to take on another 1,500 children in the near future. They provide a fee to the family, health care and educational needs, as well as counselling services and vocational training.

EOC-CFAO provides day services to 190 local children, while paying their caregivers EB 140 a month. Hope Enterprises runs a day centre that provides care for 600 children in Dessie. Although the centre does not provide residential services, it does provide lunch, uniforms, education and medication. There are also plans to provide bathing facilities and a laundry. Hope Enterprises gives the caregivers EB 40 a month. The existence of day centres not only provides free services to vulnerable children, but also provides a longer duration of care each day than formal schools, which only run for half days. This means that parents or other caregivers are free to work full days without giving up time to care for their child or neglecting it.

(d) Selection of children

It is important to note how the selection of children is made. In all areas visited, the need vastly outstrips the available resources. The branch manager of Hope Enterprises estimated that for every child they select, ten more are poor enough or vulnerable enough to require help. Selection criteria, therefore, are crucial.

In all cases, kebeles select a number of children that they determine require assistance. Sometimes the kebele will have a representative of the poor on the selection panel, otherwise the community is consulted on the choice of children after an initial shortlist has been drawn up. In all cases, the NGO will make a final assessment of the needs of the children, and attempt to prioritise the most needy. Orphans take priority, with half-

orphans and children from poor large families also a primary focus. In many cases, the NGO will attempt to settle the child with a member of his or her extended family, or some other caregiver in the community (e.g. Hope Enterprises focuses on homes without children).

It is interesting to note how Hope Enterprises deals with children whose parents are likely to die from AIDS. It would not be possible to have an overt policy on the subject of AIDS, according to the branch manager, because it is such a sensitive subject, and individuals are often not willing to discuss it or are not well enough informed about it. However, when a representative of Hope Enterprises visits the home of a child that has lost one parent, s/he will attempt to determine the circumstances of that parent's death and ask about the symptoms of the disease if appropriate. If AIDS is suspected, then it is privately acknowledged that the other parent is at risk also. Hence the child is treated as if it is likely to be orphaned in the near future. This is important for Hope Enterprises, because it only takes in children at the beginning of their school life, aged 4½ to 5 years old. If a child was omitted from the scheme because it had one parent at the time of selection, but this parent died soon afterwards, this would fail to give priority to the most needy. Hope Enterprises appears to deal with this problem in an appropriate manner.

(e) Vocational training

However, while the selection of children and their care at the centre is important, their future once out of the centre determines the poverty reduction impact. Education and training are vital components of this. In both church-based centres, children attend the local school with their expenses paid for by the church. Hope Enterprises has an integrated formal school at the centre, as well as providing registration fees and materials to an additional 2 365 children at other schools in Dessie. In all centres, vocational training is a key component. EOC-CFAO provide vocational training to their children, including sewing, woodwork, garage skills, typing, electrical skills, and farming. Just over half of their graduates have been placed in jobs. KHC plans to provide a similar local centre in the future but one that could also be used by the local community; at present, the children are sent to a residential home in Addis Ababa for vocational

training which covers catering and construction work among other skills. KHC also runs a job placement scheme. Hope Enterprises provides three years of vocational training after grade ten; while the Dessie school focuses on construction, electrical skills, and mechanics (with a plan to include veterinary skills in the future), its Addis Ababa school provides training in secretarial and catering skills. The Dessie scheme has only been running for two years, so data on placement rates are unreliable; the Addis Ababa project places 85 per cent of graduates in jobs. It is expected that the Dessie project will face more challenges since the job market is tighter there.

(f) Difficulties and successes

The care given to these children, both in a residential setting and in communities or families, provides these children with the necessary chance to avoid poverty in later life. Unfortunately, the same problems apply to these valuable projects as to other NGO efforts – they benefit only a small proportion of those in need. With the incidence of HIV infection climbing in Ethiopia, it seems likely that NGOs’ efforts to provide care for orphans and vulnerable children will be dwarfed by the size of the need.

However, the NGO community has gone some way to showing how care for vulnerable children can be achieved on a cost effective basis. Hope Enterprises Danish donor agency (Woord and Daad) has reportedly praised the Dessie project highly for its efficient use of resources. Hope Enterprises estimates that its centres provide care to children at much lower cost than when provided on an individual basis – it feeds children for EB 1.00 per head as opposed to the usual EB 2.00, it claims, while the total cost per child (including caregiver payments) is EB 128 per month. Furthermore, it seems likely that NGO experience will help to indicate whether home-based or institutional care is the more appropriate method of protection for children in different situations.

8.3 Case study of non-primary care

Case study: Forum on Street Children Ethiopia, Dessie

Forum on Street Children Ethiopia (FSCE) provides a variety of services to children who either live or work on the street. In addition to the non-formal education services

outlined earlier, it also provides other services linked to education – tutorial classes, facilities for after-school work, and girls support clubs. However, it also focuses on children who are at risk from the law, either because they themselves commit crimes or because they are involved in situations that may involve the police in other ways, such as children at risk of violence. FSCE's work helps to provide children with chances for a more stable life, which may give them better chances of avoiding poverty when they are older.

FSCE works through Child Protection Units that it has established in four police stations in Dessie. In each police station, FSCE has established an office with a counsellor, who can deal with children as they are brought in, whether for crimes or other reasons. FSCE also provides transport to police to take displaced children back to their family if the child so desires.

FSCE works with the police in Dessie to make them aware of children's rights and needs. They trained one policeman from each of the four police stations in various child-relevant material: in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, in appropriate means of providing psychological assistance, and in the relevant aspects of the law. These police receive additional training on an ongoing basis, training that focuses on reinforcing the message that the protection of children is partially the responsibility of the police force. In this way, FSCE tries to provide moral motivation rather than a financial incentive.

FSCE is aware that it is not providing a comprehensive service for these children. With more resources it would provide a place for displaced children to stay, as well as qualified child psychologists who could address the child's problems in more depth. In addition, it is aware that it is only addressing a small proportion of the problem, as with other NGOs. However, it is addressing a need for child security that complements the primary care given by other agencies. It also addresses a policy gap – concerning the integration of extreme needs of children into the work of the police. Unfortunately, work at the local level cannot address the national policy deficit in this area. Indeed, a policy

gap at national level may endanger the work done locally, as staff turnover will lead to limited local institutional memory in the absence of explicit support at national level.

9. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND REGENERATION

9.1 An Improved Soil and Water Conservation Project

Case study: SOS Sahel

This project, located on a hillside in Doge Mashido P.A. in Kindo Koysa Woreda, Wollaita Zone of the SNNP Region, had involved fifty farm households working together to construct grass-covered bunds and planting fruit tree seedlings on their individual farms. SOS Sahel was approached by the P.A. and provided assistance in designing the sub-watershed plan and subsidising digging tools and fruit tree seedlings. The area covered is approximately 30 hectares, farm size averaging only 0.6 ha. Customary soil bunding techniques, as practiced by the Ministry of Agriculture, involve scraping top-soil from above and below into a bank running along the contour and ½ to one metre in height. The bund itself is usually uncultivated and, with the loss of fertile top-soil, unit area productivity is reduced in the short-term. As farmers either do not maintain the bund or after a few years deliberately spread it across the adjoining fields, the supposed medium-term benefits of reduced physical erosion are not achieved either. In this case, ditch-based terraces (fanya juu – Swahili: to work upwards) were constructed in the dry season, which were then planted with perennial desho grass. Loss of top-soil is minimised and the grass, which protects the bund from rain splash erosion, is cut and carried to livestock kept on the farm infields. The technique was popular with the farmers interviewed. However, signs of soil erosion were visible on farms a kilometre or so away on the other side of the valley; no spontaneous diffusion had occurred in the three years since the scheme had been completed. The organisation of a similar farmers group without outside technical and material assistance appears to be too complex a task. However, such activity falls within the remit of the Ministry of Agriculture, which ought to base its future soil and water conservation activity on the

improved, tested and demonstrated bunding technique which is more farm-household friendly.

9.2 A Township Flood Protection Project

Case study: World Vision

In 1995 the trading centre of Majeti Town in the Antsokia I project area of South Wollo Zone, Amhara Region, was overwhelmed by fierce flood waters from the nearby river; this flows down from the eastern wall of the Rift Valley. Huge boulders crushed the flimsy houses in the township; 44 people were killed. World Vision Ethiopia was asked to help prevent a re-occurrence of such a tragedy. By 2001, the township bank of the river had been protected by a massive wall composed of rock-filled gabions 770 metres in length. One final extension of around 100 metres is planned to complete the task. An area of reclaimed land behind the wall has allowed small allotments to be allocated to landless families living in the township. Labour paid on a food-for-work basis also benefited from the project.

In the relatively young geological context of the Ethiopian highlands, population growth tends to push increasing numbers of poor households who have no other options into unstable areas, which are subject to landslides and destructive flooding. NGOs can collaborate with regional governments in identifying both preventive and post-disaster measures which can minimise the adverse effects of such hazards.

9.3 An Urban Regeneration Project

Case study: IHA-UDP

Integrated Holistic Approach – Urban Development Project (IHA-UDP) undertake urban regeneration projects. They go into a single kebele and completely renovate it – they tear down housing and rebuild it, build schools (with government teachers), and provide libraries, day centres for the elderly, vocational training centres, health posts, trained health workers, garbage cans, communal latrines and workshops for the disabled.

IHA-UDP claim a bottom-up approach in terms of assessing felt needs and engaging the community in implementation, and a previous project was successfully handed over to a CBO (250 members of staff for 30 000 beneficiaries) to run. In that case, they handed over a wide range of projects to the community, and received community inputs of EB 0.5 million on their last project.

With a total budget of EB 25 million, however, there is a question about cost-effectiveness. Essentially, this is an extremely resource intensive approach, something that their PR officer admitted the government could never hope to replicate. Prioritisation of activities would enable faster and broader coverage of the kebeles which have still to receive any assistance.

10. MAJOR FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- (1) In a country with so large a concentration of poor people and where total development resources are still woefully inadequate relative to need, it is surprising to find in Ethiopia a history of unnecessary duplication and antipathy by government agencies towards a relatively small and underfunded NGO sector. The PRSP process offers the possibility of a new era of more collaborative relationships, where both representative participation (at least) and the facilitatory role of NGOs have been specified in the 2001/2002 process. Various NGOs have built up valid development experience, especially in working with poor categories of people such as the landless, cattleless, widows and orphans, in ways that are complementary to state and private sector activity.
- (2) Despite limited time and geographical coverage, the study team was able to identify and confirm on the ground a significant range of innovatory and, in the experience of beneficiaries, effective poverty-reducing activities being assisted by

NGOs. Nevertheless, various aspects of cost-effective service delivery are often not yet satisfactorily in place:

- (i) coverage is often slight and slow to expand; phasing-out, rolling on and replication by other agencies do not seem to be receiving adequate attention;
- (ii) technical production components are haphazardly selected according to agency or individuals' partial experience rather than relating systematically to global experience, especially from pro-poor agrarian strategies in other relevant developing countries;
- (iii) arrangements for maintenance and repair of infrastructure such as roads and bridges have not been agreed with community or regional authorities.

- (3) How far does the PRS process require the deployment of the complete range of NGO sector roles in Ethiopia? Does it require additional and complementary tasks? The PRSP plan specifies the participatory inputs from woreda level representatives, and NGOs are described as facilitators to the process at regional and national level. The linkage to debt relief decisions provides a high degree of incentive for government compliance and collaboration with the internal and international agencies involved.

In Christian Aid's four-year plan document for its Ethiopian activities (Christian Aid, 2001) NGO roles and contributions are identified. These are all relevant to the ways that NGOs can engage in the PRSP process, and are used in the following recommendations.

- (1) The identification of gaps and provision of services 'where government services are weak or unadapted to local needs';
- (2) The design and piloting of small-scale innovative approaches, to be replicated by government where successful;

- (3) The promotion of people's participation in development decision-making (as well as in the needed inputs and in the enjoyment of its benefits) i.e., giving 'a voice to the poor';
 - (4) Their advocacy in international forums of improved policies for development;
 - (5) The resolution and prevention of conflict, whether directly through specific action or, indirectly and involving a larger number of NGOs, through bringing accelerated development to areas of potential or actual conflict;
 - (6) Building the capacities of indigenous NGOs and local community based organisations (CBOs).
- (4) Clearly, the 2001/2002 opportunity requires the assembly of pro-poor service delivery activities, primarily, as well as capacity building in CBOs and indigenous NGOS. Those NGOs with relevant pro-poor development experience are urged to fully participate in CRDA's structural linkage into the PRSP formulation process. Information will need to be upgraded on project designs, costs and participatory impact assessment findings. This would ideally be phased over a 2-3 year period if the PRSP process remains open over the three-year plan implementation period. Hopefully, discussion forums will remain open and active not only at central government level but in all regional government offices where decentralised poverty-reducing strategies are to be implemented. Advocacy activities should probably concentrate on making the PRSP process work better, especially in broadening participation across woredas and to below woreda level progressively over time. Mismatch between woreda level realities and strategies based on 'one size fits all' assumptions at national or regional level seems quite probable in the initial PRSP document, especially given the exclusion of some 417 of the 532 woredas from representation at the regional and national planning stages (see para. 10 below).
- (5) Activities which directly raise the value productivity of the labour of poor people can make the greatest impact on poverty in the short term. This is especially the

case in Ethiopia in the area of food security improvement and increased smallholder sales of commodity surpluses. Other interventions which improve health status, literacy and educational levels and reduce manual drudgery need to be accompanied by expansion of productive self- and wage-employment opportunities in order to achieve impact in terms of income poverty reduction. NGOs are ideally placed to design and pilot such schemes that government may be unable to implement on a large scale. Also, NGOs are ideally placed to note the relative success or failure of existing schemes, but more systematic information sharing amongst the NGO community is necessary.

- (6) It seems likely that greater receptivity by some NGOs to participatory ongoing evaluation and sharing of experience will enable more accurate identification of 'best practice' in the various poverty reduction activities. This would also assist the field departments of regional governments to scale-up their programmes along 'best practice' lines. More vigorous delivery of commercial services by the private sector in the rural areas would also follow from better information dissemination by those NGOs which are taking the lead role in area development programmes. There is a need, however, to create in NGOs additional capacity in ongoing participatory evaluation procedures, building on systematic monitoring by management. CRDA should address this issue on behalf of its members.

- (7) The problem of insecure land tenure rights in northern and central Ethiopia was discussed in sub-section 3.3 above. Although the World Bank went on record in 1999 as believing that this was not a problem, it failed to offer an explanation for continuing soil fertility decline and deforestation in these areas compared with rising 'in-field' fertility and increasing soil protection under 'woody perennials' in the southern highlands farming systems. Other promising techniques such as agro-forestry and micro-irrigation cannot be adopted by farmers if their future use rights are uncertain. The NGO sector could assemble expertise and evidence, and press for independent policy reviews at regional level (where the 1994 constitution lays the authority for land tenure policy-making).

- (8) Especially in view of the limited impact on poverty reduction which is being secured under the present design of the Agricultural Development-led Industrialisation Strategy (ADLI), a more effective range of pro-poor policies and projects needs to be identified and put into effect, including pilot testing and demonstration where necessary. The NGO sector can assist in this through direct action on the ground, sharing their field-level experience and by using *ex post* poverty impact analysis to improve the policy mix over successive PRSPs. In the rural sector, a greater emphasis on decentralised planning at regional level is more likely to achieve effective poverty-reducing impact than a centrally planned national policy as exemplified by the current design of the ADLI strategy. NGOs working in specific regions, therefore, should make their rural development experience and findings available in the regional-level PRSP forums.
- (9) A related constraint on poverty reduction is the weakness of agricultural technology and commodity innovation for small-scale farms, especially on the part of the government institutions. Research activity, especially, is unnecessarily complex and long drawn-out. Capacity building assistance is required for designing improved low external input sustainable agriculture (LEISA) systems in government, especially, and some NGOs which rely on inappropriately trained ex-government employees. ‘South-south’ technology transfer routes and ‘search’/pilot testing on live ‘unit farms’³ should replace ‘north-south’ transfer and experimental station research. Areas requiring particular attention are:
- Agro-forestry (alley cropping, multi-storey cropping, taungya and silvo-pastoralism systems).
 - Water-harvesting and micro-irrigation (drip, trickle, gravity driven sprinkler, etc.).
 - Inter-cropping and green manuring.

³ The whole farm being run by a live family as a test-and-demonstrate system.

- Ratooning techniques (semi-arid areas).
- Horticulture and pomology.
- Diversified small-stock (pigs, ducks, geese, rabbits – despite taboos)
- Power tillers, carts and other appropriate technology.

Confusion is particularly rife in the area of agro-forestry (where farm forestry and community forestry monoculture are widely substituted) and micro-irrigation (where small and medium-scale irrigation under engineer management replaces farmer managed systems).

(11) Other policy areas where the interests of the poor may be neglected or even over-ridden include:

- (i) Micro-finance legislation where studies are needed of the performance of central and regional government, parastatal and business firm (banks) micro-finance institutions vis-a-vis cooperative and NGO institutions;
- (ii) The role of the business sector in land acquisition for large-scale agricultural enterprise while neglecting cooperation with small-scale producers in the form of outgrowers' schemes, nucleus estates, etc.

The NGO sector should institute independent policy studies in these and similar areas where pro-poor impact could be augmented.

(12) Nomadic pastoralism dominates the rural economies of large swathes of territory in Ethiopia: the whole of Afar and Somali Regions, Borana Zone of Oromiya Region and the south-western lowlands of SNNPR. Under a PRS, the major objective in these areas would be to increase food security in adverse climatic situations. Experience elsewhere in Africa suggests the importance of expanding the number of watering points, and maintaining them, to allow opportunistic herd

management strategies to access larger areas of dry season/dry year grazing. The required knowledge can only be assembled through participatory procedures at woreda and zonal level, feeding in to regional development strategies. Watering point maintenance probably requires local government capacity to be created from a mix of local taxation (trader licenses, V.A.T.) and block grants from central government. NGOs working in these areas can assist with expertise (south-south), pilot-testing and advocacy in the event of continuing inaction on the part of the public authorities.

- (13) The 2001/2002 PRSP process seems likely to be only partially appropriate as an informed participatory exercise, given a very tight time schedule, limited geographical coverage and non-availability at the consultation stage of key poverty data. Annual iteration and rolling forward of the three-year PRSP would allow for adjustments and corrections to be made in successive stages. The NGO sector should press for annual PRSP revision to overcome the present and unfolding weaknesses and to increase the participation at woreda level as rapidly as possible (approx. 417 out of 532 woredas are excluded in round 1). NGOs should press for clarity regarding their role as facilitators of the consultation process. NGOs will also have a full role to play in assisting the federal and regional governments by contributing the lessons of their unique field experience, in improving the pro-poor policy framework and by working for fuller participation in the process by the poor themselves.

ANNEX 1 ITINERARY

A: Preliminary Visit

Deryke Belshaw (DB) 1.8.01 – 4.8.01

Itinerary

Wednesday 1.8.01	09.00	Oxford - London road and rail
	14.00	Meeting, Clive Robinson, Country Representative, Christian Aid Ethiopia
Wednesday 1.8- Thursday 2.8.01	20.00	LHR-AA (diverted via Djibouti)
	16.30	Arrive AA Hotel
	18.00	Meeting, Wzt.Adey Abebe, CRDA
Friday 3.8.01	09.00	Meeting, Wzt. Adey Abebe, CRDA
	11.00	Meeting, Ato. Yilbetal Tirueneh, Team Leader, WAAS Ato. Delil Hussein, WAAS Consultant
	16.00	Meeting, Ato. Fikre Zewdie, Director, ActionAid, Ethiopia
Saturday 4.8.01	09.00	Meeting, Wzt. Adey Abebe, CRDA
	11.00	AA – LHR
	24.00	Arrive Norwich (road)

B: Main visit

Deryke Belshaw (DB)	1.9.01 – 11.9.01
Erin Coyle (EC)	1.9.01 – 16.9.01

Sunday 2.9.01	0030	EC departs London Heathrow (3 hr delay)
	1330	EC arrives Addis Ababa
	1200	DB departs for Nairobi Airport
	1830	DB arrives Addis Ababa
	1930	Meeting with Martin Roberts (SOS Sahel) and Clive Robinson (Country Representative – Christian Aid, Ethiopia)
	2000	Dinner with Clive Robinson

Monday 3.9.01	0800	Meeting with Ato Fekade Tsegaye (Director) and Wzt. Adey Abebe (Head of Information) (CRDA) and Clive Robinson
	1000	Meeting with Ato Bussa Badesa (Director) and Ato Delil Hassen (Project Officer) (WAAS)
	1100	Meeting with Ato Fikre Zewdie (Director – ActionAid)
	1330	Meeting with Ato Haj Adane Mamuye (General Secretary – EMRDA)
	1430	Meeting with Dr Tsegaye Habte (Commissioner – EOC-DICAC)
	1530	Meeting with Anne Bousquet (Country Representative – CRS)
	1630	Meeting with Dr Tesfaye Yacob (General Secretary – Kale Heywot Church)
	Tuesday 4.9.01	0630
1430		Meet Ato Mulken and Ato Mulugeta (Project Officers – SOS Sahel) in Sodo – depart for field project near Bele
1530		Participatory assessment with beneficiary of goat credit scheme
1645		Participatory assessment with beneficiaries of grass bunding scheme
1800		Return to Sodo, stay overnight
Wednesday 5.9.01		0830
	0930	Depart for field project in Boloso Sore Woreda
	1000	Participatory assessment with beneficiary of beekeeping scheme
	1100	Visit to water project pumphouse
	1200	Participatory assessment with beneficiaries of savings and credit scheme
	1430	Depart for Selam Ber
	1600	Arrive Selam Ber (Kucha Woreda). Meeting with Ato Belayneh Assegu (Programme Coordinator) and staff (ERSHA)
	1830	Arrive Sodo, stay overnight

Thursday 6.9.01	0600	Depart Sodo
	1900	Arrive Kombolcha. Logistical meeting with Ato Samuel Sugamo (Officer in Charge) and Ato Tamru Chewaka (Communications Officer) (World Vision Northern Branch)
	2130	Arrive Dessie, stay overnight
Friday 7.9.01	0740	DB meeting with Ato Samuel Sugamo – office briefing in Kombolcha
	0930	DB visit to feeder road and market access project in Kemissie (Antsokia: 2)
	1200	DB visit to Majeti (Antsokia: 1) Discussion of Majeti irrigation scheme Participatory assessment with beneficiaries of credit and savings scheme Visit to storm protection and plots for the poor project
	1400	DB Depart for Dessie
	1530	DB Return Dessie – afternoon spent on documentation
	0845	EC Meeting with Ato Tamrat (Sponsorship Officer) and Ato Solomon (Savings and Credit Officer) (FSCE) – office briefing
	1000	EC Participatory assessment with Wzt. Fatuma (President of Girls' Support Club)
	1030	EC Participatory assessment with beneficiaries of savings and credit scheme
	1130	EC Participatory assessment with teachers of ACCESS scheme
	1300	EC Afternoon spent on documentation
Saturday 8.9.01	0815	Search for EOC-DICAC offices
	1000	Unable to find EOC-DICAC offices, meet instead with Project Officer (EOC-CFAO)
	1100	Depart Dessie
	1900	Arrive Addis Ababa
	1945	Dinner with co-sponsors: Adey Abebe, Fekade Tsegaye, Fikre Zewdie, Clive Robinson
Sunday 9.9.01	1000	Report drafting, documentation, administration, and other project necessities

	1700	DB departs for airport
	1915	DB flight departs
Monday 10.9.01 (Ethiopian New Year's Eve – offices open half day)	0900	DB in Nairobi all day due to flight delay; work on documents; arrive Norwich 1000 on 11.9.01
	1000	EC collect documentation from CRDA library – rest of day spend reading documentation and report drafting
Tuesday 11.9.01 (Ethiopian New Year – offices closed)	0900	Reading and report drafting
	1400	Afternoon free (spent with Adey Abebe's family)
Wednesday 12.9.01 (holiday – most offices closed)	0900	Meeting with Wzo. Abiesh Biru (Advocacy Officer), Wzt. Fatia Muhape (Assistant Advocacy Officer) and Salome Teshome (Research Assistant) (ACORD) – office briefing
	1100	Participatory assessment with idir members (outside target area – kindergarten)
	1200	Participatory assessment with idir members (construction of bridge and road)
	1300	Participatory assessment with idir members (new pipeline initiative)
	1500	Meeting with Wzt. Serkalem Berhanu (Programme Co-ordinator – WISE)
	1530	Participatory assessment with beneficiaries of savings and credit scheme
	1630	Meeting with Wzt. Tsigie Haile (Director – WISE) – office briefing
1800	Report drafting	
Thursday 13.09.01	0900	Meeting with Wzo. Konjit Birhanu (Program Manager – Propride) – office briefing
	1000	Interview with Community Health Agent
	1030	Participatory assessment with beneficiaries of family planning facilities at health centre
	1130	Flight confirmation at Hilton Hotel
	1400	Meeting with Sister Jember Teferre (Project Coordinator) and Sophie Yitma (Public Relations Officer – IHA-UDP) – office briefing

	1500	Visit to urban development project in Woreda 23 with Sophie Yitma and an education extension worker.
	1630	Meeting with Wzt. Adey Abebe
	1730	Report drafting
Friday 14.9.01	0700	Depart for Debre Zeit
	0900	Meeting with Ato Tesfaye Temesgen (General Manager – Kale Heywot Children’s and Integrated Development Centre)
	1030	Visit with Ato Jonathan to rural water filter project
	1100	Participatory assessments with water filter users
	1230	Depart for Ziway
	1400	Meeting with Ato Shambel Gemechu (Programme Coordinator) and Ato Gizaw Koji (Project Officer – Rift Valley Women and Children’s Development Project)
	1500	Participatory assessment with farmers on canal project
	1530	Participatory assessment with farmers on water pump project
	1615	Participatory assessment with beneficiaries of savings and credit scheme
	1730	Depart for Addis Ababa
	2100	Report drafting
Saturday 15.9.01	0900	Meeting with Ato Getachew Wolde-Mariam (Director – World Vision Ethiopia)
	1100	Meeting Paul Barker (Director – CARE Ethiopia)
	1200	Afternoon free
Sunday 16.9.01	1000	Depart for airport
	1230	Flight departure from Addis Ababa
	2350	Arrive Cambridge

ANNEX II: REFERENCES CONSULTED

- Ahmed Ali (1998) ACCESS: An alternative route to basic education for children in Ethiopia. Paper presented at a CRDA/Ministry of Education Workshop on 'The Role of NGOs in Education'. Addis Ababa.
- Belshaw, D. (2001) The Role of NGOs in Poverty Reduction in Ethiopia: Preliminary Visit Report. Addis Ababa: Christian Relief and Development Association (CRDA)/London: Overseas Development Institute.
- Bush, J. and Alemayehu Konde. (2001) Ethiopia Food Aid Impact Study: Meda Welabu Woreda. Addis Ababa: Christian Aid.
- Christian Aid. (2001) Ethiopian Country Policy Paper: April 2001 – March 2005. Addis Ababa.
- CRS (2001) Lege Oda Mirga Case Study Report. Addis Ababa.
- CRS/USCC (2001) Ethiopia Program: Annual Public Summary of Activities, 2000. Addis Ababa.
- CRDA (2001a) Editorial: A co-ordinated effort [PRSP Task Force]. *CRDA News*, 17,7:2.
- CRDA (2001b) Promises to Alleviate Poverty [3rd UN Conference on Lesser Developed Countries]. *CRDA News*, 17, 7:7.
- CRDA (2001c) . NGOs and the Business Sector. *CRDA News*, 17, 7 (Highlights).
- CRDA (2001d) Ethiopia – Debt and PRSP. *CRDA News*, 17,7:7.
- CRDA (2001e) Terms of Reference for the Study on NGO Contribution to Poverty Alleviation in Ethiopia. Addis Ababa.
- Dejene Aredo (1993) The Iddir: A study of an indigenous informal financial institution in Ethiopia. Milan: FINAFRICA Foundation.
- Devereux, S. (2000) Destitution in Ethiopia's Northeast Highlands (Amhara Region): Conceptual paper. Addis Ababa: Save the Children Fund (UK) Ethiopia.
- DFID (2001) *Poverty: Bridging the gap. Guidance Notes*. London.

- Eyasu Elias, Morse, S. and Belshaw, D. (1998) Nitrogen and Phosphorous Balances of Kindo Koisha Farms in Ethiopian Agriculture, *Ecosystems - Environment*, 71, 93-113.
- ERSHA (2001) Short Briefings about ERSHA – KIRDIP for CRDA team. Kutcha.
- Federal Government of Ethiopia (2000) Ethiopia Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper, 2000/2001 – 2002/03. Addis Ababa.
- Federal Government of Ethiopia (2001) Government Plan of Action on the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper. Addis Ababa.
- Fukuda-Parr, S. (2001) Diffusion of Technology should be Part of National Poverty Reduction Strategies, *I.M.F. Survey*, 30, 16, 272-4.
- Killick, A. (2001) Globalisation and the Rural Poor, *Development Policy Review*, 19, 2, 155-180.
- Mosley, P. (2001) Poverty Relief: A simple technology for poverty-oriented project assessment, *Impact Assessment and Project Appraisal*, 19, 1, 53-67.
- Norton, A. and Foster, M. (2001) The Potential of Using Sustainable Livelihoods Approaches in Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers. London: Overseas Development Institute, *Working Paper* 148.
- PRUS (2001) The Challenge of Ending Rural Poverty: Focus, *PRUS News*, 1, 1 (Summer).
- Seyoum, S. (2001) Is Agricultural Development-led Industrialisation (ADLI) a Poverty Reduction Strategy? *Medrek*, Forum for Social Studies, Addis Ababa.
- Sutherland, A.J. (2001) Sustainable Livelihoods and Small Farmer Development: Opportunities for improved coherence in policies and services. Paper prepared for EAAE Conference, Imperial College at Wye.
- Terefe Asfaw (1998) The Contribution of the Voluntary Sector and the Role of NGOs and Church-based Agencies in the Education Sector. Paper presented at a CRDA/Ministry of Education Workshop on 'The Role of NGOs in Education'. Addis Ababa.
- Tiffen, M. *et al.* (1994) *More People, Less Erosion*. Chichester: Wiley.
- Tsegaye Habte (2001) Report on Core Group Meeting. Addis Ababa: EOC/DICAC.
- Van Diesen, A. with Walker, K. (1999) The Changing Face of Aid to Ethiopia: Past experience and emerging issues. London: Christian Aid.

- Water Action (2001) *Water Action 1995-2000: Working to alleviate poverty in Ethiopia*. Addis Ababa.
- World Bank (2000) *World Development Report, 2000/01: Attacking Poverty*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- World Bank/IMF (2001) Joint Staff Memo: HIPC Initiative – Country Implementation Status Notes (<http://www.worldbank.org/hipc/51101A> – Country Implement Status. pdf)
- World Vision Ethiopia (2001a) *Strategic Directions, Strategic and Business Plans of WVE*. Addis Ababa.
- World Vision Ethiopia (2001b) *Antsokia Gemza Area Development Program: Mid-term Review of the Five-year Plan 1998-2002*. Addis Ababa.
- Worku Tessoma (2000) *Stakeholder Participation in Policy Processes in Ethiopia*. IIED/SOS Sahel, *Managing Africa's Soils Working Papers 17*.
- Yeraswork Admassie (2000) *Twenty Years to Nowhere: Property rights, land management and conservation in Ethiopia*. Asmara: Red Sea Press.