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SUMMARY REPORT OF THE MID-TERM EVALUATION OF THE COUNTRY PROGRAMME ETHIOPIA 104300 (2007–2011)

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NOTE TO THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

This document is submitted to the Executive Board for consideration.

The Secretariat invites members of the Board who may have questions of a technical nature with regard to this document to contact the WFP staff focal points indicated below, preferably well in advance of the Board's meeting.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Ethiopia, one of the poorest countries in the world, is Africa's third most populous country with 78 million people.¹ Recent social and economic progress in Ethiopia has been steady, with major advances in education, significant improvement in the rate of growth of gross domestic product, and considerable progress in managing a national safety net programme for rural food-insecure households. Despite this progress, there continue to be several million food-insecure Ethiopians requiring food assistance. This report evaluates WFP's ongoing country programme in terms of relevance, results and factors explaining the performance. The evaluation was conducted by a team of five independent evaluators with field work taking place in May and June 2009.

The evaluation found that WFP's country programme was generally well-aligned with government policies and partners' strategies that address major natural and human resource constraints affecting Ethiopia's food-insecure rural poor. In the component Managing Environmental Resources to Enable Transitions to More Sustainable Livelihoods Through Partnership and Land Use Solidarity, ongoing physical asset creation and watershed rehabilitation have resulted in increased water availability, soil productivity and income-earning opportunities among participating households. In the Children in Local Development – Food-for-Education component enrolment rates, gender equity in enrolment and drop-out rates have all exceeded planned targets in the first two years.

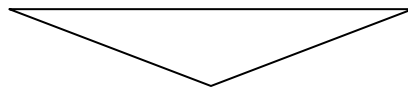
The factors that positively influenced the operation's efficiency and effectiveness include: sustained support, over several years, to community-owned watershed rehabilitation; and strong government and community commitment to universal primary education in general, and to establishing primary schools as centres for community activities that include adult education. On the other hand, the efficiency and effectiveness of the operation was negatively influenced by resource shortfalls, late arrival of commodities, procurement delays for equipment and vehicles, deficiencies in the logistics and monitoring and evaluation systems; continuing high turnover of staff; and insufficient investment in augmenting staff capacities of WFP and partners.

The evaluation recommends a major external study on the sustainability of WFP's watershed rehabilitation approach in Ethiopia and some redesign of both components prior to the next country programme to enhance their demonstration effects and impact and to take better advantage of synergies between the components. Other recommendations are made for the country office and the Government on specific programme components for improvement of the current country programme.

¹ FAO/WFP. 2009. FAO/WFP Crop and Food Security Assessment Mission to Ethiopia. January, Rome.



DRAFT DECISION*



The Board takes note of “Summary Report of the Mid-Term Evaluation of the Country Programme Ethiopia 104300 (2007–2011)” (WFP/EB.1/2010/7-C) and the management response in WFP/EB.1/2010/7-C/Add.1 and encourages further action on the recommendations, taking into account considerations raised by the Board during its discussion.

* This is a draft decision. For the final decision adopted by the Board, please refer to the Decisions and Recommendations document issued at the end of the session.



BACKGROUND

Context

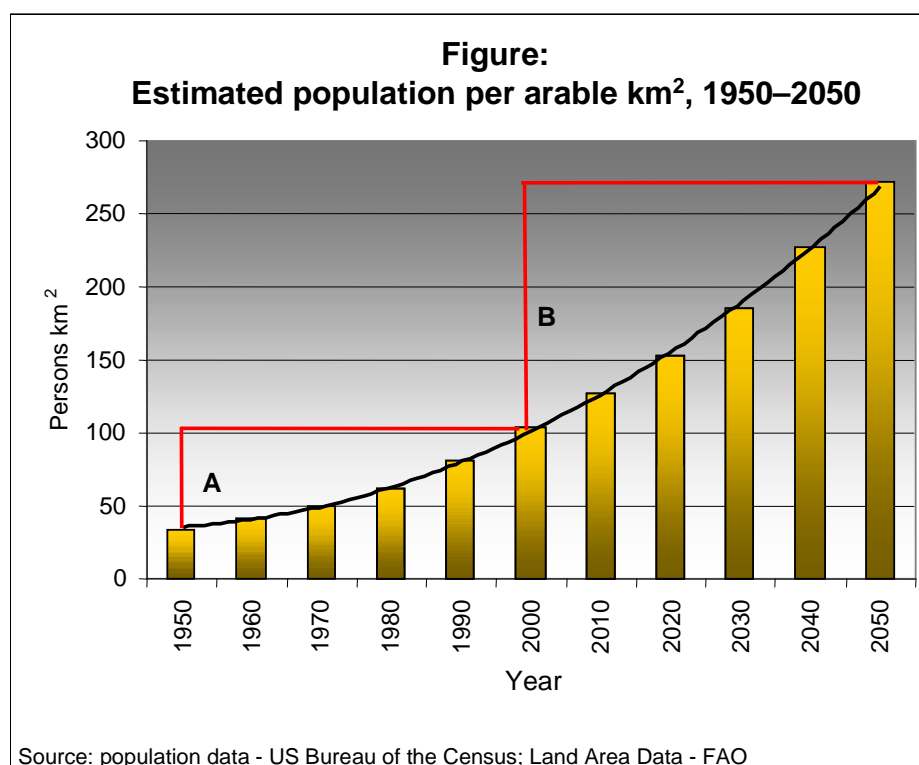
1. Ethiopia, one of the poorest countries in the world, is Africa's third most populous country with an estimated population in 2009 of 78 million. The 2007–2011 WFP country programme (CP) 104300 has been implemented during a period of significant policy evolution in Ethiopia and turbulence in the world economy. Over the past five years social and economic progress has been steady with major advances in education, significant improvement in the growth rate of gross domestic product and considerable progress in managing a national safety-net programme for rural food-insecure households. The global economic recession has reduced Ethiopian exports, remittance flows and donor resource flows to the country.² Devolution of decision-making authority to regional and local governmental bodies continues.
2. Approximately 80 percent of households live in rural areas and are dependent on local agriculture to meet their food needs. There continue to be several million Ethiopians requiring food transfers³ as a result of low agricultural productivity, heavily degraded agricultural lands, population growth and extremely low household incomes. In addition, drought has been a consistent threat and inflation has driven up food prices significantly. During 2007 many of the more food-insecure areas of Ethiopia experienced major floods. Severe drought reappeared early in 2008 in the eastern half of the country – particularly in the Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Region (SNNPR) and Somali, Afar, eastern Oromiya and eastern Tigray regions. Drought conditions continued into 2009 in these parts of the country. The prices of food in 2007 in both rural and urban markets was 40 percent above the average for 2002–2006⁴ and in mid-2008 reached levels 200 percent above 2004–2008 averages; in 2009 they were still above the longer-term average.
3. Ethiopia's natural resource base is heavily degraded from unsustainable farming practices and deforestation, abetted by growing population pressure. The relationship between population growth and the relatively fixed quantity of arable agricultural land makes evident the magnitude of the problems confronting Ethiopia and underlines the difficulty of improving the food security status of the country's poor. The figure below shows the numbers of people in Ethiopia per km² of arable land over the 100-year period from 1950 to 2050. If population growth continues in 2050, 270 Ethiopians will have to gain a living from each km² of arable land, compared to 35 in 1950. This underscores the importance of efforts to reduce the amount of arable land in Ethiopia that is degraded, to increase the returns to this land and to decrease the rate by which the population is growing.

² According to International Monetary Fund data, per capita official development assistance to Ethiopia remains near the bottom compared to other low-income, food deficit countries.

³ There are 7.5 million chronically food-insecure people under the Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP) and an estimated 4.9 million people in need of emergency food assistance for the period January to June 2009 (citation footnote 1). Under the PSNP a large portion receive cash transfers or a combination of cash and food transfers.

⁴ Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS NET). Ethiopia Food Security Update. January 2008.





4. WFP, in collaboration with other United Nations agencies, bilateral and multilateral donors, and the Government, aims to assist Ethiopia to achieve Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in poverty reduction, agricultural growth, empowering women and achieving universal primary education, among others. Major advances have been achieved in primary education: the number of students enrolled in primary education increased dramatically from 8.1 million in 2001 to 14 million in 2007, resulting in a gross enrolment ratio of 97 percent for boys and 85 percent for girls.⁵ Table 1 below shows dramatic progress in selected primary education indicators from 1995/96. Notwithstanding these achievements on the national scale, considerable regional and gender disparities prevail.

⁵ http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/ethiopia_statistics.html#56

TABLE 1: ETHIOPIA'S PROGRESS TOWARD MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS IN PRIMARY EDUCATION*

	1995/96	2000/01	2006/07
Number of students	3.8 million	8.1 million	14 million
Gross enrolment ratio (<i>percent</i>)	-	61.6	91.6
Completion rate (<i>percent</i>)	-	42	65
Girl students (<i>percent</i>)	37	41	47
Literacy rate (<i>percent</i>)	26 (1996)	29 (2000)	38 (2004/05)

Source: The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, 2008.

Description of the Operation

5. The 2007–2011 CP in Ethiopia aims to improve agricultural productivity and household income in selected food-insecure areas and increase the number of rural Ethiopians receiving primary education.

⇒ Component 1

6. Managing Environmental Resources to Enable Transitions to More Sustainable Livelihoods Through Partnership and Land Use Solidarity (MERET-PLUS) is a continuation of ongoing efforts to energize communities in food-insecure rural Ethiopia to take the lead in participatory watershed revitalization and sustained protection. Participants work on their own and communal lands to contribute to increased water availability, improved soil management techniques, greater agriculture productivity, sustainable livelihood improvements and income growth.

⇒ Component 2

7. Children in Local Development – Food for Education (CHILD-FFE) is the continuation of a food-for-education programme in selected primary schools in food-insecure rural areas. In addition to the ongoing FFE programme, since the new CP started in 2007 an added element encourages communities to utilize their local schools for community-centred development activities to enhance health, nutrition and local economic development and to provide non-formal education of community members.
8. The Board approved the CP budget of US\$116 million. Of this, US\$65 million was budgeted for the purchase of 230,000 mt of food for the two components. Planned beneficiaries totalled 1,048,000 per year: 610,000 for the MERET-PLUS component and 438,000 for the CHILD-FFE component. During 2008 the budget levels were increased to US\$166 million to offset substantial increases in food prices and ocean transport costs. This included US\$100 million to cover food costs. In 2007, there was a sharp reduction in regular funds made available for WFP's planned development programmes globally, resulting in a significant drop in cash and in-kind resources available for all CPs, including Ethiopia, which received US\$13.4 million rather than the planned US\$23 million.⁶ The

⁶ The Committee on Food Aid Policies and Programmes (CFA) provided in its 38th session that “no country should receive more than 10 percent of total available development resources”. In 2007, only US\$160 million was available for all WFP development activities globally.



situation regarding CP resources had improved somewhat by June 2009 when donor contributions totalled US\$75 million (45 percent of needs for the entire five-year period).

Evaluation Features

9. The evaluation serves accountability and learning purposes and was conducted between May and August 2009. It involved a preparatory mission, desk review of documentation and elaboration of evaluation methods, with fieldwork between 27 May and 27 June. The evaluation team, comprising three international and two Ethiopian consultants, interviewed WFP, partner and stakeholder staff and representatives, reviewed documents and reports and visited MERET-PLUS and CHILD-FFE sites in five regions: Afar, Amhara, Oromiya, SNNPR and Tigray. The evaluation followed WFP's Evaluation Quality Assurance System.

PERFORMANCE HIGHLIGHTS

Operation Design: Relevance and Appropriateness

10. Both components are logical and appropriate continuations of activities commenced in the 1990s and continued through the two previous CP periods. The sustained focus on addressing major natural and human resource constraints affecting Ethiopia's food-insecure rural poor remains appropriate and highly relevant to the Government's Plan for Accelerated and Sustained Development to End Poverty development strategy and policies. It is also relevant to the United Nations's strategic focus on poverty alleviation, human resource development and reducing food insecurity among the most vulnerable rural poor, as jointly pursued via the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) II.

Outputs and Implementation Processes

11. Through December 2008, 35,365 mt of food had been distributed under the MERET-PLUS activity, and 13,437 mt under CHILD-FFE. These figures represent about half of planned levels for the first two years of the CP.

TABLE 2: PLANNED VS ACTUAL COMMODITY DISTRIBUTION 2007, 2008 (mt)						
	2007 Planned	2007 Actual	2008 Planned	2008 Actual	2007–2008 Actual	2007–2008 % of planned
MERET-PLUS	32 917	16 239	32 916	19 126	35 365	53.7
CHILD-FFE	14 529	6 980	14 148	6 457	13 437	46.9
Total	47 446	23 219	47 064	25 583	48 802	51.6

Source: 2007 and 2008 Standardized Project Reports (SPRs) for the Ethiopia CP



12. The effect of the substantial food shortfalls was immediate and significant. The MERET-PLUS component eventually had to reduce the number of active sites from 607 to approximately 350.⁷ Whereas approximately 610,000⁸ beneficiaries had been planned for 2007 and 2008 in the MERET-PLUS component, the actual number was around 382,000 – or 62.6 percent of target levels. The number of schools in CHILD-FFE was reduced from 1,030 in the first semester of 2007 to 772 by the end of 2008. Table 3 below summarizes the results regarding planned versus actual beneficiaries.

TABLE 3: BENEFICIARIES BY COMPONENT, BY CATEGORY: 2007 AND 2008									
	Planned			Actual			% Actual vs. Planned		
	Men/ boys	Women/ girls	Total	Men/ boys	Women/ girls	Total	Men/ boys	Women/ girls	Total
2007									
MERET-PLUS	298 690	310 884	609 574	186 991	194 624	381 615	62.6	62.6	62.6
Participants in FFW	60 957	60 958	121 915	45 031	31 292	76 323	73.9	51.3	62.6
CHILD-FFE	253 827	183 806	437 633	360 856	292 180	653 036	142.2	159.0	149.2*
Girls' take-home ration	-	67 702	67 702	-	70 781	70 781	-	104.5	104.5
2008									
MERET-PLUS	298 690	310 884	609 574	193 800	186 200	380 000	64.9	59.9	62.3
Participants in FFW	60 957	60 958	121 915	37 204	38 760	76 000	61.1	63.6	62.3
CHILD-FFE	253 827	183 806	437 633	229 346	192 456	421 802	90.4	104.7	96.4
Girls' take-home ration	-	67 702	67 702	-	63 853	63 853	-	94.3	94.3

Source: 2007 and 2008 SPRs for Ethiopia CP

* The high beneficiary number in 2007 resulted from substantial carry-over of food stocks from the previous CP.

13. A few problems need attention. The methods by which beneficiaries are identified and counted needs to be reviewed. Results-based monitoring (RBM) showed the number of total beneficiaries to be nearly at planned targets, even though the food available was less than half of planned figures. In 2007, this was possible because of a large carry-over from the previous CP. In 2008, beneficiary numbers were 96 percent of planned even though food distributed was half that of planned. Schools visited by the team and reports from regional quarterly reviews indicate a serious problem with the delivery of food to many schools. The 2007 SPR shows that food was distributed on 73 percent of schooldays that year. In 2008, according to the subsequent SPR, it was distributed on only 43.5 percent of

⁷ The MERET National Project Support Unit reported in 2008 that there were 607 MERET-PLUS sites, of which 351 were active. The CP proposed support for 500 active MERET-PLUS sites. The CP figure is not used in any programming or monitoring documentation the team received. From an Ethiopian Government perspective the reductions in food available were viewed as a 42 percent reduction in support. Compared to CP numbers the reduction was about 30 percent.

⁸ All beneficiary numbers are rounded to the nearest 1,000.



schooldays. Thus students fed half the time are counted as beneficiaries just as if they had received their food benefits every day. This is misleading and deserves to be reviewed.

14. Late arrival of food at both MERET-PLUS and CHILD-FFE sites affected the achievement of results at planned levels – particularly for MERET-PLUS, where there were reductions in both the number of sites and the number of beneficiaries. In CHILD-FFE, substantially fewer meals were provided than planned. Problems procuring WFP-financed equipment, vehicles and motorbikes curtailed site visits by government field agents. Continuing high turnover of staff adds to the amount and frequency of training required for replacements. Sufficient numbers of appropriately trained field agents are essential to maintain progress. The reality of high turnover must be factored into the design of training programmes. The team concluded that these shortfalls are beginning to slow achievement of capacity development objectives. Strengthened capability in local groups for managing core processes is vital to sustain CP results after WFP support has ended.
15. The Bureau of Finance and Economic Development and the *woreda*⁹ education offices contract local transporters to deliver food from regional WFP depots to school sites. This arrangement has caused problems that have been unresolved for too long and require the attention of more senior managers from WFP and the Ministry of Education.

Results

16. *Effectiveness.* Both CP components have leveraged rather small amounts of food aid and related financial resources into commendable outputs and outcomes – albeit for a somewhat reduced set of beneficiaries. In MERET-PLUS there is clear evidence that ongoing physical asset creation and preservation has resulted in increased water availability, soil productivity and income-earning opportunities among participating households. All of these aspects increase the likelihood of sustained improvements in food security. In CHILD-FFE, increased enrolment rates, improved gender equity in enrolment and reductions in the drop-out rate have all exceeded planned targets in the first two years and have provided stimulus in highly food-insecure rural districts to the efforts of Ethiopia and the United Nations to achieve universal primary education by 2015.
17. In the MERET-PLUS sites covered, 86 percent of households in active sites have reported increased incomes in the first two years of the programme. Half of MERET-PLUS beneficiaries also report reduced food deficits in the two months prior to results-based monitoring (RBM)¹⁰ surveys, at or above target values. These are particularly good results, given that many of these areas have experienced protracted drought conditions. These results would seem to indicate that MERET-PLUS activities may well be helping reduce vulnerability of households to the effects of droughts, at least for a year or two. Additional survey work to confirm this tentative conclusion is warranted.

⁹ A *woreda* is a sub-regional administrative unit.

¹⁰ Target indicators of achievement are identified and information gathering mechanisms are established in a “results-based monitoring” system intended to monitor changes and provide ongoing evidence of progress.



TABLE 4: OUTCOME 1 – INCREASED ABILITY TO MANAGE SHOCKS AND MEET NECESSARY FOOD NEEDS AND DIVERSIFY LIVELIHOODS

	2007 plan	2007 actual	% of plan	2008 plan	2008 actual	% of plan
1.1 Households claiming income increment (% of those surveyed)	70	85	121	75	87	116
1.2 Households claiming reduction in food deficit by at least two months (% of those surveyed)	43	53	123	46	47	102

Item numbers relate to country-level documents.

18. The CHILD-FFE activity continues to support efforts to expand primary education to all children in highly food-insecure districts through the provision of school meals and take-home rations for girls as an incentive for more children to attend school. It has been successful in meeting enrolment, attendance and gender ratio targets. The team was favourably impressed by overall progress in Ethiopia in moving toward the MDG target of universal primary education and by the significant, positive role of CHILD-FFE in that progress. The addition of the CHILD component, and the improvements in the quality of education offered in all schools visited by the team as compared with their state in the previous two mid-term evaluations, are significant achievements.

TABLE 5: OUTCOME 4 – MORE CHILDREN (GIRLS AND BOYS) ENROLLED AND ABLE TO ACTIVELY PARTICIPATE IN SCHOOLS

	2007 plan	2007 actual	% of plan	2008 plan	2008 actual	% of plan
4.1 Number of girls and boys enrolled in WFP-assisted primary schools	437 633	653 036	149	437 633	421 802	96
4.3 Attendance rate: 90% of girls and boys in WFP-assisted schools attending class during school year ¹¹	90% boys 90% girls	91% boys 91.5% girls	101 102	92	98	107
4.4 Drop-out rates of girls and boys from WFP-assisted primary schools reduced	11% boys 9% girls	11% boys 9% girls	100 100	10% boys 9% girls	9% boys 6.5% girls	110 138
4.5 Ratio of girls to boys enrolled in WFP-assisted primary schools	0.77:1	0.89:1	116	0.90:1	0.89:1	98

Item numbers relate to country-level documents.

19. RBM reporting on achievements at output and outcome levels for both MERET-PLUS and CHILD-FFE needs some improvement. In MERET-PLUS the surveys used to monitor progress have changed some of the indicators from the use of actual numbers (e.g. the number of hectares of land reclaimed, total area of soil improvement, or the area of improved irrigation) to percentages of households or communities engaged in particular practices. This is less desirable from an evaluation perspective than surveying actual areas reclaimed or improved. While the figure of 400,000 hectares of area reclaimed since the start of the original MERET-PLUS activity is widely used, it has proved difficult for the team to determine how many hectares have been added to that total in the 2007–2008

¹¹ RBM data for 2008 provided to the team was not disaggregated by gender for this indicator.



period. Another example is in the new CHILD component where the lack of available data has hampered the team in presenting a full picture of progress against targets for some indicators, especially for 2007.

20. *Impact.* Overall, the CP is effective in achieving impact with beneficiaries and within beneficiary groups. In CHILD-FFE, high enrolment and attendance are likely to be influenced by external factors such as changing parental attitudes toward the utility of primary education for their children and their increasing willingness to send their children to school with or without a school meal programme. A study is needed to determine the relative weight of the existence of FFE in a school – compared to other factors – in actually increasing the number of children in attendance. This is likely to vary. The team believes that the weight of FFE in parental decisions is greater in the pastoralist areas of Afar and Somali regions and perhaps less in the highlands.
21. Implementation of the CHILD subcomponent is the major new element in WFP's school feeding programme in Ethiopia during this CP period. It is, in the team's view, not only an excellent concept, but in the schools visited, seemed to be helping in a number of ways to multiply the development impact of primary schools within their community and to energize community involvement in school-related training of non-student community members. Success is highly dependent on the efforts of *woreda* education field staff and adequate budget levels for training and transport to school sites of these field agents. Staff at WFP's sub-regional offices is particularly important in this endeavour. Due to budget constraints, these field officers are required to backstop both MERET-PLUS and CHILD-FFE activities, even though these staff are generally trained in either agriculture or education, rarely both. Therefore, training of WFP field officers in both disciplines is essential.
22. The CHILD-FFE component has had a positive impact on the perceptions of senior education officials regarding the utility and social and economic returns derived from providing a highly nutritious meal at school to all Ethiopian primary schoolchildren, particularly in the more food-insecure, drought-prone areas. The potential for increasing the impact of individual schools on the economic and social development of their surrounding communities is high and the CHILD effort is well on its way to realizing that potential.
23. MERET-PLUS has had a significant demonstration effect on watershed rehabilitation efforts throughout Ethiopia. As a prototype for sustainable land management and participatory natural resource management programmes, MERET-PLUS has introduced the basic concepts of sustainable land management in core agricultural activities in ways that place farmer communities at the heart of these activities. Households have continued to use the land management practices learned within MERET-PLUS after active participation in food-for-work (FFW) activities because they have understood the importance of continuing to protect watershed improvements to their future livelihoods. In addition, households have expanded the sustainable livelihood management practices from communal lands to their own farms and to areas outside FFW-supported sites, using their own resources.
24. MERET-PLUS has had a major impact on government policy in the natural resources and land management areas. The MERET-PLUS approach, focused on participatory, community-based organizing principles and high standards for assets created, is the model copied and adapted for the Government's Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP), developed as a response to a 20-year history in Ethiopia of annual appeals to food aid donors for emergency food assistance; the World Bank-assisted Sustainable Land Management programme in the higher-potential agricultural areas; and the Government's



Strategic Investment Framework for Sustainable Land Management, which is still under development.¹²

25. *Sustainability.* In the case of MERET-PLUS, the timeline is much longer than the 30 months under review and indications of sustainability are more apparent. There is considerable evidence to suggest that positive results attained in earlier WFP-supported natural resource management efforts using FFW as an incentive have been sustained for periods in excess of 10 or more years beyond the ending of FFW support. Many of these former sites remain heavily vegetated, have ground and surface water obviously available for longer periods of time than adjacent areas which did experience these improvements, and are clearly being maintained by resident households and communities even though FFW ended many years earlier. There is pressing need to gather and share evidence that supports this hypothesis.
26. Sustainability in the CHILD-FFE programme derives from the enduring character of the education imparted to students enabled to attend school by availability of WFP-provided school meals and take-home rations. The achievement of universal primary education in Ethiopia seems assured within the next few years, given present trends and the priority established for that objective by the Government and all donors. The role of WFP in making that happen in selected food-insecure districts is a major contribution to that objective, which will be sustained.

Crosscutting Issues

27. *Gender.* Efforts in both the MERET-PLUS and CHILD-FFE components to promote gender issues were significant, serious and productive. In the MERET-PLUS component, one half of all watershed committee members are women. In consideration for eligibility for receiving FFW assignments, women-headed households are given priority. Many (although not nearly half) of development agents are women.
28. In the CHILD-FFE programme, many FFE schools are at gender parity for students and, in several, girls now outnumber boys. Increasingly schools are at or close to gender parity among teachers. Where there were about 15,000 women teachers in Ethiopia in 1991, today there are 70,000.
29. *HIV and AIDS.* HIV/AIDS is a cross-cutting issue within the MERET-PLUS programme. WFP field monitors and community leaders, including members of the MERET-PLUS planning committees in some cases, are engaged in “community conversations”¹³ about HIV/AIDS, funded by the United Nations Development Programme. In 2008, only 6 percent of MERET-PLUS sites reported that local communities were actively enforcing recommended positive behavioural changes, in spite of the high levels of participation in the “community conversations” recorded. This reflects the difficulty in actually promoting changed behaviour in some strongly traditional rural districts. It is essential that this effort be strengthened in order to succeed.
30. In all of the CHILD schools visited, visible indicators of effectiveness included HIV/AIDS education in the form of clubs, early testing and active implementation of

¹² The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, Sustainable Land Management Secretariat. 2008. Ethiopian Strategic Investment Framework for Sustainable Land Management. Addis Ababa. (August)

¹³ A method that engages communities in discussions leading to better understanding of HIV and AIDS and their impact on the community, generating community resolve and action to confront the causes.



activities leading towards prevention of HIV infection such as community discussion forums, home visits and labour donations.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Overall Assessment

31. The overall assessment of the CP is that it is well-targeted on issues of major significance for Ethiopian development, food security improvement and spreading of primary education, but the food available has been only about half of targets. Hundreds of watersheds have been cut from the planned programme in many of the most food-insecure areas of Ethiopia. This may lead to increases in the numbers of households requiring food transfers.
32. The main conclusion related to CHILD-FFE is that it should stay the course. There has been considerable improvement in the learning environment in FFE schools and in attitudes of parents and of communities toward those schools compared to the findings of the two previous mid-term evaluations. The CHILD element is a major reason for that.

Issues for the Future

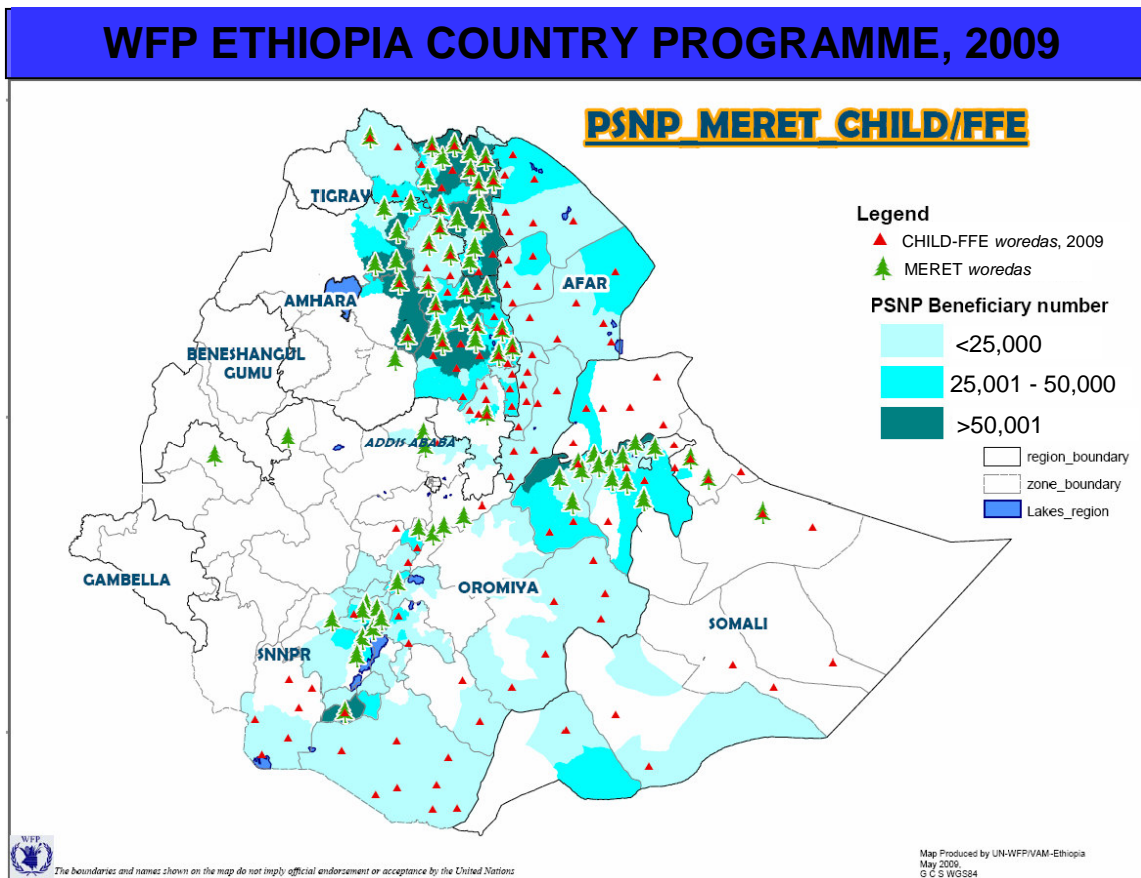
33. With regard to the future of both elements of the CP, the team concludes they should continue but with modifications. MERET-PLUS should be continued, but its mandate (not its methodology) should be changed. It should remain separate from PSNP and focused on developing *model* participatory, community-based watershed rehabilitation and sustainable land maintenance sites in all livelihood zones in food-insecure areas of the country. All MERET-PLUS sites in the next CP period should be designed to demonstrate, in each of these livelihood zones, the most effective approaches for achieving sustainable community-based improvements in land and water rehabilitation in ways generating widespread improvements in sustainable livelihoods.
34. The team urges that consideration be given in the next CP for co-locating CHILD-FFE schools and the new MERET-PLUS sites in forming joint model sites in all livelihood zones. CHILD-FFE schools in these partnered sites would also become “model” schools. As both MERET-PLUS and CHILD focus on the development of community-based governance and community-directed setting of local priorities, the synergy thus created would almost certainly reinforce goal achievements in both activities.

Recommendations

- 1) The way in which beneficiaries are defined in the CHILD-FFE component needs revision. The present definition adversely affects analysis of costs versus benefits, and of nutritional and educational benefits and the impact of school meals on parents’ willingness to send their children to school.
- 2) Headquarters should commission an external study of the sustainability of WFP’s watershed rehabilitation approach in Ethiopia. Evidence exists suggesting WFP efforts in MERET-PLUS and preceding activities have achieved notable, sustained successes; authentication is needed.



- 3) Senior country office and government staff must intensify efforts to resolve long-standing implementation problems related to: i) delivery of food; ii) procurement by *woreda* partners of goods needed by implementation staff; and iii) the processing of quarterly advances by WFP to government implementing partners.
- 4) For the next CP period, redesign MERET-PLUS as a “model site” participatory, community-based, watershed rehabilitation and livelihood enhancement programme in all livelihood zones in each of Ethiopia’s regions.
- 5) CHILD-FFE should remain on its present course for the remainder of the 2007–2011 CP. When designing the next CP period consideration should be given to adding a focus on schools in the model watershed sites where MERET-PLUS livelihood zone activities are to be implemented. Demonstrable synergy between CHILD and MERET-PLUS should be a strategic objective.
- 6) A study is recommended to determine the relative importance of the availability of FFE school meals in household decision-making regarding the sending of children of primary school age to school in food-insecure districts in Ethiopia.
- 7) RBM data collection and retention in a viable database for CHILD-FFE and MERET-PLUS need improvement to increase its usefulness to management.
- 8) The skills of individual WFP field monitors in sub-offices must be upgraded to enable them to monitor and report on both MERET-PLUS and CHILD-FFE activities.
- 9) Ongoing training of Bureau and *woreda*-level agriculture and education field staff must be given higher priority in light of extremely high turnover of staff and their central importance in achieving desired outcome levels.
- 10) There is need for more attention to the issue of food storage and meal preparation at schools.
- 11) The country office and Ethiopian government officials must make improvements as soon as possible in how Bureaux of Education tender for transport of food to schools.
- 12) The Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping Unit should provide more support to the CP including geographical information system maps which are *woreda*- or site-specific (where possible) and which can be manipulated to show a range of livelihood, geographic, climate and other socio-economic data superimposed over MERET-PLUS and CHILD-FFE sites identified by a global positioning system.
- 13) In the design of the next phase of the PSNP, linking WFP-supported school feeding with post-2011 PSNP activity should be strongly considered.



The designations employed and the presentation of material in this publication do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the World Food Programme (WFP) concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or of its frontiers or boundaries.

ACRONYMS USED IN THE DOCUMENT

CHILD-FFE	Children in Local Development – Food for Education
CP	country programme
FEWS NET	Famine Early Warning Systems Network
FFE	food for education
FFW	food for work
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MERET-PLUS	Managing Environmental Resources to Enable Transitions to More Sustainable Livelihoods Through Partnership and Land Use Solidarity
NGO	non-government organization
RBM	results-based monitoring
PSNP	Productive Safety Net Programme
SNNPR	Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Region
SPR	Standardized Project Report
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework