

PSNP-HABP Final Report, 2014

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Introduction

This document summarizes material found in four documents prepared as part of the 2014 evaluation of the impact of Ethiopia's Productive Safety Net Programme, the *Performance* reports which focus primarily on operational aspects and the *Outcomes* reports that examine impact. Performance and Outcome reports were prepared separately for the Highlands and Lowlands. Regions covered in the Highlands reports are Tigray, Amhara, Oromia, and SNNPR as well as localities in Amhara where beneficiaries had previously received a High Value Food Basket (HVFB) as part of USAID's support to the PSNP. Regions covered in Lowlands reports are a random sample of woredas in Afar and a selected sample of woredas in Somali.

This document is structured around specific research questions posed as part of the Terms of Reference for this work with one or at most two pages devoted to each. For each research question, we provide a brief summary of results followed by a commentary that provides further details and contextual information. Each summary is accompanied by a table indicating where (report, chapter) further information can be found and the source of the information used in obtaining these findings. In a small number of cases, we could obtain only limited information on a particular question.

It is important to recognize that the results are based on quantitative and qualitative information collected between June 2014 and February 2015. Changes and improvements to the implementation of the PSNP and HAP that occurred after those dates are not reflected in our findings.

RQ1: Has PSNP improved food security? Are there differences in food security status across the Regions?

Summary

Food security has improved in all Highland regions. Among households receiving Public Works payments, the PSNP accounts for approximately 80 percent of this improvement. In the Lowlands, there has been some improvement in food security but this is woreda-specific. The poor targeting of the PSNP in the Lowlands (see RQ3) limits its impact on food security outcomes.

Commentary

Highlands

- Food security improved significantly in PSNP localities, with nearly all this change occurring since 2010. The average PSNP beneficiary household in our sample reported a food gap of about three months between 2006 and 2010. In 2012 this has dropped to 2.04 months and to 1.75 months in 2014.
- The severity of food insecurity has dramatically declined. In 2006, 26 percent of PSNP beneficiaries reported food gaps of five months or more. In 2014, this had fallen to eight percent.
- Food security has improved in all regions. In Tigray and Oromia, the food gap experienced by PSNP beneficiaries has more than halved since 2006.
- Across all regions and years, a 100 birr increase in the received payments through Public Works, leads to a 0.2 month improvement in food security. The average real value of all Public Works payments received by the households in 2014 is 549 birr and this improves food security by just over month. For PSNP households, the food gap fell from 3.09 months in 2006 to 1.75 months in 2014. The PSNP Public Works transfers have an effect size equivalent to 80 percent of this improvement.
- Diet quality has improved. In 2006, the average household in our sample consumed from 3.3 food groups, by 2014 the figure is 4.0. This corresponds to a 21 percent increase in household dietary diversity over the 9-year period.
- Across all regions and years, a 100 birr increase in Public Works payments leads to a 0.13 food group increase in household dietary diversity. Public Works payments received by the average PSNP beneficiary, 549 birr, increased dietary diversity by 0.7 food groups.
- The continued movement of households in and out of Direct Support has meant that we can no longer generate a credible counterfactual or comparison group. This limits our ability to state that Direct Support payments have caused changes in food security status. That said, we note that in 2006, the average Direct Support beneficiary had a food gap of 3.80 months. By 2014, this had fallen to 1.71 months. This improvement is

seen in all regions. While we cannot ascribe impact, we do note that much of the change comes after 2010 when Direct Support payments increased substantially.

Lowlands

- In Afar, the food gap has fallen by one month since 2010, from 2.37 months in 2010 to 2.03 months in 2012 and to 1.40 months in 2014. In Somali, the food gap has fallen by 1.16 months since 2010 but this fall is concentrated in the period 2010-2012, from 2.56 months in 2010 to 1.23 months in 2012 and then rising slightly to 1.40 months in 2014.
- These aggregate figures mask considerable variation in trends within *woredas*. In Afar, there are three *woredas* where food security was relatively good in 2010 and where there have been small improvements since (Bure Mudayitu, Semurobia Gelale and Elidar). There are four *woredas* where initially there were significant food security concerns with mean food gaps of 2.50 months or higher but where food security has improved considerably (Teru, Kori, Ewa and Dubti). Finally, there are three *woredas* where food security was poor in 2010 and where change has been marginal or where the food gap has increased (Dalol, Erebti and Megale).
- In Somali, the pattern is slightly different. Five out of six *woredas* surveyed in 2010, 2012 and 2014 show an improvement in food security but in three of these (Gursu, Erer and Dolo Odo) all of this improvement comes between 2010 and 2012. Shinile and Udet record improvements both between 2010 and 2012 and between 2012 and 2014. In Afdem, the food gap fell markedly between 2010 and 2012 only to grow larger again in 2014.
- In both Afar and Somali, there have been increases in the percentage of households reporting no food gap. In Afar, this has risen from 34 percent in 2010 to 56 percent in 2014. In Somali, this rose from 23 percent in 2010 to 59 percent in 2014. However, pockets of severe food insecurity remain in Afar. In 2010, 24 percent – a quarter of our sample – reported a food gap of four months or more. By 2014, this had only fallen to 14 percent.
- Severe food insecurity in the six Somali *woredas* interviewed in 2010, 2012 and 2014 has fallen dramatically, from 27 percent in 2010 to six percent in 2014.
- Across our full sample, we find no evidence that the PSNP improves food security in Afar or Somali.
- When we restrict our sample to the poorest 50 percent of households in Somali only (i.e., households with livestock holdings below the median), we find that participation in PSNP public works reduces the food gap by 0.70 months. This is a large impact given that, in 2012, the mean food gap was 1.23 months.

Source for findings	Chapter	Quantitative data source		Qualitative data source	
Highlands, performance report		Household survey	✓	Household case study	
Highlands, outcomes report	4, 8	Community survey		Focus Group Discussion	
Lowlands, performance report		Woreda quant survey		Key informant interview	
Lowlands, outcomes report	3, 4				

RQ2: Has PSNP protected household assets?

Summary

In the Highlands, there is clear evidence that the PSNP has protected assets and, in the case of poor households, led to an increase in livestock holdings. We have no strong evidence that it has protected assets in the Lowlands largely because of poor targeting (see RQ3).

Commentary

Highlands

- PSNP participants have markedly reduced their use of distress asset sales. In 2010, 54 percent of Public Works households reported making a distress sale of assets in order to meet food needs and 26 percent did so in order to obtain cash for non-food emergency cash needs. By 2014, these percentages had fallen to 25 and 13 percent respectively.
- Livestock holdings are higher in 2014 than they were in 2006, but lower than in 2010. However, this aggregate pattern masks two important trends: (1) Livestock holdings by the poorest PSNP Public Works households have risen markedly, from 0.5TLU in 2006 to 1.65 TLU in 2014; and (2) The real value of livestock holdings has increased, suggesting that households are investing in improved livestock quality.
- PSNP Public Works households have been investing in housing, with the percentage of dwellings with improved (metal roofs) tripling between 2006 and 2014, from eight to 24 percent.
- A 100 birr increase in PW payments increases the probability of improving housing stock by 4.4 percentage points. The impact is statistically significant.
- Public Works transfers increase livestock assets by 0.13 TLU for the poorest 20 percent households. There is no impact on wealthier PSNP households.

Lowlands

- In Somali, on average livestock holdings have remained unchanged. Mean TLUs in the six *woredas* appearing in all three survey rounds were 8.8 in 2010 and 9.1 in 2014.
- In Afar, there is evidence of declining herd sizes with TLU falling from 14.5 in 2010 to 10.8 in 2014. However, closer inspection of the data shows that in each round at least part of this is due to the presence, or absence, of a few households with enormously large households, in excess of 40 animals.
- Participation in the Public Works component of the PSNP has no significant impact on livestock holdings in either Afar or Somali.

Source for findings	Chapter	Quantitative data source		Qualitative data source	
Highlands, performance report		Household survey	✓	Household case study	
Highlands, outcomes report	6	Community survey		Focus Group Discussion	
Lowlands, performance report		Woreda quant survey		Key informant interview	
Lowlands, outcomes report	3, 4				

RQ3: Is the PSNP targeted to the right people?

Summary

In the Highlands, the PSNP is well targeted. Beneficiaries are poorer and more food insecure than non-beneficiaries. The PSNP remains poorly targeted in Afar and Somali. In both Afar and Somali, rich households have high levels of PSNP participation while a significant proportion of the poorest households are excluded

Commentary

- In the Highlands, targeting processes closely follow the design described in the Programme Implementation Manual.
- In the Highlands, targeting improved between 2012 and 2014. Predicted probabilities of Direct Support participation for wealthier households are close to zero everywhere. The probability of participation in Public Works by the richest quintile fell in Tigray, Amhara, Amhara-HVFB and SNNP; in fact, in these regions, predicted participation falls pretty close to zero everywhere.
- Participation in Direct Support rises with age of household head, is generally higher when the household is headed by an elderly widow while participation in Public Works employment rises when there are able-bodied adults resident in the household.
- While *Kebele* FSTFs continue to operate in all surveyed localities, record keeping has deteriorated, and in some localities this deterioration is significant. Especially troubling is the decline in the availability of PSNP participant lists. Between 2006 and 2014, the percentage of communities that could show these lists to our enumerators fell from 94 to 69 percent in Tigray, 92 to 71 percent in Amhara, and 72 to 62 percent in SNNP. Household understanding of the role of the KFSTF is also declining.
- Young people have a good understanding of the PSNP. However, they have not been involved in targeting decisions. Newly married young people find it difficult to gain access to the PSNP.
- The structures needed for targeting the PSNP in the Lowlands are now widespread. For the first time since we began our evaluation work in the lowlands, all *woredas* have a KFSTF. The composition of these KFSTFs continues to improve with notable increases in the representation of women and youth. Many KFSTF report keeping records and participants. However, in majority of cases these were not seen.
- At the household level, there is increased awareness of CFSTF and their roles. However, many households are still unable to describe their activities.
- After 2012, there were efforts to improve training of staff (especially in Somali). However, while there were measurable efforts to improve the capacity of *woreda* staff, this did not extend to the *kebele* level where implementation occurs.

- However, there appears to have been little effort to re-target. While this had the arguably positive effect on ensuring continuity in programme participation, it meant that there was little scope for correcting the poor targeting observed in 2012.
- A consequence of the limited extent of re-targeting is that households who have only recently moved to a given location are much less likely than longer-term residents to receive PSNP benefits. Since these new households tend to be poorer, this is one reason why coverage of the PSNP among poor households is relatively low.
- Traditional leaders and clan structures retain considerable influence on how targeting takes place. Further, especially in Afar, resistance to the idea of targeting households is common; indeed, targeting is seen as unfair and as a likely source of community tension. Consequently, targeting takes place in an environment where those with influence do not necessarily have an understanding of who the PSNP is intended to serve and where the notion of selecting some households, but not others, is seen as unfair, even though those selected might be poor.
- It is possible that poor targeting is tolerated because it is assumed, following widely stated norms, that beneficiaries share their transfers with non-beneficiaries. While there are examples where this does occur, they are the exceptions not the rule. In 2014, only two percent of PSNP transfers were shared with non-beneficiaries.

Source for findings	Chapter	Quantitative data source		Qualitative data source	
Highlands, performance report	4	Household survey	✓	Household case study	✓
Highlands, outcomes report		Community survey	✓	Focus Group Discussion	✓
Lowlands, performance report	4	Woreda quant survey	✓	Key informant interview	✓
Lowlands, outcomes report					

RQ4: How are food security outcomes mediated by receipt of different combinations of food and cash?

Summary

Since 2006, PSNP food payments have differed from cash payments in multiple ways: frequency of payment; timing of payment; size and value. This means that when we compare cash and food payments, we are not simply comparing two transfer modalities. Additionally, the choice of payment mode is not made randomly. If food(cash) payments go to localities for reasons that we cannot observe or account for, our impact estimates will be biased because they confound the impact of the modality with the choice or reasons underpinning their allocation.

Given that we do not have a credible means of identifying impact, we do not attempt to estimate the separate impact of food payments and cash payments on food security or other outcomes.

Commentary

- We note that starting in 2006, for each survey round, households that received cash payments were less food secure than households that received food payments. We cannot ascribe the initial (2006) difference to the receipt of food or cash as the choice to distribute food rather than cash could have reflected a number of factors. This gap rises in 2008, possibly because that of the fact that the real value of the Public Works wages had plummeted. From 2010 onwards, the food gap falls for households receiving both food and cash and the magnitude of this change is similar, 1.29 months for households receiving cash and 1.21 months for households receiving food.

Source for findings	Chapter	Quantitative data source		Qualitative data source	
Highlands, performance report		Household survey	✓	Household case study	
Highlands, outcomes report	9	Community survey		Focus Group Discussion	
Lowlands, performance report		Woreda quant survey		Key informant interview	
Lowlands, outcomes report					

RQ5: What impact has the PSNP had on the poverty levels of beneficiaries as measured by consumption of food and non-food goods?

Summary

The PSNP has increased consumption of food and non-food goods in the Highlands.¹

Commentary

- In real terms, household consumption by PSNP Public Works has nearly doubled, rising from 309 birr per person per month in 2006 to 608 birr per person per month in 2014. This increase occurs in all regions.
- Every 100 birr in Public Works payments leads to a 14.4 per cent increase in monthly per capita expenditures. This impact is statistically significant.
- Every 100 birr in Public Works payments leads to a 15.9 per cent increase in monthly per capita food expenditures. This impact is statistically significant.

Source for findings	Chapter	Quantitative data source		Qualitative data source	
Highlands, performance report		Household survey	✓	Household case study	
Highlands, outcomes report	5	Community survey		Focus Group Discussion	
Lowlands, performance report		Woreda quant survey		Key informant interview	
Lowlands, outcomes report					

¹ Data for this research question was not collected in the Lowlands.

RQ6: Are Public Works and Direct Support payments timely and predictable? Do clients receive their complete entitlement?

Summary

There continue to be improvements in the timeliness and completeness of payments in the Highlands. Timeliness has improved in the Lowlands but completeness remains a concern. Predictability is problematic everywhere.

Commentary

Completeness

- Between Tir and Ginbot, 2014, the average payment to a household doing Public Works in the Highlands was 1,578 birr. This is nearly triple the payment levels made in 2010 and approximately 10 percent higher than payments in the same period in 2012. Further, excluding Amhara-HVFB (where payments are higher because of the inclusion of pulses and oils in the food basket), there is considerably less regional variation in payments than has been seen in previous evaluations. High levels of payments were also observed in 2013, suggesting that this is a sustained improvement in programme performance.
- The improvement in the level of Direct Support payments observed in 2012 has been sustained.
- Apart from Amhara-HVFB, on average, Public Works households with between three and five members receive payments equivalent to at least 90 percent of their entitlement. Larger households typically receive less.
- We calculate the real value of the PSNP wage rate in the Highlands for 2006, 2008, 2010, 2012 and 2014, using information on local cereal prices to deflate the nominal wage. This shows that the wage fell dramatically during the food price spike of 2008. Increases in the nominal PSNP wage have partially redressed this but in 2014, the purchasing power of the Public Works wage rate remains below its 2006 level.
- In the Lowlands, clients do not receive their complete entitlement. On average, Public Works beneficiaries receive 52.4 percent of their entitlement in Afar and 73.5 percent in Somali. In Afar households of size 2, 3 and 6 receive 79, 55 and 43 percent of their entitlement, respectively. In Somali, households of the same size receive 96, 90 and 66 percent of their entitlements, respectively.
- There are a number of reasons why entitlements are not complete. In some woredas, PSNP payment rates are at variance with official guidelines. In Dollo Ado (Somali), officials indicated that payment was 15 kg of wheat per month, but only 0.5 kg per day. Officials in Ewa (Afar) explained that the payment amount is agreed with the community with smaller families getting 50 KG per month per household and the largest households receiving 150 KG per month. While these deviations are not the norm, they are noteworthy.

Timeliness

- In the Highlands, 77 percent of payments were made in the first six months of 2013; this is the same percentage observed in 2011. Regional variations in this metric have narrowed with the previously poorest performing region, Tigray, increasing the percent of transfers made in the first six months from 58 to 68 percent.
- The sustained improvement in the time taken to process payments may well have improved the timeliness and predictability of payments compared to 2010 and earlier. The dramatic improvement in the time taken to process cash payments observed in 2012 has been largely sustained. In 2014, it took an average of 24.5 days to process payments. On average, 31 days elapse between receiving the first attendance sheet and making the final food payment.
- There has been an increase in the frequency of payments and by reductions in paying in arrears in the Highlands. The increased frequency of payments is especially noticeable for Direct Support beneficiaries. For example, only 4.6 percent of Direct Support recipients in Amhara received five payments in the first five months of 2010; in 2014, the comparable figure was 44.8 percent.
- In Afar, on average it takes 56 days from receipt of the first attendance sheet to the last payment, though there is considerable variation around this average. In Somali, it takes an average of 21.5 days to process payments, a figure not that different from what we find in the Highlands. In the previous (2012) assessment of the operations of the PSNP in Afar and Somali, it was not possible to examine many of the issues considered in this chapter. *Woredas* were simply not able to answer these type of questions. The fact that much richer information was available for this assessment is an indication of considerable improvement in PSNP operations.

Predictability

- In the Highlands, only 36 percent of beneficiaries state that they can plan ahead because they are confident that they know when they will be paid. With the exception of SNNP, predictability of payments remains problematic everywhere. Multiple sources of information in the household quantitative survey as well as responses from the qualitative fieldwork all make this point. This problem has been noted in both this and in previous reports suggesting that little progress has been made in rectifying this. Beneficiaries resort to an assortment of coping strategies, including borrowing, asset sales and reduced food consumption. This suggests that some of the broader objectives of the PSNP – such as reductions in distress asset sales – are being undermined by relatively poor payment predictability.
- Payments are not predictable – a view that emerges from both the quantitative and qualitative data. A sizeable majority of respondent - 67 percent in Afar and 61 percent in Somali do not feel that they can plan ahead because they know when they will be paid. Unpredictability in payments imposes welfare costs on beneficiaries. The most common coping strategy is to sell livestock.

Source for findings	Chapter	Quantitative data source		Qualitative data source	
Highlands, performance report	6, 7	Household survey	✓	Household case study	
Highlands, outcomes report		Community survey		Focus Group Discussion	✓
Lowlands, performance report	5, 6	Woreda quant survey	✓	Key informant interview	✓
Lowlands, outcomes report					

RQ7: Are pregnant female participants moved from Public Works to Direct Support, as per the PIM?

Summary

The principle that pregnant female participants should be moved from Public Works to Direct Support is universally understood and widely practiced. However, women are moved later in pregnancy and return to work earlier than the dates set out in the PIM.

Commentary

- The PIM states PSNP participating pregnant women should be switched to Direct Support after the fourth month of their pregnancy and should remain on Direct Support until 10 months after delivery.
- Recognition that pregnant female participants should be moved from Public Works to Direct Support is universal.
- While this generally occurs around the sixth month of pregnancy in the Highlands, there is variation in this across and within regions with women moved before the sixth month of pregnancy in approximately 24 percent of surveyed communities.
- In the Lowlands, pregnant female participants are moved from Public Works to Direct Support around the fifth month of pregnancy in Somali and the sixth month in Afar.
- In the Highlands, on average, women are moved back seven months after giving birth. However, there is regional variation in this with women moved back sooner (within six months of giving birth) in Oromia and SNNP and later (10 months or more) in Tigray, Amhara and Amhara-HVFB.
- In Afar and Somali, women generally return to work around the sixth month after giving birth.

Source for findings	Chapter	Quantitative data source		Qualitative data source	
Highlands, performance report	4	Household survey		Household case study	✓
Highlands, outcomes report		Community survey	✓	Focus Group Discussion	✓
Lowlands, performance report	4	Woreda quant survey		Key informant interview	
Lowlands, outcomes report					

RQ8: Are transfers received at a place no more than three hours from home?

Summary

In the Highlands, 84 percent of PSNP beneficiaries reported that they could reach their payment site in less than three hours. In the Lowlands, 90 percent of PSNP beneficiaries in Somali reached the payment site in less than three hours; in Afar, this figure was 62 percent.

Commentary

- In the Highlands, regional variations in travel time have been reduced most notably in Amhara where the percent of beneficiaries travelling for more than three hours fell from 26 to 15 percent. Only in Amhara-HVFB do more than 20 percent of beneficiaries report travelling more than three hours.
- In Somali, only 10 percent of households report spending more than three hours to get to the payment site and nearly all of these are found in Afdem and Aysha.
- More than 38 percent of Afar beneficiaries had to travel more than three hours. However, this masks considerable heterogeneity across *woredas*. The median travel times for Bure Mudayitu and Megale exceeded four hours and half of the beneficiaries in Erebti had to travel more than three hours.

Source for findings	Chapter	Quantitative data source		Qualitative data source	
Highlands, performance report	7	Household survey	✓	Household case study	
Highlands, outcomes report		Community survey		Focus Group Discussion	
Lowlands, performance report	6	Woreda quant survey		Key informant interview	
Lowlands, outcomes report					

RQ9: Do households participate in the PSNP for at least three consecutive years?

Summary

On a rolling basis, the vast majority of PSNP households in the Highlands, 93 percent, have participated for at least three consecutive years. In the Lowlands, the majority of current beneficiaries (71 percent) have received PSNP benefits for three consecutive years.

Source for findings	Chapter	Quantitative data source		Qualitative data source	
Highlands, performance report	4	Household survey	✓	Household case study	
Highlands, outcomes report		Community survey		Focus Group Discussion	
Lowlands, performance report	4	Woreda quant survey		Key informant interview	
Lowlands, outcomes report					

RQ10: Does the Risk Financing Mechanism protect people against larger than ‘localized’ shocks?

Summary

In both the Highlands and Lowlands, there is considerable confusion about how the Risk Financing Mechanism (RFM) is supposed to work. This limits the ability of the RFM to protect households against larger than localized shocks.

Commentary

- Risk Financing funds were used in 2014 in Tigray, Amhara and Oromia. Agricultural production failures resulting from drought remained the principal rationale for requests for risk finance.
- As was the case in 2012, delay in releasing funds was identified as a significant problem by regional and *woreda* FSTF and Early Warning officials. This limits the effectiveness of the RFM in protecting households against larger than ‘localized’ shocks.
- In the Lowlands, the delay or late release of risk finance resources and the limited knowledge of the use of such funds by officials were widespread problems observed in our qualitative work. Officials in seven out of 10 *woredas* were not familiar with the risk financing mechanism and officials in two others had only limited knowledge.
- Regional FSTF officials in Afar and Somali stated that the RFM did not adequately protect households from depleting assets. This is due to the fact that the resource is released from the federal system after people have already disposed of their assets, typically livestock. In Afar, risk financing funds were released to some *woredas* without the prior knowledge of regional officials.

Source for findings	Chapter	Quantitative data source		Qualitative data source	
Highlands, performance report	3	Household survey		Household case study	
Highlands, outcomes report		Community survey		Focus Group Discussion	✓
Lowlands, performance report	3	Woreda quant survey		Key informant interview	✓
Lowlands, outcomes report					

RQ11: How are contingency budgets used, especially in relation to the Kebele Appeals system?

Summary

Understanding and use of contingency budgets has improved in the Highlands. However, use of regional contingency funds is less well understood in the Lowlands, especially in Afar.

Commentary

- Data collected as part of the *woreda* quantitative survey indicated that virtually all Highland *woredas* (87/89) had a contingency fund. There has been an increase in the number of *woredas* reporting that this fund equaled 20 percent of the PSNP budget, rising from 22/86 in 2012 to 44/85 in 2014. The release of these funds to *woredas* did not change between 2012 and 2014 with 68 percent receiving these funds by Yekatit.
- Across all Highland *woredas*, 33 percent report using these resources to respond to appeals, 62 percent use them to deal with localized droughts within the *woreda*, and 54 percent use them for non-drought shocks. There is a noteworthy increase in the use of these funds to respond to appeals in all regions except for Tigray (where this use drops).
- Qualitative interviews with officials at the regional and *woreda* levels revealed a number of challenges in implementing contingency budgets. These include:
 - Poor quality contingency plans resulting from limited technical capacity and staff at the *woreda* level to undertake high-quality analysis of early warning data and preparation of scenario-based contingency plans.
 - Challenges arising from poor quality, timeliness and appropriateness of early warning information.
 - Delays in transferring of contingency budget to the regions.
- Our qualitative work in the Lowlands indicates that there is a lack of understanding on the use of regional contingency funds to address appeals cases, especially in Afar. In Afar, officials in three *woredas* stated that regional funds were requested to increase the caseload; in three others regional funds were used to extend the period during which PSNP clients received transfers. In Somali, officials in three out of four *woredas* indicated that regional contingency funds were used to increase the caseload.
- In Afar, most *woredas* utilize the contingency budget to respond to localized shocks (about 60%). About 12.5 percent of *woredas* use the budget for appeals.
- In Somali, half of the *woredas* utilize the contingency budget to respond to appeals and about 44 percent use it to respond to localized shocks.

Source for findings	Chapter	Quantitative data source		Qualitative data source	
Highlands, performance report	3	Household survey		Household case study	
Highlands, outcomes report		Community survey		Focus Group Discussion	✓
Lowlands, performance report	3	Woreda quant survey		Key informant interview	✓
Lowlands, outcomes report					

RQ12: Have transfers and PW activities stimulated markets? If so, how?

Summary

Results for this topic are based solely on qualitative fieldwork, specifically key informant interviews with traders and Development Agents and focus group discussions with PSNP beneficiaries. Transfers are seen to have transitory effects on prices. Improvements in the road network are seen to have stimulated market activity.

Commentary

- While many do not feel that PSNP transfers have an impact on local markets, on balance, the majority report changes they believe can be attributed to PSNP transfers. The effect varies depending on whether the transfer is given in cash or food; it is also determined by, at least anecdotally, the level of competition within the market place and the extent traders are able to obtain additional supplies to meet increased demand created. Around the time of the PSNP transfer, the demand for goods and services tend to increase. Those who reported market changes in response to a cash payment all stated that the transfer had an inflationary effect on the market prices, for a variety of goods and services. Food transfers appear to be less common, but when they do occur, they tend to reduce or stabilize food prices. However, market disturbances around the time of a PSNP transfer appear to be transitory, with prices reverting to normal within a short period of time. There are also reports that HABP's livestock fattening initiatives have increased demand for livestock by attracting traders.
- PSNP public works are perceived to have stimulated markets in the Highlands. Work to improve the road network is frequently cited as the greatest contribution of PSNP public works. Newly-built feeder roads have helped facilitate trade, enabling communities to transport produce to market, and have encouraged traders to travel further off the beaten track to deal directly with producers. They have also helped farmers gain access to agricultural inputs required to boost production. However, some have questioned the quality of the roads constructed by PSNP public works, and the long-term sustainability of the network.
- In recent years trade in lowland areas has reportedly increased. Traders observe more activity within their local markets, including increase trader numbers, more competition, and consumers demanding more variety. The majority of traders have altered their trading practice to reflect these market changes.
- There were suggestions that PSNP transfers increase livestock prices in the Lowlands. During the transfer period fewer livestock are brought to market for two primary reasons: 1) increased food availability means that livestock owners are less likely to need to sell their animals to meet transitory need, and can thus are better able to sell livestock at time of their own choosing, when prices are more favourable; 2) PSNP beneficiaries have less need to travel to market when food is available, meaning fewer people, and hence fewer animals, are present during market days.

- Most lowland traders do not alter stock levels in anticipation of a food disbursement. In some places uncertainty surrounding the timing of disbursement, makes it difficult to plan. Furthermore, high temperatures in lowland areas mean that traders are unable to hold perishable stock for long periods of time.

Source for findings	Chapter	Quantitative data source		Qualitative data source	
Highlands, performance report	11	Household survey		Household case study	
Highlands, outcomes report		Community survey		Focus Group Discussion	✓
Lowlands, performance report	8	Woreda quant survey		Key informant interview	✓
Lowlands, outcomes report					

RQ13: Has the HABP improved food security? Are there differences in food security status of those PSNP clients supported by the HABP vs. non-HABP clients?

RQ14: Has the HABP helped recipients build or diversify assets? If so, how far?

Summary

Only 3.9 percent of all households report preparing a business plan that has been shown to a Development Agent and only 12 percent of Public Works participants have borrowed money from a RuSACCO, MFI, or VLS. There are simply too few HABP participants to be able to estimate the impact of the HABP on food security (RQ13), agricultural production or the level or diversity of assets (RQ14).

It should be noted that certain components of the HABP have seen significant roll-out, most notably the widespread expansion of RuSACCOs. Particularly in Tigray and Amhara, a significant fraction of households now have access to credit. Further, as documented in focus group discussions, it is possible to find successful examples of HABP implementation. There are just not enough of these to support a quantitative impact evaluation.

Two constraining factors are limited HABP capacity building activities and limited capacity of Development Agents to support the HABP. To be clear, there are regions and woredas where training has occurred. There has been an expansion in the number of DAs. But it is less clear if this has been sufficient to allow support to a significant number of households. 75 percent of the 192 *kebeles* covered in the community quantitative survey report that fewer than 50 households participate in the HABP. In all regions, ‘heavy workloads’ is the most frequently cited reason as to why DAs do not routinely visit HABP beneficiaries.

Also note that in the Highlands Outcomes Report, we report trends in agricultural productivity and we assess whether Public Works payments alone were sufficient to increase agricultural production or productivity.

Source for findings	Chapter	Quantitative data source		Qualitative data source	
Highlands, performance report	8, 9	Household survey	✓	Household case study	✓
Highlands, outcomes report	1	Community survey	✓	Focus Group Discussion	✓
Lowlands, performance report		Woreda quant survey	✓	Key informant interview	
Lowlands, outcomes report					

RQ15: Have PSNP participants received both technical support (e.g., business plan preparation) and micro-finance services (credit) at the same time through the HABP approach?

Summary

Few households report preparing a business plan that has been shown to a Development Agent.

Commentary

- Few households prepare business plans. In Tigray, where business plans are most widespread, only 8.9 percent of households reported that they had prepared a business plan in the last two years that they have shown to a DA. Across all surveyed households in the Highlands, only 3.9 percent of all households report preparing a business plan that has been shown to a Development Agent
- There has been a significant expansion of access to credit. Around 20 percent of Public Works participants and Recent Graduates report borrowing from HABP-linked financial institutions. There is much less use of credit in Oromia and SNNP. 12 percent of Public Works participants have borrowed money from a RuSACCO, MFI or VLS.
- Two constraining factors are limited HABP capacity building activities and limited capacity of Development Agents to support the HABP. To be clear, there are regions and woredas where training has occurred. There has been an expansion in the number of DAs. But it is less clear if this has been sufficient to allow support to a significant number of households. 75 percent of the 192 *kebeles* covered in the community quantitative survey report that fewer than 50 households participate in the HABP. In all regions, ‘heavy workloads’ is the most frequently cited reason as to why DAs do not routinely visit HABP beneficiaries.
- An ongoing concern has been DAs’ limited engagement with women and young people. The qualitative fieldwork included questions on access to DA services in discussions with Kebele FSTFs. The impression from these discussions is that there have been some improvements in extending technical support to women and young people.

Source for findings	Chapter	Quantitative data source		Qualitative data source	
Highlands, performance report	8, 9	Household survey	✓	Household case study	✓
Highlands, outcomes report		Community survey	✓	Focus Group Discussion	✓
Lowlands, performance report		Woreda quant survey		Key informant interview	✓
Lowlands, outcomes report					

RQ16: Has the HABP enhanced access to sustainable financial services (through RuSACCOs and MFIs)? If yes, how far?

Summary

There has been a considerable expansion of financial services across all regions. Nearly all (94 percent) of *kebeles* in Tigray have at least one RuSACCO or VSLA. Coverage is also high in SNNP (84 percent) and Amhara-HVFB (81 percent). While Oromia has the lowest percentage of *kebeles* with a RuSACCO or VSLA (58 percent), four years previously only three percent of *kebeles* had these.

Commentary

- There has been a significant expansion in the availability of RuSACCOs at the *kebele* level. RUSACCOs and other MFIs appear to have a good sense of their roles within the HABP. However, apart from Tigray, there is limited evidence of financial flows reaching RUSACCOs and other MFIs.

Source for findings	Chapter	Quantitative data source		Qualitative data source	
Highlands, performance report	8, 9	Household survey		Household case study	
Highlands, outcomes report		Community survey	✓	Focus Group Discussion	✓
Lowlands, performance report		Woreda quant survey		Key informant interview	✓
Lowlands, outcomes report					

RQ17: Do HABP participants have difficulty in repaying loans? Does this differ across loans provided through RuSACCOs and those provided by MFIs? Are there meaningful differences in repayment rates?

Summary

Information on whether HABP participants had difficulty in repaying loans was collected through key informant interviews with credit providers. Repayment rates differ by region rather than by type of provider.

Commentary

- Repayment rates for HABP loans vary within and across regions, though they are generally higher in Amhara and Tigray and low in SNNPR. In better performing woredas, the factors contributing to higher repayment rates include adequate monitoring and support by financial services providers as well as the requirement of group collateral for certain loan products.
- HABP loans through RuSACCOs are often provided to groups, with each member expected to provide collateral in case of default. According to kebele-level officials, this increases pressure on other group members to keep up with loan payments, ensuring a higher repayment rate compared to loans provided through MFIs.
- A number of reasons were given for lower repayment rates seen in some woredas. One of these is the attitudes of loan recipients themselves, who regard the loan as ‘aid’ rather than something that must be repaid. Weak coordination amongst service providers, and a lack of ownership of the programme – felt particularly amongst MFIs – dampens efforts to ensure the repayment of HABP loans, as well.

Source for findings	Chapter	Quantitative data source		Qualitative data source	
Highlands, performance report	9	Household survey		Household case study	
Highlands, outcomes report		Community survey		Focus Group Discussion	
Lowlands, performance report		Woreda quant survey		Key informant interview	✓
Lowlands, outcomes report					

RQ18: Has HABP enhanced sustainable input and on and off farm technologies sourcing, production and delivery systems? If yes, how far?

Summary

It proved difficult to obtain substantive information on this in either the quantitative or qualitative fieldwork. Approximately 30 percent of households who had contact with a DA indicated that they had received technical support associated with the marketing of off-farm production but it is not clear how sustainable this is.

Commentary

- On-farm technologies continue to focus largely on the use of fertilizer and modern inputs for crop production and on livestock fattening.
- Few kebeles have DAs with expertise in off-farm income generating activities and this may be one factor that has limited the effectiveness of the HABP in creating sustainable off farm production.
- There is little evidence that off-farm activities can be supported by the HABP. In most woredas there are weak connections between the Agriculture Office and SMEA, which is meant to provide guidance on planning off-farm enterprises. SMEA was mentioned in only four of ten *woredas* that were visited for qualitative fieldwork. Few DAs have the skill set needed to support off-farm activities.

Source for findings	Chapter	Quantitative data source		Qualitative data source	
Highlands, performance report	8, 9	Household survey	✓	Household case study	
Highlands, outcomes report		Community survey	✓	Focus Group Discussion	✓
Lowlands, performance report		Woreda quant survey		Key informant interview	✓
Lowlands, outcomes report					

RQ19: Has HABP increased access to effective product and labor markets? If yes, how far?

Summary

Aside from a few examples found in Tigray, we found little evidence that HABP activities directly strengthened access to product or labour markets. In focus group discussions, participants were more likely to refer to the benefits of road construction, rather than any specific activities conducted as part of HABP.

Source for findings	Chapter	Quantitative data source		Qualitative data source	
Highlands, performance report	9	Household survey		Household case study	
Highlands, outcomes report		Community survey		Focus Group Discussion	✓
Lowlands, performance report		Woreda quant survey		Key informant interview	
Lowlands, outcomes report					

RQ20: Do HABP clients participate in financial literacy, business plan preparation, and other types of training related to HABP?

Summary

About one-third of households who state that they had contact with a DA reported receiving training on financial management.

Source for findings	Chapter	Quantitative data source		Qualitative data source	
Highlands, performance report	9	Household survey	✓	Household case study	
Highlands, outcomes report		Community survey		Focus Group Discussion	
Lowlands, performance report		Woreda quant survey		Key informant interview	
Lowlands, outcomes report					

RQ21: Has HABP increased clients’ knowledge, skill and confidence to participate in business plan preparation, and access to credit?

Summary

Few households had developed business plans. However, focus group discussions and key informant interviews revealed that where these had been developed, there were examples of these succeeding, particularly with livestock fattening.

Commentary

- There are major differences in HABP implementation across regions. For example, approximately 20 percent of Public Works participants in Tigray and Amhara report borrowing from a RuSACCO, MFI or VSLA. Use of HABP-related credit is much more limited in Oromia and SNNP.

Source for findings	Chapter	Quantitative data source		Qualitative data source	
Highlands, performance report	8, 9	Household survey	✓	Household case study	✓
Highlands, outcomes report		Community survey		Focus Group Discussion	✓
Lowlands, performance report		Woreda quant survey		Key informant interview	
Lowlands, outcomes report					

RQ22: Has the PSNP PW contributed to improved livelihoods? If so, how?

Summary

PSNP public works are perceived to contribute to improved livelihoods in both the Highlands and Lowlands.

Commentary

- In the Highlands, PSNP public works are seen to have improved basic conditions necessary for productive livelihoods such as improved connectivity through road infrastructure, investment in irrigation, and through improving the biophysical condition of watersheds, supporting livelihoods dependent on natural resources.
- Across all the four Highland regions, 47 percent of respondents report that soil and water conservation activities on communal land has raised farm productivity. Not only do roads improve market access, they are seen as being a mechanism for improving farm productivity.
- In the Lowlands, PSNP public works have strengthened livelihoods in a number of ways: roads have supported trade; land clearance, particularly of prospoils, has freed land for cultivation, enabling more diversified agro-pastoral livelihoods; improved water sources support livestock and irrigated agriculture; and natural resource management activities, such as enclosure, have helped improve the condition of the natural environment supporting livelihoods, such as by increasing access to fodder for livestock.

Source for findings	Chapter	Quantitative data source		Qualitative data source	
Highlands, performance report	10	Household survey	✓	Household case study	
Highlands, outcomes report		Community survey		Focus Group Discussion	✓
Lowlands, performance report	7	Woreda quant survey		Key informant interview	✓
Lowlands, outcomes report					

**RQ23: Do HABP clients benefit from the community assets created by PSNP PWs?
How?**

Summary

Focus group discussions and key informant interviews in the Highlands turned up a limited number of examples of HABP clients benefitting from community assets created by PSNP public works.

Commentary

- Examples included how land rehabilitated and enclosed now supported a number of HABP activities such as beekeeping and forage gathering. Community irrigation schemes were seen to contribute to a more productive, resilient, irrigated HABP supported agriculture.

Source for findings	Chapter	Quantitative data source		Qualitative data source	
Highlands, performance report	10	Household survey		Household case study	
Highlands, outcomes report		Community survey		Focus Group Discussion	✓
Lowlands, performance report		Woreda quant survey		Key informant interview	✓
Lowlands, outcomes report					

RQ24: Has the PSNP increased poor people's access to social services? If so, how?

Summary

In both the Highlands and Lowlands, qualitative research indicates that PSNP public works are perceived to have increased access to a variety of social services, in particular, education, healthcare, and to a lesser extent veterinary services, and childcare.

Commentary

- Qualitative research indicates that PSNP public works are perceived to have increased access to a variety of social services, in particular, education, healthcare, and to a lesser extent veterinary services, and childcare. As was noted in the previous evaluation, road improvements have made it easier for pregnant women to access obstetric care.
- Public works support access to social services both *directly*, such as through the construction of hard infrastructure to house these services; and *indirectly*, through facilitating access to these services such as through better transport networks realised through road construction and improved land management practices, and through supporting livelihoods which enabled beneficiaries to pay for social services.

Source for findings	Chapter	Quantitative data source		Qualitative data source	
Highlands, performance report	10	Household survey		Household case study	
Highlands, outcomes report		Community survey		Focus Group Discussion	✓
Lowlands, performance report	7	Woreda quant survey		Key informant interview	✓
Lowlands, outcomes report					

**RQ25: Has the PSNP improved the availability of clean water for human consumption?
If so, how?**

Summary

The PSNP is perceived to have improved availability to clean water for human consumption. The extent of this varies with region, with respondents in Amhara most likely to report that PSNP work on wells and other sources of drinking water improvements had improved water supply.

Commentary

- The PSNP is perceived to have improved availability to clean water for human consumption: directly through the construction and rehabilitation of wells; indirectly through natural resource management activities that improve increasing water quality and availability; and indirectly through activities that improve access to water such as work on water harvesting and the development of canals for irrigation, ponds and cisterns.
- While PSNP public works have helped improve access to potable water in some Lowland areas, there remain many cases where work has either not been undertaken, or is insufficient to meet the need. In a number of localities, communities rely of water sources intended for livestock, or irrigation purposes.

Source for findings	Chapter	Quantitative data source		Qualitative data source	
Highlands, performance report	10	Household survey	✓	Household case study	
Highlands, outcomes report		Community survey		Focus Group Discussion	✓
Lowlands, performance report	7	Woreda quant survey		Key informant interview	✓
Lowlands, outcomes report					

RQ26: Has the PSNP PW contributed to improve/rehabilitate natural resources and the environment? If so, how?

Summary

Qualitative interviews suggest that PSNP public works do contribute to the rehabilitation of natural resources in both the Highlands and Lowlands.

Commentary

- Activities that were seen as playing an especially important role in improving the environment include soil and water conservation measures that rehabilitate watersheds, revegetation and enclosures and, in the Lowlands clearance of invasive species.
- These activities are perceived to decrease run-off and flooding, reduce soil erosion, improve water quality and availability, and increase forage availability.
- Respondents report rehabilitated watersheds are more resilient and better able to support a variety of livelihoods, both agricultural and livestock based. Enclosures also support alternative livelihoods such as beekeeping.

Source for findings	Chapter	Quantitative data source		Qualitative data source	
Highlands, performance report	10	Household survey		Household case study	
Highlands, outcomes report		Community survey		Focus Group Discussion	✓
Lowlands, performance report	10	Woreda quant survey		Key informant interview	✓
Lowlands, outcomes report					

RQ27: Is the graduation process transparent? Are better-off households ‘graduated’ from the PSNP?

Summary

The graduation process is not transparent. While there are examples of better off households being graduated, there are numerous cases where there is no obvious difference between PSNP and graduate households.

Commentary

- Although there are exceptions to this statement, as a general proposition graduated households do not understand why they are chosen for graduation. Only eight percent of recently graduated households reported being interviewed prior to graduation. Safeguards such as public discussion of who is to be graduated and the public posting of the names of graduated households does not occur. While they are examples of good graduation practice being followed, these are the exception.
- On average, recent graduates had slightly higher holdings of productive assets than non-graduates. However, the difference is small – only 1,277 Birr – and not statistically significant. There is considerable variation across regions. Compared to non-graduates, Recent Graduates in Tigray have, on average, considerably higher asset holdings. By contrast, the difference in asset holdings in SNNP is minimal. There is no difference in landholdings between graduated and non-graduated households. Further, there are numerous examples of graduated households having lower levels of asset holdings than non-graduated households in the same *woreda*.
- In focus group discussions, men, women and youth all agreed that there are a minority of cases where graduates households are better off than PSNP households, yet in the main respondents believed that there was no obvious difference between PSNP and graduate households.
- Respondents were clear that there were no federally mandated graduation targets. While there were a range of regional views on whether targets are given or not, all *woreda* level officials interviewed for this evaluation reported that they have received graduation targets from the regions, and that, in turn, these targets are passed down to the *kebeles*.
- These targets have a distortionary impact on the process of implementing graduation, leading to significant deviations from what is laid out in the various Graduation Guidance Notes and with the result that households were pre-maturely graduated. While it might be expected that some graduate households would complain about this process, what is especially striking is that these concerns are also raised by those responsible for implementing graduation, *kebele* level staff and Development Agents.

Source for findings	Chapter	Quantitative data source		Qualitative data source	
Highlands, performance report	5	Household survey	✓	Household case study	✓
Highlands, outcomes report		Community survey		Focus Group Discussion	✓
Lowlands, performance report		Woreda quant survey		Key informant interview	✓
Lowlands, outcomes report					

RQ28: What are the characteristics of those graduated households vs. non-graduated households? How do graduate households differ from households in the PSNP?

Summary

Recent Graduates have a smaller food gap than Public Works households. But the average difference is small and many Recent Graduates are food insecure.

Commentary

- 50 percent of Recent Graduates are food secure in that they report no food gap in the 12 months prior to the 2014 survey. But a significant fraction of recent graduates remain food insecure: 19 percent have a two month food gap, 14 percent have a three month food gap and 10 percent have a food gap of four months or more.
- Recent Graduates have a smaller food gap than Public Works households. But the average difference is small, 0.48 months or about 14 days. Such a relatively small gap is seen across all regions. In Amhara, the average Recent Graduate has a food gap of 1.81 months; in SNNP, the average Recent Graduate has a food gap of 1.51 months.

Source for findings	Chapter	Quantitative data source		Qualitative data source	
Highlands, performance report	5	Household survey	✓	Household case study	
Highlands, outcomes report		Community survey		Focus Group Discussion	
Lowlands, performance report		Woreda quant survey		Key informant interview	
Lowlands, outcomes report					

RQ29: What happens to households’ food security after they graduate? Is there evidence of ‘back-sliding’ by graduated households?

Summary

The average recently graduated household reported a small improvement in food security status with the mean food gap falling by 0.40 months. However, this mean improvement obscures considerable heterogeneity in changes in and levels of food security status.

Commentary

- Of households graduated between 2012 and 2014, 59 percent reported no food gap in the 12 months preceding the 2014 quantitative household survey. However, 21 percent report a food gap of one or two months and a further 20 percent report a food gap of three months or more.
- Among graduated households, 37 percent saw an improvement in their food security status between 2012 and 2014 in that the food gap improved (ie it became smaller) and 38 percent recorded no change. However, 25 percent of graduated households reported a worsening of their food security in that the food gap worsened.
- For those recent graduates reporting that their food gap remained unchanged, 26 percent also reported a reduction of three groups or more in dietary diversity. A further 25 percent reported a reduction of one or two food groups meaning that slightly more than half reported a decline in the quality of their diets.

Source for findings	Chapter	Quantitative data source		Qualitative data source	
Highlands, performance report		Household survey	✓	Household case study	
Highlands, outcomes report	10	Community survey		Focus Group Discussion	
Lowlands, performance report		Woreda quant survey		Key informant interview	
Lowlands, outcomes report					

RQ30: What level of technical support is provided to graduate households? Do they have access to services provided through the HABP?

Summary

Recent Graduates' continue to have access to technical support through contact with Development Agents.

Commentary

- The percentage of Recent Graduates who report contact in the last 12 months ranges from 35 percent (Oromia) to 60 percent (Tigray). The type of information they receive is similar to other households in our sample. While this is heavily focused on agriculture, about 37 percent also received advice on non-farm income generating activities and on financial management.

Source for findings	Chapter	Quantitative data source		Qualitative data source	
Highlands, performance report	9	Household survey	✓	Household case study	
Highlands, outcomes report		Community survey		Focus Group Discussion	
Lowlands, performance report		Woreda quant survey		Key informant interview	
Lowlands, outcomes report					

RQ31: Do graduated households believe PSNP PWs contribute to graduation? If so, what are the main contributing factors?

Summary

We encountered no examples of graduating households believing that PSNP Public Works contributed to graduation.

Source for findings	Chapter	Quantitative data source		Qualitative data source	
Highlands, performance report	5	Household survey		Household case study	✓
Highlands, outcomes report		Community survey		Focus Group Discussion	✓
Lowlands, performance report		Woreda quant survey		Key informant interview	
Lowlands, outcomes report					