

FOOD SECURITY

A Review of Literature
From Ethiopia to India

FAMINE AND SOCIAL PROTECTION L I T E R A T U R E ETHIOPIA TO MAHARASHTRA

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INTRODUCTION:¹

This review provides the theoretical framework for any research on food security and social protection through Employment Generation Schemes. It presents a 'conceptual geography' of important works of literature related to the latest evidence and informed by the best international experience. The subject of hunger can be tackled from rights, economic, social, environmental, agricultural and political based perspectives and therefore a combination of different factors are determinants of the extent of poverty and hunger in a given context. Poverty has been described as:

"Poverty has both physical and psychological dimensions. Poor people themselves strongly emphasise violence, crime, discrimination,

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insecurity and political repression, biased or brutal policing, and victimisation by rude, neglectful and corrupt public agencies"
(Narayam et al, 2000)

It is usual to refer to food security as a food supply, food access and nutrition issue. However, I have taken the opportunity to integrate nutrition as an access issue so as to include social protection as an important subject area for EGS in particular. Nutrition is not an intervention in itself but an outcome affected by entitlement and other livelihood issues. Social protection policies and programs can address nutritional welfare either directly through food subsidies or indirectly through income support. It needs to be acknowledged from the outset that much of the international literature on hunger and social protection through safety nets stems from the seminal work of Amartya Sen, the Indian economist



who, in his powerful analysis of famines explored the political economy of hunger and its affliction. Having stated the centrality of Sen's contribution, this does not preclude that other theoreticians and practitioners have not significantly enriched the field of study and the development of different models. Much of Sen's work, however sometimes theoretical, has been focused on action rather than measurement. Sen and Drèze have written that

"Hunger is not a new affliction. Recurrent famines as well as endemic under-nourishment have been persistent features of history. Life has been short and hard in much of the world, most of the time. Deprivation of food and other necessities of living has consistently been among the causal antecedents of the brutishness and brevity of human life" Drèze and Sen (1989).



Social protection is as a collection of measures to improve or protect human capital, ranging from labour market interventions, publicly mandated unemployment or old-age insurance to targeted income support. Social Protection interventions assist individuals, households, and communities to better manage the income risks that leave people vulnerable. Given the extent of global

poverty and hunger, there is an urgent need for social protection programs that provide income assistance at the level of the minimum acceptable international level of US\$ per day. In this regard, social protection has emerged in the new millennium as an important tool for economic reform. According to the World Bank social protection seeks to:

"Reduce the vulnerability of low-income households with regard to basic consumption and services; allow households to shift income efficiently over the life-cycle, thus financing consumption when needed; enhance equity particularly with regard to exposure to, and the effects of adverse shocks; and, social Protection interventions contribute to the solidarity, social cohesion, and social stability of a country. Well-designed and implemented, these interventions support importantly sustainable economic development in a participatory manner". (World Bank, 2002)

FOOD SECURITY:

Debates surrounding food security, poverty and famine have been the focus of academic curiosity for many years². Although debates have become subsumed under the general context of poverty and hunger eradication, entitlements and vulnerability, natural hazards research, disasters and more recently livelihoods, many classic and

² Food insecurity was first noted in the old testament (Biblical famines) although the first usage of the word famine was cited in the Oxford English Dictionary in 1362 from the Latin *famina* which was derived from *fames* meaning hunger (de Waal, 1989: pg. 13)



seminal works now exist facilitating easy review of important themes. Authorial backgrounds deviate around economics and the political economy and plotting these theoretical models reveals a number of broad camps or opinion regarding poverty and hunger in particular. Different lines of research focus upon market behaviour and the human impact of such markets (Sen, 1983; Ravallion, 1985); the political economy and structures of power-over through space and time (Firth, 1959, Rangashami, 1986) and the theories of famine in Ethiopia and Sudan (Hellden, 1984, De Waal, 1989) related to coping strategies.

The role of the researcher has been to identify hunger processes, models and trends as well as to focus on the practical aspects of disaster prevention³ Prevention has optimistically become the work of governments, international organisations and NGO's working along side international donors. The language however has tended to be descriptive and reactive rather than transformatory and preventative. Prevention however requires planning for social protection and welfare - human rights. Accordingly, food security and famine have been described⁴ countless different

³ The concept of disaster prevention has always had a rather utopian feel about it leading UNDRO to declare "*The term should not be used as it implies misleading resource allocation. It is false to suggest that infinite risk can be met with infinite resources.*" (UNDRO 1991: 157). Accordingly the term mitigation ("damping the worst effect of violent and sudden natural hazards) was preferred. Other works on prevention and mitigation include White, G., 1974, Pitak and Atkisson, 1982, Drabek, 1986 and Palm, 1990)

⁴ Indeed, the definitional exercise "*is more interesting in providing a pithy description of what happens in situations*

ways although all definitions inevitably converge around the issues of food availability (supply) and accessibility (entitlements). This research is no different in the overall stance taken with the exception that availability and access are not viewed here as different processes but rather processes linked in the same way as both vulnerability and entitlements might be considered two sides of the same coin. Theorists do not, by and large, disagree with these two principle elements however viewpoints change over the importance of what has been termed Food Availability Decline (FAD) vis-à-vis Food entitlement Decline (FED). The FAD approach clearly sees the centrality of availability decline whereas the FED approaches sees famine as the result of entitlement decline. However, it is clear that:

"the conflicting explanations involved in FAD and FED need to be resolved so that it can be shown how the root causes are channelled through well defined and precise mechanisms towards causing a famine' (Blaikie, et al, 1994: Pg. 78).

Paradoxically the increase in available literature on hunger has been countered by an increased prevalence of the incidence of poverty and hunger itself. According to a United States Office of Foreign Assistance report of 1990 it is stated that 'of all the deaths due to disaster between 1900 and 1990 over 48.6 percent were caused by civil strife, 39.1 percent as a result of famine with

clearly diagnosed as one of famine than in helping us to do the diagnosis - the traditional role of definitions' (Sen, 1981. P. 40, footnote). For a fuller discussion on this issue see de Waal, (1989).



the remaining 12.3 percent due to earthquakes, volcanoes, cyclones, epidemics, floods and others' (OFDA, 1990). What is significant here is that the figures for civil strife include the deaths of both World War I and II and, if these were discounted, famine would be the most prevalent disaster over the last 40 years or so. The increase in reported disasters can be either one of more of the following: increased population (see Malthus, 1780); better reporting; or, that more communities are being exposed to hazards because of increased vulnerability (see Wijkman and Timberlake 1984; Drabek 1986, Berz 1990).



The Malthusian nightmare of population outstripping food supply has not materialised as predicted by some observers (see Malthus and Ehrlich, P.). Instead, the more complex problem of many people having insufficient food despite the increases in global production (FAD Vis a Vis FED) has become apparent. The problem of food security is clearly not purely a problem of production but one of access/entitlements although in itself, increased food production is still an important element of the food security equation.

Literature relating to supply is diverse and tends to be dominated by the introduction of agricultural technologies and extension as well as macro-economic policy reforms and population policies. This school of thought:

“attributes famine to an aggregate decline in food supply and is clearly linked to explanations of famine in terms of natural events, particularly drought’ (ibid: Pg. 82) although it needs to be stressed that in recent literature it is difficult to find ‘pure supply side explanations of famine’ (ibid: pg. 83)

As this approach is both environmentally deterministic and Malthusian – both of which are largely discredited as sole causes of famine. Literature regarding availability has tended to focus on two major trends in current world food markets. The first is the:

“Levelling off of per capita food production since 1973 following a quarter century of steady gain” and the second is the “increasing differences in food production among continents and major countries. In some regions, per capita production is surging ahead; in others it is falling steadily” (Brown, 1989).

It has long been recognised, however, that international thinking has changed dynamically since the 1974 Food Conference where it is acknowledged that “for some time now, experts discussed food security concerns largely in terms of increasing domestic production and creating international reserve stocks” (Falcon, et al (1987: pg. 20). Subsequently it has been seen that the supply-oriented concept of



food security was outdated and that food security should be rather seen as a function of all factors affecting the maintenance and improvement of per capita food consumption. Accordingly, it has been observed that “a government confronting food problems must choose a path that strikes a balance between long and short term considerations and the needs and claims of different groups” (ibid: 22).⁵ This inevitably involves prioritising a stop-gap (relief food) approach at the same time as addressing more structural problems. Additional areas of focus for increasing food supply include giving priority to agricultural development led industrialisation, market liberalisation, maintaining lower real food prices through increased production, increased extension inputs, expanded access to micro-finance, reformist land policies and land administration laws as well as lower cost marketing (World Bank, 1996). Other areas include increasing rapid growth of businesses that can absorb rural labour as well as focusing on the diversification of agricultural production and exports in support of food trade.

Given that food availability depends on supply through either/or domestic production or food imports (food aid and grain trade) the global food security

⁵ An excellent example of this dichotomy is the present situation in Ethiopia regarding the timing of fertilizer and relief food inputs. In December, 1998 the GoE plans to import a further 272,000 MT of fertilizer through the port of Djibouti blocking ports for relief food import for 5-6 months based on present capacity. The government clearly is prioritising fertilizer over and above relief food imports. These kind of daily decisions need to be taken. Focusing on supply or stop-gap food imports.

reserve is also an important factor and in 1998 the global food reserve was equivalent to 14 per cent of the total food needs equal to ~ 1.5 months. According to Donaldson:

“Although the data on global food trends are poor, they do show that grain production has grown at a generally increasing rate) ~ 3 per cent) since the early decades of the 19th Century and has consistently outstripped increases in global population. As a result the price of food grain has declined steadily in real terms. Economists see no reason why this trend should not continue through the end of this century” (Bale and Duncan, 1983; Barr, 1981)

The food supply problem changes form depending on the level of analysis. Global food security involves supply through production whereas food supply at a household level is clearly determined by own production plus entitlements and accordingly, this has increasingly been reflected in food policy. This has been recognised for many years leading Reutlinger, S., et al to state that:

“The following precepts should therefore be adhered to: a) the lack of food security is basically a lack of purchasing power of people and nations. The convergence on the objective of poverty alleviation and of food security is thus strong b) Food security does not necessarily derive from food self sufficiency nor from a rapid increase in production c) long-term food security is a matter of achieving economic growth with equitable distribution of benefits. Food security in the shorter run is a matter of redistributing purchasing power and resources. By choosing redistribution policies on the basis of cost effectiveness,



governments can play constructive roles in improving the food security of their citizens and, d) transitory food insecurity – because of fluctuations in domestic harvest, international prices and foreign exchange earnings – can best be alleviated through measures that facilitate trade and provide income relief to afflicted populations” (Reutlinger, S. 1987)

However, the present working methodology of major organisations still fails to acknowledge the limitations of the supply approach to solving the food security problem. For example, in Ethiopia, the annual FAO/WFP crop assessment assesses the food budget deficit only (per capita food needs minus annual production figures = deficit) and this information becomes the basis for the annual relief appeal of the DPPC. Items such as livestock consumption or other off farm income sources are not included in the assessment. This approach follows that the food will always be targeted to the most vulnerable that inevitably, is not always the case (GMRP, 1997, 1998). Famine prevention is primarily concerned with food entitlement protection in circumstances where livelihoods are in danger of collapsing. Sen's work on the Indian Famine Codes prepared by the Indian Famine Commission (IFC) from 1880 onwards among others has also created widespread academic debate (Sen, 1981; Dréze 1988). However, lessons from the famine codes indicate the importance of employment generation schemes in transferring assets to vulnerable groups; the importance of clearly identifying pre-conditions for food insecurity; and,

the value of being reflexive to different interpretations of causation.

Sen's FED model, is in opposition to the market-failure explanation whereby it is seen that despite the existence of effective demand and purchasing power certain market situations may arise where supply does not equal demand. Entitlement and market failure are often combined in marginal rural economies and a less developed economy impacts upon both sets of failure. One of the major causes of market failure, it is argued, is poor transport infrastructure. Tigrai is a classic example in this regard where in western Zone annual surplus production is exported south to other national regional states and to Eritrea in the north while in eastern Zone many Woredas remain food deficit. However, market integration can be achieved through reduction in transport costs through road building and maintenance, support to increased private storage, development of rural financial markets and development of the skills and organisation of traders. Regarding market-failure the work of Ravallion (1985) and Seaman and Holt (1980) provides useful examples of market-failure related to Ethiopia. This issue is particularly important in areas such as Tigrai where the impact of food assistance dampens market prices and can restrict the production incentive. An additional aspect relates to areas under military occupation where although effective demand exists supply routes are blocked.

As stated above, Sen's FED demand and supply framework of enquiry is broadly accepted by the international



community. For Sen it is a failure of 'pull-factor' or effective demand, induced by entitlement failure that can cause famine not a market 'response failure'. Central to Sen's analysis is his categorisation of 'entitlement relationships' whereby individuals gain access to food. However, it should be noted that these failures are only strictly observed in market economies under private ownership. Sen's work in recent years has been jointly undertaken with Dréze, J. In their powerful book, 'Hunger and Public Policy' the relationship between different broad entitlements is forwarded as:

The emphasis given to entitlements relates to socially-derived resources whereby both access and command are important concepts. In order for the resource to become mobilised in favour of a given party the party must be first gain access and demonstrate sufficient command to benefit from the resource. Sen terms an individual's entitlements as a person's 'endowment' which can also be exchanged - 'exchange entitlement'. A person's individual 'commodity bundle' and their effective command and control over the bundle therefore becomes key to further analysis. The power of the FED framework is that it acknowledges both social and market relationships over time whereas the FAD approach highlights merely the supply factors related to food supply.

Research conducted by Watts (1983) in Nigeria focuses on the different levels of causation from household, community, national, regional and international

levels. The aim is to clearly demonstrate the different pre-conditions existing for famine to occur at different levels. If 'entitlement mapping' is effectively carried out within such a framework of analysis then both the causes and effects can be clearly expressed.

Both the FAD and FED models are useful as a point of entry however, it is now widely recognised that famines are caused by a unique set of circumstances relating to a wide range of social and non-social variables (Blaikie et al (1994)). In recent years the FED/FAD debate has become stale as both supportive and non supportive evidence exists concerning each theory. However, the debate has been polarised and increasingly couched in the style of an academic contest. This pursuit of a single theory of the mechanism of famine has diverted attention from multiple-causality and the possibility of famines at different times in the same place being caused by a different mix of factors. To this extent all disasters and famines are unique with a particular set of circumstances. It is therefore best to assume that famines have particular pre-conditions that can be triggered by disparate variables at a given point in time. In the context of Ethiopia a wide range of causal nexus can contribute towards such an outcome including over population, environmental degradation, small land holdings, market mechanisms, political turmoil and geo-politics, poor market integration, insufficient external input availability, gender, variable rainfall, cultural practices etc. In short, we need to understand the complex relationship



between all these variables and their impact at a given point in space and time. It is a specific combination and sequence of events that causes famine. In this regard the work of Walker (1989), Cannon (1991), Curtis et al (1988) provides useful case studies internationally and Holt and Lawrence (1993), Jayne et al (1994), Kabeer (1992) and GoE (2001).

Access to food is less a food, but rather than in income problem. Individuals with a disposable income sufficient to support their nutritional requirements do not go hungry. Access, not supply of food, has been explored in almost every detail and has tended to take over as the major concern of international organisations addressing poverty and hunger eradication. However, it should be recognised that much of this work evolved out of the India famine experience. As Gandhi said, "the earth has sufficient for every man's need, but not for every man's greed" Gandhi, Mahatma (1930). The seminal work of Amartya Sen, in his ground breaking book of 1981 entitled 'Poverty and Famines' sets the international stage and conditioned the next twenty five years of enquiry into exploring the relationship between vulnerability and entitlements, through analysis of rural livelihoods and markets. Vulnerability has been defined by Blaikie et al as;

'the characteristic of a person or group in terms of their capacity to anticipate, cope with, resist and recover from the impact of natural hazards' (Blaikie et al 1994: 9). Other authors have contrasted the concept of 'vulnerability' with the concept of

"capability as the ability to protect oneself or one's community and to re-establish one's livelihood" (Anderson and Woodrow, 1989).

What the researcher contests about the first definitions is its exclusive link to natural disasters where it cannot be denied the significance of anthropogenic causation in many vulnerability processes. Livelihoods of the poorest are frequently affected by economic equity and politics, not just natural disasters. Work on vulnerability in Ethiopia, related to hunger and social protection includes: Shimeles (1996) focused on the impact of economic reforms on the welfare of poorest households, Tsedeke (1996) on vulnerability to crop failure in southern Ethiopia, the importance of economic reforms addressing vulnerability, GoE (1996) and Deriba (1996) focused on the importance of food security and vulnerability monitoring.

Analysis of vulnerability has tended to focus on the household as a unit of enquiry. Subsequently, household livelihood models have been developed as a way of developing an understanding of the pathways, flows and processes of food and non food assets, production, exchange and consumption etc. Such livelihood analysis highlights the different seasonal and non seasonal coping strategies at a household level (see O'Keefe and Wisner 1975; Sen A. 1981; Watts 1983 and 1991; Swift 1989; Young 1992; Blaikie et al 1994). Such coping strategies have been analysed in many different disaster prone areas and detailed analysis is given in Blaikie et al



1994. However, recent changes away from viewing the house as a homogenous unit (particularly as a result of gender analysis) have begun to focus on in-equality within the household (Rivers 1982; Cutler 1985).



The disaggregation of gender consumption patterns demonstrates examples of extended entitlements at work and often leads into what Sen defines as 'co-operative conflicts'. It is seen that 'there tends to be a coexistence of conflicts and congruence of interests' at the same time (Sen, 1985 and 1987). Co-operative conflicts in gender relations and in intra-family divisions are due to many cultural reasons such as perception problems. Important to this study is the assertion that women tend to be in a position where conflicts over resource favour men who are more frequently the recipients of cash income and social dominance such as eating first. Analysis of the gender differentiated impact on household food security of access to and command over resources therefore becomes very important. That there is social injustice within the household unit has been well documented however, it might be fair to say that beginning the process of attaining food security at a household

level depends on eradicating in-equality as well as boosting and stabilising either production of or access to resources. In this regard work by Masefield (1996); Sen, A. and Grown, C. (1987), Agarwal, B. (1986), Shiva, V. (1989) among others should be noted.

The concept of vulnerability, entitlements and gender are inextricably linked – loss of entitlements creates vulnerability. Important work on vulnerability and gender in Ethiopia includes Bruce and Dwyer (1988), Bryceson (1993) and Dejene (1994) on female headed farm households. The work of Masefield on the role of women in agriculture, often dismissed by men as significant, also needs to be acknowledged (Masefield, 1996, 1998, 2000).

The availability of food in a market place does not enable equitable access by all to it. This depends on the individual 'commodity bundle' that an individual can take legal command over. Accordingly, entitlements can be defined in terms of '*ownership rights*' (Dreze J., et al 1989: 9) over certain commodity bundles also know as an individual's entitlements. According to Sen the following entitlement-relationships are accepted in a private ownership market economy typically include the following:

- a) *Trade based entitlements*: One is entitled to own what one obtains by trading something one owns with a willing party or with a willing set of parties);



- b) *Production based entitlements*: One is entitled to own what one has produced by using one's own resources, or resources hired from willing parties meeting the agreed conditions of trade;
- c) *Own labour entitlements*: One is entitled to one's own labour power, and thus to the trade-based and production based entitlements related to one's labour power; and,
- d) *Inheritance and transfer entitlements*: One is entitled to own what is willingly given to one by another who legitimately owns it, possibly to take effect after the latter's death. (Sen, 1982)

A person's entitlements (ownership rights) depend both on what is initially owned and upon what can be exchanged. A farmer's own production can be both consumed directly or exchanged/monetised for other commodities which would lead to a change in commodity bundle. The initial ownership is termed a person's endowment. (see Sen, A. 1989). When an individual's commodity bundle is insufficient for the needs of the person this is termed entitlement failure.

Sen's popularity is due to his detailed study of the legendary Bengal famine of 1943 where he asserted that the famine was not created because of a structural food deficit but due to entitlement failure (Sen, A. 1981). His thesis of social causation (determinism) vis a vis environmental determination received support from Wisner, B (1988), Wijkman, A. and Timberlake, L. (1984), Glantz, M. (1987) among others. Since

Sen's social model of causation was forwarded the view that drought in particular was a key determinant of famine has received less support and it is now considered to be a 'trigger factor' only. The important link here is that environmental and social processes are related but are not always key determinants in creating disaster conditions. Examples of this relationship have been documented in Sudan, Ethiopia and elsewhere where it has been shown that droughts do not always lead to famine and that famines can occur without drought (de Waal, A. 1989; Pankhurst, R. 1974). It follows that for wealthy communities a decrease in production followed by increase in market prices need not lead to famine if households own either sufficient stores and resources and have sufficient purchasing power to buy food.

Literature related to entitlements has tended to focus on entitlement failure and the role of micro-economics within intra-household relations (see Sen 1976, 1981, 1982 and Dreze 1989, Watts and Bohle 1993) as well as what has been termed '*extended entitlements*' which may be seen as non-legal entitlements whereby social arrangements favour certain groups to dominate consumption (see Dreze et al, 1989: 10). Moreover, because it has been recognised that economic growth alone is insufficient to overcome the problems of the inequality of access to food, government programs tend to focus on



both supply and demand related interventions at the same time⁶.

Entitlement programs (social protection programs) tend to focus on poverty alleviation as a wider goal with alternative measures to increase economic growth in low potential areas largely through targeted access programs that focus on both agricultural and non-agricultural activities. These supplementary employment schemes link with development priorities in rural areas and the targeted access programs target the very poor and vulnerable groups and resemble a 'Safety Net Program' in many countries such as Ethiopia. Entitlement interventions also target health and nutritional components. An important element of the literature relating to this classification is the extent to which 'coping strategies' are researched with the aim of enhancing their productivity and to ultimately provide greater household income diversification opportunities⁷. Coping strategies such as off farm labour, charcoal making, fuel wood collection, collection of famine

⁶ It should be noted that food security programs clearly need to focus on both supply and entitlement elements as both output and availability of food are among the several influences that determine entitlements. Even though hunger is clearly caused by entitlement failure, changes in production play a causal role in the process of deprivation and hunger. Decreased supply raises prices and discriminates against the poorest of the poor.

⁷ In the process of strengthening coping strategies there is a need to also limit those strategies which are beneficial in the short term but harmful in the long term. For example, the collection of wood fuel in Tigray and Amhara provides poor households with income opportunities but at the same time it increases environmental degradation which in the long term increases the pressure on land and reduces agricultural production.

foods etc. also contribute to an individual's commodity bundle.

'Space-time mapping' provides an understanding of the different layers of pre and post disaster coping strategy and consequently much analysis of seasonality and seasonal calendars has been conducted (De Waal 1989; Chambers et al 1981; McCracken et al 1988; Middlebrook, 1996). Coping has been defined as "*the stuff of everyday life*" (Holt and Lawrence 1993) and as the "*manner in which people act within existing resources and range of expectations of a situation to achieve various ends*" (Blaikie, P 1994). It includes "defence mechanisms, active ways of solving problems and methods of handling stress (Murphy and Moriarty 1976). Analysis of coping has concentrated on both physical and social means. Physical resources include land, tools, seeds, livestock and draught oxen, cash and other fixed household assets to include stored food. Social means includes command over and mobilisation of fixed asset resources including markets, human rights, obligations, inheritance etc. It has been noted that special access qualifications are often required before a resource can be effectively mobilised and that during times of rapid change such 'ethno-science' can disappear from local practise (O'Keefe and Wisner 1975). However, despite the occasional disappearance, which may also have its own logic, coping in times of disaster is the human face of poverty negotiation. Strategies differ prior to, during and after stress and from generation to generation as different life options present themselves. Plotting changes in



coping strategies on time series has yet to be substantially undertaken.

If coping 'is the stuff of every day life' then analysis of coping strategies must clearly focus at both an individual and community level. It is clear that on a seasonal basis certain groups of vulnerable people (by gender, age, sex, class, ethnic group, ability etc.) simply don't possess access to a basket of basic commodities and command over those commodities to survive without making a modification to their normal life. In rural communities in Ethiopia individual households are singled out for relief assistance as a result of administrative targeting procedures (Middlebrook, P. 1996). Therefore in single communities some households are food self sufficient while others are perennially food deficit. Structural and transitory food security issues are discussed more fully later. Such coping mechanisms, often based on Ethiopian experiences, have been studied by Maslow 1970; Sen 1981; de Waal 1989; Jodha, 1991; Raphael 1986; Dynes et al 1987; Hussein 1976; Douglas 1985 among others. The discussion varies considerably with focus on how different societies and households deal with food related stress. However, after the work of Blaikie et al (1994) it is clear that a number of broad coping strategies can be usefully categorised.

a) Categories include: preventative strategies/action (impact-minimising strategies (mitigation); creation and maintenance of labour power; building up stores of food and saleable assets);

b) Diversification of the production strategy (diversification of income sources; development of social support networks); and,
c) Post-event coping strategies.

These have additionally been studied by Douglas (1985) who analysed risk acceptability and that past experience of a disaster often triggers similar adaptive strategies. Having large numbers of children has also been studied by Cain (1978) in Bangladesh where it was considered that having additional children is less risky than investing in other resources. However, in this regard having children might be as much to do with preventative coping as poor birth control. An additional strategy of interest is the strategy diversifying modes of production known here as risk aversion. Here farmers can be involved with mixed cropping, alley cropping or inter-cropping and the production of non staple food supplies. While this strategy probably minimises risks of absolute economic stress below which life may cease it may also reduce the possibility of achieving an excellent harvest of highly marketable monocrop. This has been studied by Allan (1965) and Wisner (1978).

Important supplementary work on food security and hunger includes: Alamgir and Arora (1991); De Waal (1987), Sen (1986), Donovan (1987), Watts (1983 and 1984), Masefield, G (1963), Alamgir (1977, 1980), Currey (1978, 1981 and 1984), Walker (1989), Cannon (1991), Curtis, D (1988), Kent (1987), Sen (1976, 1981, 1982,), (Dreze (1989), Watts and Bohle, Ricardo (1822), Marx (1957-8,



1887). International work on food security from a market perspective has been undertaken by Ravallion (1986 and 1989), Smith (1961), Stiglitz (1981), Davraux (2000), Sen et al (1995) among many others. On food supply and population pressure see Malthus (1890 and 1898), Ehrlich (1990) and Banister (1984).

Important work on hunger polices and complex emergencies in Ethiopia includes World Bank (1999, 2000), Cohen (1988), FAO (1990), World Bank (1986, 1989 and 1990), Maxwell (1991), Geier (1995), Duffield (1989, 1994), IOV (1994), Kent (1987) and EEA (2000) in the annual report. The NGO SCF (UK) (1999) has detailed the processed of rural destitution and the World Bank (1999) on the options for a national food security program and on food security strategy (EC, 1996 and 2000) and Robinson (1994). Additional work by Anderson (1989, 1994) has cited Ethiopia in many areas related to reform of the agricultural sector.

The work of Wolde-Mariam (1978, 1984 and 1991) are among the most important works on famine, diet, nutrition and gender in Ethiopia as they expose the extent to which vulnerability relates to policy – many call for social protection policies. Other works include Kebede and Tadessa (Ed.) (1996); Kloose and Zein, Z (Ed.) (1993); Penrose (Ed.) (1988); Moser, C (1990), Sen (1986), Agarwal (1986), Bosrup (1970, 1980, 1986), Das Gupta (1987), Deaton (1987), Masefield, A, (1996, 1997, 1998).

SOCIAL PROTECTION AND SAFETY NETS:

Social protection can be through labour market interventions, pensions, social safety nets or through the implementation of targeted social funds. Safety nets are programs designed to provide targeted income support and access to basic social services to the poorest population groups, and/or those needing assistance after economic downturns, natural disasters, or other events that pose major risks.

“Safety Nets are programs that protect a person or household against the adverse outcomes of chronic incapacity to work (chronic poverty); and a decline in this capacity from a marginal situation that provides minimal means of survival with few reserves (transient poverty)” World Bank, (2002)

The term Safety Nets encompasses various transfer programs designed to play both a redistributive and risk reduction role in poverty reduction. Safety Nets are a form of social transfer that usually involves cash or in-kind payments to marginal income groups either gratuitously or through public works programs. The redistributive role is intended to reduce the impact of poverty and hunger and the risk reduction role is intended to protect individuals, households, and communities against uninsured income and consumption risks.

Although safety net programs need to be devised to address both redistributive and risk reduction roles, country specific conditions dictate



whether safety nets play primarily a redistributive or primarily a risk reduction role. Risks can be household-specific (i.e. seasonal unemployment), community or regionally based (i.e. drought, famine) or nation-wide (drought, global financial risks etc.). The poor may be more vulnerable than the non poor to these risks. Therefore, it is important to design programs to address the particular need and characteristics of various categories of the poor. The role of safety nets is particularly critical during economic downturns or systemic shocks such as the periods of hunger in Ethiopia of 1956, 1972, 1984, 1994 and 2000.

Public safety nets are referred to as formal safety nets. There is a broad range of mechanisms for protecting individuals from acute deprivation or inadvertent declines in income. These can include, among others: food subsidies, feeding programs, public works and other employment programs, credit-based self-employment programs, social funds and related interventions, and child allowances. Most of these have been utilised in Ethiopia over the past 20 years or more.

In addition to public safety nets, most societies have informal community-based arrangements (private safety nets) that help mitigate against deprivation and temporary income shortfalls. In most Sub-Saharan countries there is a system of labour transfers within communities, operated in places such as Amhara and Tigray. Informal transfers on private accounts are considerable in the Philippines. In China, not only are informal family-based support systems

strong, but the structural features of the rural economy itself - access to land, either individually or collectively - guarantees economic security.

Poor people and other vulnerable groups often face frequent and immediate hardship during periods of economic upheaval or other emergencies. Indeed, even in prospering economies, some families will face hardship due to loss of job, illness, or chronic poverty. Safety nets should thus be a permanent feature of social policy. In good times, they help families in difficult circumstances. In bad times, it is much easier and more effective to expand existing programs than to build them from scratch during an emergency.

Risks can vary and affect households (illness, disability or death in a family, unemployment of the wage earner), communities and regions (floods, famine, epidemics) and countries (drought, global financial risks, shifts in terms of trade, etc). The adverse impact of these risks can be highly damaging for the incomes and well-being of the poor, and for human development generally. The World Bank believes that governments and the international financial institutions therefore have a special role in helping to protect the poor during times of individual or widespread crisis.

“Social safety nets offer protection by providing income through cash transfer programs, subsidies on staple foods and other items, employment through labour-intensive public works programs, and cash



through targeted human development programs. Also included are programs that give the poor access to essential public services, such as school vouchers or scholarships and fee waivers for health care services or for home heating in cold climates. Informal (private) safety net arrangements may also be important in providing households security, and must be considered in the design of publicly financed social safety nets. Cash transfers between households are important in many regions" (World Bank, 2002).

The overall policy and directive framework of the GoE are embodied in the following key documents directly related to the role of the state in social protection and welfare. the National Policy for Disaster Prevention and Management (1993) and National Disaster Directives (1993) which set the policy framework and the accompanying policy measures and directives for implementation. The DPPC established the Employment Generation Scheme Guidelines (1997) providing a detailed summary of guidelines for the implementation of the program. This guideline was well developed and initially received although its contents are not adhered to by most regional administrations. Widening the GoE response away from a disaster preparedness towards a more strategic approach, the GoE developed the Ethiopia Food Security Strategy, (1996) with the assistance of the World Bank and the regions developed the further Food Security Program Documents (1998). These policy statement and guidelines have been incorporated into the Ethiopian interim Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (2001)

and the Poverty Reduction Program (2002). According to the World Bank

"Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP) describe a country's macroeconomic, structural and social policies and programs to promote growth and reduce poverty, as well as associated external financing needs. PRSPs are prepared by governments through a participatory process involving civil society and development partners" (2002).



As already stated, a combination of supply failures increase market prices beyond the purchasing capacity of poor households leading to entitlement failure. This scenario is particularly although not exclusively an Ethiopian one as even in the developed countries of the transatlantic nations many individuals and households fall outside the normal socio-economic system and come to depend upon income support and hand outs. The last 30 years has seen the mushrooming of relief based organisations such as Oxfam, Save the Children Fund (SCF), International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), Lutheran World Federation (LWF), United Nations High commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the UN Disaster and Humanitarian Affairs Office (UNDHA) and the European



Community Humanitarian Office (ECHO) to name but a handful. Accordingly, a large literature has been developed in response to slow and quick onset disasters and the provisioning of relief and rehabilitative assistance to disaster victims, as a form of social protection. However, in recent years discussion about the 'relief / development continuum' has changed the way that both theoreticians and practitioners perceive disaster management and prevention. According to Smith and Maxwell

"The basic idea is simple and sensible. Emergencies are costly in terms of human life and resources. They are disruptive of development. They demand a long period of rehabilitation. And they have spawned bureaucratic structures, lines of communication and organisational cultures and duplicate development institutions and sometimes cut across them....If relief and development can be linked, so the theory goes, these deficiencies can be overcome. Better development can reduce the need for emergency relief and better relief can contribute towards development and better rehabilitation can ease transition between the two" (Smith and Maxwell 1994: Pg. 1)

An example of linking relief to development is the new policy of the European Commission Food Security and Food Aid Program not to import relief food where possible but to provide cash to purchase the cereals from surplus producing areas. This has encouraged producers and strengthened the local economy in the food aid recipient state. Another example

includes EGS programs where relief food is channelled through labour intensive public works for food security rather than being handed out gratuitously. This has enabled many thousands of Kms of rural access roads and soil and water conservation structures to be constructed to help mitigate against the effects of famine. Another element of disaster prevention and management has been the focus on Famine Early Warning Systems (FEWS) and the establishment of large in-country food stocks – Food Security Reserves (FSRs) within which pre-positioned relief food inputs reduce the time taken for food aid imports – normally up to six months for East Africa. Work on linking relief to development in Ethiopia has been conducted by Davies (1994), DPPC NEWS and Herbinger (1994) among others.

Social protection in Ethiopia, has been funded largely through food aid related public works programs, although differentially described in international literature labour intensive public works. These might best be seen as

"work programs that provide employment and, typically, generate public goods such as physical infrastructure, through labour intensive means and assist in providing permanent access to food in sufficient quantity and quality for an active and healthy life" (Middlebrook (1998).

Public works policies and programs aimed at increased food security should address availability and entitlement issues at both individual, community



and national levels if they are to provide meaningful employment opportunities to unemployed and under-employed groups. The international experience has been modestly positive as claimed by Von Braun, A., et al:

"Three central problems facing Africa today - food insecurity, growing un-employment and poor infrastructure, need to be, and can be, addressed simultaneously by appropriate action through LIPW programs" (Von Braun et al, 1991).

Despite this assertion, experience has been varied both in terms of programming approaches and implementation results. Employment creation (long term and short term) relies upon many factors among which macro-economic reforms are most likely to create major long term employment opportunities coupled with other employment based initiatives such as micro-finance schemes etc. However, wage and employment markets are also dependent on a range of additional factors such as seasonality within the agricultural cycle. This is a particularly important factor in Ethiopia.

IF LIPW/EGS are properly designed they should address a number of risks systematically through the transfer of resources and stabilisation of vulnerability and entitlements as well as "decreasing the risk of consumption shortfalls among the poor" (Ravallion, 1990). However, it would be better that LIPW/EGS complement a basket of development instruments geared towards poverty alleviation rather than addressing short term fluctuations in

food supply as practised in many parts of Ethiopia.

Important work in the area of disaster management and safety nets as a form of social protection in Ethiopia includes: Alder and Elder (1985), Linner (1986). The UN prepared international guidelines for disaster prevention, preparedness and mitigation in what has been called the Yokohama Message, Strategy and Plan of Action (UN, 1994). Others with wide experience in disasters include Kent (1987) in his book on disaster causation and practise. The role of early warning systems in disaster management has been covered by Davies (1996), Buchanan-Smith and Davies (1997) and Borton and Shoham (1991). Important work on disaster prevention includes Dreze (1989), Borton (1984, 1988, 1989), Eicher (1985), Mackrey (1957) and work on hazards includes: Blaikie et al (1994), O'Keefe and Wisner (1977), Timberlake (1984), Glantz (1987).

The importance of developing sustainable rural livelihoods concepts has been largely developed by the Institute for Development Studies (IDS) and Overseas Development Institute in the UK with financial backing from DFID. Parallel research has been undertaken by UNDP and FAO again focused around the need to develop sustainable livelihoods based on clear analysis of livelihood constraints. Pioneering work in this area has been conducted by Carney (1998, 1999) in defining different approaches to understanding livelihoods although very much based on the work of



Chambers and Conway (1992). Other authors such as Thin et al (2001), Hann et al (2000), Turton (2000), Francis (2000) and Scoones (1998) have looked at the impact of development policy on rural livelihoods. Bebbington (1999) looked at livelihoods and poverty and Hobley and Shields D (2000) looked at the reality of trying to transform structures and processes in forestry. Specific work around livelihoods in Ethiopia has been spearheaded by Rahmato (1988, 1991, 1992, 1994). On coping strategies Frankenburger (1992), Downing (1986, 1988a, 1988b), Webb (1991), Davies (1996), Corbett (1988) provide many insights including the stages of capital build up and loss.

DIFFERENT COUNTRY EXPERIENCES:

The following short review summarises the key literature covered in the context of specific countries, with particular reference to the Maharashtra EGS experience, and draws upon the main working conclusions. The summaries largely stem from the work of Von Braun et al (1991), the International Labour Organisation (ILO), Drèze and Sen, Clay and Hossain, M., but also expand the discussion by including additional texts of interest.

Evaluation of LIPW for food security initiatives in Africa: Nigeria, Niger, Burkina Faso, Senegal, Cameroon, Sudan, Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda, Botswana, Zimbabwe and Mozambique and Asia: Bangladesh, India and China conducted by Von Braun et al forwarded a checklist for screening the

scope for LIPW for food security in Africa. The report states that:

"While there are important macro-economic and institutional issues that determine the scope of end constraints for public works programs, many policy questions for screening the scope of public works programs for food security improvements remain country - and location - specific (Von Braun et al, 1991: 15-16).

The report highlights a number of important steps in the screening process as follows:

"(i) Country and location specific public works screening; (ii) Defining the problem overlap between food security problems and the deficiency in public goods; (iii) Consider public works programs versus alternative instruments and (iv) Institutional and implementation issues must be considered" (ibid.)

This framework will be used to present a detailed philosophical approach to EGS presented in chapter four. The following summary of the Maharashtra experience is strengthened with the researchers field notes after visits in 1998 and 1999. In 1999 I led a study visit of 16 Ethiopian government officials to Maharashtra to compare and contrast the program with the Ethiopian program.

Arguably the most successful labour intensive public works program is the Maharashtra Employment Guarantee Scheme (EGS) which has become an international model for many countries including Ethiopia. In 1997 the Ethiopian Federal DPPC and



representatives from Amhara and Tigray regions visited India to learn from the experience gained since 1972. The final study visit report indicated that:

"India has a well established strategy and experience in disaster preparedness and management based upon a determination to alleviate the chronic problems of unemployment, under-employment and poverty. This strategy gives considerable emphasis to creating employment programs that generate income to vulnerable sections of the society and augment the development efforts of the affected areas...This rich and long experience provides lessons to developing countries like Ethiopia" DPPC (1997)

The Maharashtra program evolved through a desire to alleviate poverty by providing gainful employment to the poorer sections of the community in rural areas in the State in the year 1972. The State Government has given "statutory support to the guarantee of employment through the enactment of the Maharashtra Employment Guarantee Act, 1977, which has been brought into force from 26th January 1979" (GoM, 1981). The program involved the design of a range of employment generation programs like the 'Rural Works Program', 'Crash Scheme for Rural Employment Program', pilot 'Intensive Rural Employment Program' and programs designed for rendering assistance to small and marginal farmers, agricultural labourers and rural artisans. The principal aim of the employment guarantee scheme in Maharashtra is to

"provide gainful and productive employment to rural communities who are

in need of work and are prepared to do manual labour but cannot find it independently. The employment has to be both gainful to the individual and productive to the economy of the state. The guarantee to provide work has been restricted to unskilled manual work. The second fundamental objective of the scheme is that on completion of the works undertaken, durable community assets should be generated and that the wages paid to the workers should be linked with the quantity of work done" (Middlebrook 1999, Field Notes).

The Maharashtra EGS is a 'demand driven self targeted' program and physical planning targets are not fixed but depend on labour demand for the program. As of the author's visit earlier this year, a total of 341661 different work activities have been started under the EGS since its commencement in 1972 up until March, 1997 and out of these 323,262 (94 per cent) of the works are completed. The labour days employed on the program since inception is 1,901,000,000 equivalent to 5,703,000 mt of food equivalent. This is equal to 211,222 mt ⁸ per annum of food equivalent provided in cash (GoM, 1995). Analysis by Ezekiel and Stuyt (1989) shows that "program provided employment volume is roughly a mirror image of agricultural employment: when agricultural employment is up, EGS employment is down and vice versa" (Ezekiel et al 1989). While the Indian and Ethiopian EGS necessarily revolve around different contexts of implementation the relationship

⁸ Based on a calculation of US \$ 300 per Mt which is the standard EC planning guideline used in 1999.



between agricultural employment and EGS is a similar facet of both.

A review of public rural works for relief and development in Bangladesh concluded that "*public works have the potential to serve both relief and development objectives*" and in the 1980s the FFW program had the capacity to generate about 100 million person days of employment (about 17 days per landless worker). However, the Bangladeshi experience also demonstrated the complexity of providing employment opportunities and major problems such as the high degree of:

"leakage of resources during the implementation of the program", "lack of technical expertise", dampened community initiative to undertake small scale projects through mobilisation of voluntary labour". However, a positive side effect of the rural works program is that it "increased interactions between various layers of the local self-government units" and it has "prompted popular participation in rural development activities" (Hossain and Akash 1993).

While not on such a large scale, Senegal has also been involved in labour intensive public works to ameliorate the problem of unemployment. In preceding years the GDP of Senegal has only grown by 2.4 per cent per annum which according to the World Bank (1989) is the lowest rate in an African country not affected by military struggle of conflict. Whilst this low rate is largely caused by fluctuations in world market prices for groundnuts urban consumer subsidies and wage policies have also

played a role. In 1986, mean daily calorie consumption was found to be only 1,900 Kcals per capita in the villages of the Sahelian Zone and 1,950 in the Sudanian Zone (Reardon 1990). In order to tackle slow growth Senegal structural adjustment programs were implemented to promote privatisation, retrenchment of public sector employees and removal of state subsidies. According to Von Braun et al (1991: 69) the "*cornerstone of the policy*" involved diversifying the production base away from groundnut production with a goal of reaching food security by the year 2000⁹. This policy called for an increase in cereal production and reduction of imports.

The result of the structural adjustment policy has been increasing unemployment and under-employment and figures of "100,000 new job seekers entering the labour market each year" (EIU 1990). The increasing destruction of feeder roads has given rise to a large potential for labour intensive public works for food security in recent years. The Directorate for Employment Creation (Presidents Office), Ministry of Water Resources and Ministry of Agriculture are key organisations involved in labour intensive works. The major employment based scheme in Senegal was initiated with funding from the World Bank and WFP (US\$ 50 million) with the aim of generating 7,000 person years of employment over the three year project period and creating up to 70,000 jobs. The experience of

⁹ However, it remains perfectly unclear in the report whether this implies national or household security.



some projects showed that payment in food soon became less attractive and "eventually US\$ 1.5 per day was given which increased the labour demand for the program and soon labour was rationed on some projects to 3 months at a time" (Von Braun et al 1991). Excess labour was stated a major problem.

The Chinese experience in LIPW for food security shows that government targeted the programs to areas of great rural poverty and vulnerability. Between 1985-97 2.7 billion Yuan worth of surplus grain, cotton and cloth were contributed for public works programs. The in kind goods were monetised at a province level to provide paid employment to poor farmers. During this period:

"completed public works... include 120,000 Km of roads of which 46,000 Km were new state class motor roads, 7,200 bridges, 172,600 hectares of irrigated land, 240,000 hectares of land protected from water logging, 1.13 million hectares of land protected from soil erosion, 1.56 million kilowatts of increased capacity of generators at small hydro power stations and an increase in drinking water supplies for 14.5 million people and 9.7 million domestic animals" (Ling and Jiang Zhong-yi, 1990). However, in reviewing this work Von Braun et al state that "no comprehensive effects of household-level food security effects of the large public works program" have so far been conducted (Von Braun et al 1991, 24)

The Nigerian, Sudan, Tanzanian, Ethiopian and Zimbabwe experience all demonstrated the need for the

expansion of employment opportunities and acknowledged the diverse range of institutional capacities and approaches for implementing a range of employment based programs. In addition, and importantly, the research concluded, "Successful examples are emerging" and that fortunately:

"the simplistic notion on the part of many governments that food insecurity is a problem of food self-sufficiency is on its way out" and "many African countries strengthened their capacity to assess household food security problems" In addition governments began to establish "food security units" and "food security strategies" at high governmental levels.(ibid. 43)

Major shifts are reported to include "a concentration of activities sectorally and geographically", "a shift in public works program's inputs away from only food to also include non-food inputs and cash", and "an increasing emphasis on private participation in public works programs" (ibid: 46).

Experience in EGS related interventions in Ethiopia goes back many years to the 1970s and 1980s although at that time, experiments with LIPW were not referred to as EGS but rather FFW. The work of both governmental and international organisations such as WFP, ILO, UNDP, the European Commission, SOS Sahel, Lutheran World Federation (LWF), CARE International would need to be recalled.





As part of the new policy initiatives of the FDRE, EGS were heralded in 1993 as the "cornerstone" of the NPDPM (GoE, 1993). In 1997 the DPPC finalised the EGS Guidelines and sent hundreds of copies out to the regions. The guidelines cover the entire planning and implementation approach for EGS and were heavily influenced by the results of a study to visit the Maharashtra Employment Guarantee Scheme. The guidelines, appeared to offer an opportunity for Ethiopia to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of food aid interventions by aspiring to two distinct but objectives: the first is a relief objective focused on nutritional / short term productive assets protection and the second relates to development although the extent to which this objective relates to the mandate of line departments at the sub-regional level may be unclear. EGS planning is made through an annual 'contingency plan' which in itself does not call for detailed plans to be drawn up and the "general quality of EGS implementation remains (differentially) poor in most regions" (Middlebrook, 1999).

"However, the potential for the Ethiopian EGS is unparalleled in international experience as EGS resources are derived

from the annual relief appeal. Even including recent production figures the average 10 year volume of food aid assistance to Ethiopia is in the range of ~500,000 mt per annum. This resource is capable of providing the labour to build 83,333 Km of rural access roads a year, or 1,111,111Kms of hillside terracing per year or labour for 1,388 average sized earth dams based on WFPs standard work norms" (Middlebrook, 2000)

And yet, "because of poor planning and implementation, these potentials are not realised and vulnerability continues to persist in many areas" (Masefield, 1996). While one cannot argue that EGS is the only solution to problem or rural vulnerability and dis-entitlement, of course additional government inputs are needed in other sectoral areas, "EGS can form a complimentary approach to addressing rural needs in food insecure areas as has been seen in countries such as India where EGS and Employment Assurance Schemes (EAS) are in operation" (ibid).

It is argued that in 1998 and again in 1999 many regions and international NGOs have failed to adequately implement the national policy and EGS guidelines as Gratuitous Relief (GR) is increasingly becoming a position of 'first' rather than 'last' resort. This is surprising given the cost of food aid assistance (US\$ 200-400 per annum) in areas like East Haraghe, North and South Wollo and Borena among others, where authorities are once again opting for free hand outs again despite the fact that the national policy and EGS guidelines are clear in their commitment to increasing the effectiveness of EGS



related works. In some areas beneficiaries have received food in exchange for work at some hypothetical later date. This practice can no longer be allowed to continue as the guiding principles of self respect and independence are once again being compromised. The implementation reports from EC funded NGOs in the field of EGS projects stands as a testament of the many layers of problems which the Ethiopian EGS remains challenged.

In 1998 an EC funded Italian NGO called CISP reported that because:

"pastoralists do not live in large communities...it is often difficult to gather people for EGS activities" and "In some areas the beneficiaries were involved in EGS...In some areas because of the seriousness of the food shortage at the time of the distribution beneficiaries received the ration with the understanding that they will perform some of the activities...at later stage".

Similarly an SCF (UK) field report stated that;

"the project will attempt to distribute the food commodities through EGS.... The implementation modalities of the National Policy on Disaster Prevention and Preparedness will be through FFW, EBSN and EGS...In most areas where emergency food assistance is needed the EGS will be the modality used....Therefore the food resource will be used to execute EGS programs in some of the Woredas where it is feasible....The EGS activities to be implemented can not be exactly quantified at this stage...". In addition, the same field manager stated that the "guidelines

concerning EGS are quite theoretical, the reality looks different in many ways. In the communities there is a mixture of EGS, FFW, social mobilisation etc. to the point that one cannot relate a specific amount of food to a specific amount of output of activities. Sometimes the work is done first and the payment comes later, sometimes the other way around...SCF is not involved in the design and planning of activities because that might raise expectations that sometimes cannot be fulfilled if allocations are not given etc.... SCF has no capacity to monitor the implementation of EGS activities... The Woreda sector offices don't even have the capacity to carry out their regular work and therefore have no time to deal with relief EGS activities". Further communication shows that "furthermore, the Government's capacity in Ethiopia is too weak to implement any kind of EGS. The NGOs goal is not to invest in public infrastructure and force people to work for their food.... Also, the NGO has no means, no cash to do this monitoring". (SCF-UK, Relief Field Manager, 1998)

Implicit in the above discussion on EWS and EGS is the modality of targeting relief resources. However, it appears that no clear targeting modality has been internationally accepted for EGS and some major differences in approach exist¹⁰. While the principle underlying targeting is relatively simple, the practicality of targeting-based protection of entitlements is far more complicated. It would be possible to categorise targeting into five different classifications as follows:

¹⁰ A good targeting system should protect (either directly or indirectly) the entitlements of all those threatened by starvation and it should be noted that different targeting procedures need be developed for different situations and contexts. It should also be acknowledged that no targeting system is perfect.



- i. *'Universal Targeting'*: Here the right to food is guaranteed to all at the same rate (for analysis of the Egyptian experience to food subsidies see Alderman and Braun, 1984)
- ii. *'Market Based Targeting'*: this involves no direct selection of beneficiaries and the intervention is made to directly manipulate price, supply of goods and demand of selected goods;
- iii. *'Self Targeting'*: whereby beneficiaries make their own decision on whether to participate;
- iv. *'Administrative Targeting'*: whereby beneficiary selection is done by outsiders using objective, standardised, observable indicators;
- v. *'Community Targeting'*: where beneficiaries are selected by insiders/potential gainers such as community members. This approach can use more subjective and complex selection criteria.

These different approaches demonstrate different advantages (benefit elements) and disadvantages (cost elements) as well as operating at different levels (individual, community etc.). Despite the desirability of adopting a self targeting approach, much would need to be done in Ethiopia prior to recognition of such an approach by the administration. Self targeting may be seen as a facet of democracy, putting the right to welfare in the hands of those who need it, not those in the administration where the political economy can impact upon the selection of workers. For a fuller discussion of

these different classifications see Drèze and Sen 1989: 104, and SCF (UK) 1997: 14.

A 1991 report by the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) stated:

“Income generation through labour-intensive public works for food security can reduce risks for food insecure households, both directly through wage earnings in the short run and indirectly through income flows in the long run. Program design influences the food security effects of public works. Income effects of public works also can also generate favourable private savings and investment effects that improve household food security. Employment Generation Schemes reach the food insecure through mechanisms and design features such as wage-rate policy, regional targeting and the specific selection of households and household members. Self targeting is normally a unique feature of properly designed public works” (IFPRI, 1991)

Of significant interest to this study is the extent to which *“the household food security effects of labour intensive public works are a function of the program design”* (ibid: xii). Program design involves a number of elements including design of targeting modalities. The discussion on targeting needs to be related to the discussion in 3.3.1 below summarising the international experience.

Despite the positive nature of the national policy and the good operational guidelines provided by DPPC it appears that the true potential of the EGS program is being retarded and a number of policy and institutional



constraints exists. These are clearly documented in the recent work of the European Commission (co-ordinated by the researcher in his professional capacity as EC EGS Advisor) and regional governments of Amhara and Tigray. The reports state the following major policy issues remain unresolved:

“Inadequate food security related policies and unclear legal environment; poor policy orientation at all administrative levels on NPDPM and EGS; relationship between regional Food Security Program and EGS interventions not clearly defined; delay in publication and dissemination of national EGS Guidelines; regional Contingency Planning capacity needs to be strengthened; the relief plan only indicate no. of beneficiaries, food requirements and eventually some EGS activities without indicating the required financial and material support for EGS implementation; and, EGS planning and implementation process for Labour Intensive Public Works largely needs to be further defined”.

“Practical implementation constraints include: shelf project preparation and updating not conducted; contingency plans are not prepared in sufficient detail; Employment Needs Assessment (ENA) techniques not clearly defined; targeting system needs to be strengthened; program design and implementation inadequate; insufficient transport facilities and budget; lack of skilled staff as Woreda level involved in planning and implementation; limited knowledge and practical experience on labour intensive work techniques, project identification and planning; lack of capital inputs for project implementation and capacity building (hand tools, cement, gabion etc.); work norms not sufficiently adhered to; less than optimal relief food delivery; untimely mobilisation of wage and non wage inputs; limited road access during

rainy season; input, process and Impact (ANRS/TNRS, 1998)

Important work on EGS and public works in Ethiopia includes Clay (1986), Dandekar (1983 and 1980), Deshpande (1982), D’Silva (1983), Braun and Webb (1991), Ravallion (1990), Walker (1987), Middlebrook (1999, 2000). Braun and Web have developed the term labour intensive public works for food security, therefore making an important link for this research. The NGO experience in implementing EGS has been well documented by CARE (1992, 1996), SCF (1999, 2000), IFPRI (1992), WFP (1993, 1994, 2000), EC (1998, 1999, 2000) and DPPC (1995a, b, 1997 a, b, c). The work of Jendon in Ethiopia on EBSNs also needs to be acknowledged. This work has focused on the practical evaluation of EBSN planning and implementation in southern region. Important work on disaster prevention includes Drèze (1989), Borton (1984, 1988, 1989), Eicher (1985), Mackrey (1957) Work on hazards includes Blaikie et al (1994), O’Keefe and Wisner (1977), Timberlake (1984), Glantz (1987).

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