**Ethiopian Productive Safety Net Program (PSNP), Social Protection Nutrition Sensitive intervention**

The Government of Ethiopia has developed several policies, plans and strategies with a view to progressively fulfil constitutional rights of the nation. Among many, food security program can be mentioned as one major strategy which enable the vulnerable community to strive to fulfil their right to food. The Ethiopian Food Security Program consists of the Productive Safety Net Program (PSNP), Household Asset Building Program (HABP), the Voluntary Resettlement Program and the Complementary Community Investment Program (CCI).

The Productive Safety Net Program (PSNP) is a development-oriented social protection program launched in Ethiopia in 2005. PSNP is aimed at enabling the rural poor facing chronic food insecurity to resist shocks, create assets and become food self-sufficient. PSNP provides multi-annual predictable transfers, as food, cash or a combination of both, to help chronically food insecure people survive food deficit periods and avoid depleting their productive assets while attempting to meet their basic food requirements. The combination of cash and food transfers is based on season and need, with food given primarily in the lean season between June and August. Vulnerable households receive six months of assistance annually to protect them from acute food insecurity. The idea is to transition away from the emergency relief system.

The PSNP provides 8.3 million chronically food insecure households in 319 district/woredas with predictable cash and/or food transfers during lean months to smooth consumption in these households, protect and help them grow their assets thus improving their resilience to shocks and resulting in their graduation from the program.. Out of the total chronically food insecure household, 40% receive food and 60% receive cash (Berhane, 2011).

Able-bodied members of PSNP households must participate in productive activities that will build more resilient livelihoods, such as rehabilitating land and water resources and developing community infrastructure, including rural road rehabilitation and building schools and clinics. The Ministry of Agriculture’s Disaster Risk Management and Food Security Sector, along with regional governments, is responsible for program coordination, management and implementation.

A number of studies have shown that PSNP has had a positive impact on the livelihoods of households. PSNP is enhancing community-level infrastructure and contributing to environmental transformation. At the household level, families are experiencing improved food security, increased asset creation and protection, increased utilization of education and health services and improved agricultural productivity.

**Major achievement of PSNP on Nutritional status of the target community**

Based on the assessment result finding on analysis of Ethiopia’s Productive Safety Net Program and its linkages, IFPRI,2008, The Productive Safety Nets Program together with the Other Food Security Program,

* **Improved diet quantity, quality, and diversity –** PSNP provide additional resources for families to pay for everyday needs and services, allowing more money to be spent on non-staple foods, including fruits, vegetables, and animal food products**.** Ethiopia’s PSNP improved 75 percent of participants’ diets in both quantity and quality; and beneficiaries were more likely to consume the required 1,800 calories per day than non-beneficiaries **(Gilligan, D., et al., (2008).**
* **Decreased vulnerability to shifting patterns of agriculture and climate:** When households are relatively more food secure, they are better able to adapt to changing climates and seasonal shifts in agricultural production, contributing to a reduction in seasonal increases in malnutrition
* **Decreased childhood mortality:** Conditional cash transfer program have been shown to contribute to reductions in child mortality. Though it is difficult to conclude that the reduction in child mortality in Ethiopia (table 1) is because of PSNP but it contributes its own share.
* **Strengthened women’s empowerment:** Since Ethiopian PSNP is mostly targeted to women, it increases household investments in better nutrition for the whole family. PSNP have shown a positive impact on women and children’s health and nutrition status, and household food consumption because PSNP creates employment opportunities and increase decision-making power for women which can also improve child nutrition (Betelhem etal, 2014)
* **Together with food security and health programs, PSNP contributes its own share to achieve the following results on major nutrition indicators**

Table: EDHS data on prevalence of key child (<5 years) under nutrition outcomes

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 2000 | 2005 | 2011 | 2015 |
| U5 mortality rate (per 1000) | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | | 166 |  |  |  | | 133 | 88 | 59 |
| Stunting | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | | 57.8 |  |  |  | | 51.1 | 44.4 | 39.5 |
| Wasting | |  | | --- | | 11 | | 12 | 9.7 | 9 |
| Underweight | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | | 42.1 |  |  |  | | 34.9 | 28.7 | 23.8 |

Source: EDHS, 2000,2005, 2011, 2015

* **Reduced household food insecurity**;
* **Raised consumption levels**;
* **Increases mean calorie availability;**
* **Encouraged households to engage in production and investment through enhanced access to credit,**
* **Increased use of modern farming techniques, and**
* **Entry into nonfarm own business activities; and whether it has led to sustained asset accumulation.**

References

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