



Productive Safety Net Program Ethiopia

A public works program that provides cash and food for nine million food-insecure Ethiopian households

Summary

As the EDRI and IFPRI write, “For over 30 years, responses to food insecurity in Ethiopia were dominated by emergency food aid. While this food aid saved lives, it often failed to protect livelihoods and this became a growing concern. In response, during 2005 the Ethiopian Government revised its emergency food aid system and launched the Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP) - a more productive approach to providing a safety net to vulnerable populations,” (1). This program provided food or pay for productive work on public infrastructure. The program is now in its fifth phase 2021-2026 (PSNP5).

Rationale

"The PSNP provides a safety net for households that are both chronically food insecure and poor, and often affected by shocks. With an objective to assure food consumption, and simultaneously to protect and develop assets along with services," (2).

Defining Principles

Food security is a right and everyone is employable.

Dates of Operation

June, 2005 - 2026 (3)(4)

Number of Program Participants

9 million in 2021. 7.6 million (10% of the population) in 2009 (6).

Person-days of Employment

6 months per year (7).

Criteria for Participation

Able-bodied members of the community who can complete labor-intensive public works

Pay and Benefits

3 kg of wheat or maize per person per day or 6 birr per day (8). “Transfers totaled USD 32.8 for male-headed households and USD 37.1 for female-headed households in 2007,” (9).



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Financing

In 2009, the budget was ETB 2 trillion (USD 360 million) and 458,000 metric tons of cereals, about 1.2% GDP. In 2021, USD 2.2 billion were committed by the Ethiopian government and international partners through 2026 (Canadian International Development Agency, UK Department for International Development, Irish Aid, European Commission, Royal Netherlands Embassy, Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, United States Agency for International Development, World Food Programme, and World Bank) (10)(11). 1,549,000 Metric Tons of food transferred (12).

Implementation

At the Federal level the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development - Disbursement of Cash and Resources to Ministries and Regions, and Financial management of the PSNP. The Ministry of Agriculture oversees management including disaster risk, management, food security sector, and natural resource management, providing day to day management, technical support and program monitoring (13).

Types of Work

Watershed development; soil and water conservation measures; rangeland management; development of community assets like roads, water infrastructure, schools, and healthcare centers; climate change mitigation.

Notable Features

The case of Ethiopia's PSNP demonstrates the importance of integrating environment and climate change mitigation and adaptation when formulating and implementing social protection programmes. The PSNP has successfully and meaningfully reduced food insecurity in Ethiopia, especially in areas prone to drought-induced shocks to food supply (14).

Challenges

Key challenges include: building a "robust monitoring and evaluation system within weak government institutions; balancing the speed of the program launch with the need to immediately establish a reliable stream of information; and harmonizing the monitoring and evaluation requirements of the Government and outside donor institutions," (15).



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Challenges continued

Furthermore, “dedicated resources are required for front-line implementers and communities to support meaningful community engagement,” (16)(17).



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Citations

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