



Ethiopia

**Productive Safety Net
Programme (PSNP)**

**Assessment of
Graduation
Report**



theIDLgroup
in association with
AZ Consult and ODI

August 2010

theIDLgroup
Church Barn
Church Lane
Tickenham
Bristol BS21 6SD, UK
www.theIDLgroup.com

info@theIDLgroup.com

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This assessment would not have been possible without the efforts and contributions of a wide number of organisations and individuals. The team would like to thank the World Bank for commissioning the assessment on behalf of the Food Security Coordination Directorate and its development partners. We would also like to express our huge appreciation for the guidance and information received from these institutions both directly and through the Steering Committee. Those organisation would gave generously of their time and information include: the Food Security Coordination Directorate, the Federal Agricultural Extension Directorate, CIDA, DFID, EU, Irish Aid, USAID and the World Bank. The team would like to specifically acknowledge the guidance and support received from Ato Berhanu Wolde Michael (Head of the Food Security Coordination Directorate), and Wout Soer (Task Team Leader for the Productive Safety Net Programme at the World Bank).

A number of other individuals have also been generous with their time and responded to our questions: Ato Chala Hordofa from the Oromiya National Regional State Council Office, Lorraine Coulter and Zerihun Mekuria from the Livelihoods Integration Unit, and Dr Alemayehu from IFPRI.

The team would also like to thank the Regional Disaster Prevention, Preparedness and Food Security Commissions of Amhara, Oromiya, SNNP and Tigray for their assistance in supporting the fieldwork, and communicating with the woredas; for the information and guidance they provided the team; and for the great efforts they went to in organising the Regional Meetings to discuss how graduation systems could be improved. We hope that this report provides them with valuable insights into what is happening on the ground, and addresses their needs to improve graduation identification processes. Staff from Regional Extension Offices, Women's Affairs Bureaux of Agriculture and Rural Development (BoARDs) and Bureaux of Finance and Economic Development (BoFEDs) were also generous with their time as were staff from ORDA, REST, CARE and CRS.

Woreda staff - particularly members of the Woreda Food Security Task Force and staff of the Food Security Office – gave freely of their time, helpful in arranging kebele field visits, and valuable sources of information and insights. In most woredas, staff accompanied the field team during their kebele and community level data collection and provided invaluable support in translation and by providing on-the-spot triangulation.

Finally, the team would like to express their huge appreciation to stakeholders at community level. DAs, KFSTFs, CFSTFs, KACs, Kebele Managers, clients, graduates and non-clients all put up with our persistent questioning, our efforts to check and cross-check information and our desire to understand the best we could the reality of the graduate identification process. We hope any changes to the system, brought about by this report, simplifies their tasks.

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ACSI	Amhara Credit and Savings Institute
ATJK	Adami Tulu Jido Kombolcha
BoARD	Bureau of Agriculture and Rural Development
BoFED	Bureau of Finance and Economic Development
CCI	Complementary Community Infrastructure
CFSTF	Community Food Security Task Force
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
DFID	Department For International Development (British)
DPPFSC	Disaster Prevention and Preparedness and Food Security Commission
DRMFSS	Disaster Risk Management and Food Security Sector
ETB	Ethiopian Birr
EWRD	Early Warning and Response Department
FAED	Federal Agricultural Extension Department
FEG	Food Economy Group
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FSP	Food Security Programme
FSPD	Food Security Programme Department
GGN	Graduation Guidance Note
GoE	Government of Ethiopia
HABP	Household Asset Building Programme
HH	Household
IFPRI	International Food Policy Research Institute
IGA	Income Generating Activity
JRIS	Joint Review and Implementation Support
KAC	Kebele Appeals Committee
KFSTF	Kebele Food Security Task Force
MoARD	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development
NRM	Natural Resource Management
ODI	Overseas Development Institute

OFSP	Other Food Security Programmes
ORDA	Organisation for Relief and Development of Amhara
PSNP	Productive Safety Net Programme
RAA	Roving Appeals Audit
RAED	Regional Agricultural Extension Department
REST	Relief Society of Tigray
RFSTF	Regional Food Security Task Force
RRM	Rapid Response Mechanism
RRT	Rapid Response Team
SMEDO	Small and Micro Enterprise Development Office
SNNP	Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples [Region]
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WFSTF	Woreda Food Security Task Force
WOARD	Woreda Office of Agriculture and Rural Development

Part 1:
Introduction and
Graduation Concept

INTRODUCTION

1. The Productive Safety Net Programme was launched in February 2005. It has been actively linked with Other Food Security Programmes (OFSP), particularly household packages through credit, since 2006. The Government of Ethiopia and its development partners intend that these combined programmes (under the umbrella of the Food Security Programme) will enable chronically food insecure households to improve their lives and, once they have achieved food sufficiency, to graduate from the PSNP.

2. In 2007, representatives from federal and regional food security offices and development partners met to discuss what process should be employed to identify those households who have achieved food sufficiency and can therefore graduate from the programme. A Graduation Guidance Note was developed as a consequence of this workshop and was rolled out to regions and woredas in 2008.

3. This assessment provides a review of the experiences to-date of identifying households ready to exit the PSNP. This report describes the actual processes being followed in identifying PSNP graduates, comments on the accuracy of these processes, and documents agreements made by the Government of Ethiopia and its development partners on what changes may be required to improve systems of graduate identification in the future.

4. This assessment has been commissioned by the World Bank on behalf of the federal Food Security Programme Department (FSPD) and its development partners. The report has been produced by a team comprising the following members:

- Judith Sandford, Team Leader
- Gebrehiwot Hailemariam and Adane Tesfaye, Assistant team Leaders
- Alemtsehay Abera and Shumbash Tola, Fieldwork Coordinators
- Melete Gebregiorgis and Hiwot Workneh, researchers
- Richard Grahn, Rachel Percy, and Steve Ashley, in-country process and product support
- Kay Sharp, Taylor Brown and Rachel Slater, desk-based advice and review
- Amdissa Teshome, in-country contract management
- Josephine Tsui, UK-based contract management

5. The Assessment was guided throughout by a federal-level Steering Committee, specifically formed for this purpose, comprising the following members:

- Ato Berhanu Wolde Michael, Head of FSPD, the Steering Committee Chair
- Colleagues from FSPD including Alemayehu Tadesse and Assefa Belachew and others
- Wout Soer and Muderis Abullahi, World Bank
- Carlo di Chiara from European Delegation
- Ayuba Sani from Irish Aid
- Tigist Yifru and Fanaye Amsalu from USAID
- Tesfu Tesfaye, DFID, and
- Matt Hobson, Acting Head of Donor Coordination Team

1.1 Objective of the Assessment

6. As stated in the Assessment Terms of Reference, the aim of this consultancy is to:
 - a. Assess the system, processes and procedures that are currently being used to determine which households graduate from the PSNP, including the experience of households who have graduated from the PSNP either through the benchmark system or as 'self-graduates';
 - b. Assess whether or not households graduated from the PSNP had achieved food sufficiency, as defined in the Graduation Guidance Note (GGN), and assess changes to their livelihoods since their graduation;
 - c. As necessary, make recommendations to improve the PSNP graduation system with the aim of ensuring that:
 - Households are not graduated from the PSNP too early or do not remain in the PSNP too long (beyond when they reach food sufficiency);
 - The systems, processes and procedures are as efficient as possible, without overstressing existing capacity, particularly at lower levels; and,
 - The safeguards outlined in the Graduation Guidance Note are implemented effectively.

1.2 Process followed

7. The approach followed by the team assumes that our role goes beyond simply conducting a high quality technical study. Studies which are good but which do not inform planning in practice are of little value. The team has therefore focused on building understanding and consensus among key stakeholders on the Assessment findings and implications at all stages of implementation – through formal and informal interaction at planning stage, during Assessment implementation in woredas, before and after fieldwork in Assessment regions, and at all stages with key stakeholders at federal level.

8. The study followed the following process, all guided and supported by the federal-level Steering Committee:

- Inception phase, in which agreements were made on Assessment structure, design and timetable
- Federal consultations with key stakeholders in Government and other organisations
- Regional briefing, consultation and planning
- Woreda-level briefing, consultation and planning
- Kebele and community-level fieldwork
- Woreda-level debriefing and consensus-building on emerging study findings
- Regional-level debriefing and consensus-building on emerging study findings
- Report writing and submission
- Discussion of ways forward in a retreat attended by SC members and key regional stakeholders

9. Elaborating on this point, two meetings were held with the Steering Committee during the inception phase and discussions held with a number of federal level and Addis based stakeholders. This process helped to ensure that the design of the Assessment was set up to meet the needs of key stakeholders. A further two meetings were held with the Steering Committee during the field work process to keep them updated on progress and issues and to

obtain feedback. A final Steering Committee meeting was held at the end of the regional consultations, prior to joint Steering Committee and regional stakeholder retreat to discuss the implications of the study for the graduation process and ways forward following the study. A number of supplementary meetings were also held with Ato Berhanu Wolde Michael, Head of the FSPD, Wout Soer from the World Bank, and other Steering Committee members.

10. Prior to going to the field, stakeholder discussions were also held at a regional level. In all regions meetings were held with the Regional Disaster Prevention, Preparedness and Food Security Commissions (DPPFSC), and in many regions discussions were also held with extension, women's affairs, and BoFED. In Amhara and Tigray stakeholder discussions were also held with ORDA and REST. Although these stakeholder consultations included data collection, it was felt to be equally important to understand the needs of regional stakeholders with regards to the graduation exercise. Regional stakeholders highlighted a number of needs including:

- Are we identifying the right graduates?
- What at each step are the errors which we need to correct to improve the system?
- Is the benchmark itself appropriate?
- Could we consider livelihood specific benchmarks?

11. In addition to the stakeholder meetings conducted at the launch of the fieldwork in each woreda, debriefing meetings were also held at the end of the fieldwork in each woreda in the presence of key stakeholders. This allowed woreda stakeholders to comment on any of the field findings and to provide clarification for any outstanding issues. The feedback from these debriefing meetings was recorded and are part of the input to this report. In addition debriefing meetings were held with each region at the end of the period of fieldwork for that region. Feedback from these meetings has been documented, and informed the team's understanding and interpretation of Assessment findings.

12. During the final phase of the assessment exercise Regional Meetings were held in each of the four regions to discuss preliminary field findings and to build consensus on what improvements are needed to graduation systems. These meetings provided key inputs to the development of the final chapter on the Way Forward.

13. Finally a federal level retreat was held to further discuss field findings; and to provide an opportunity to reach key agreements on how the graduation systems could be improved in the future.

1.3 Methodology

1.3.1 STUDY SITE SELECTION AND SAMPLING

14. In accordance with the Terms of Reference, the study covers 4 regions, 12 woredas (3 woredas in each region) and 24 Kebeles (2 kebeles in each woreda). Following a discussion with the Steering Committee, three core criteria were used to purposively sample woredas.

- **Proportion of woreda population within the PSNP.** This criterion is both relevant in its own right, and also provides some indications of depths of poverty and levels of vulnerability to shock. Woredas with a high proportion of the population in the PSNP are both likely to include households who suffer higher levels of food security, and are likely to be those which have been recurrently vulnerable to shock.
- **Proportion of PSNP clients expected to graduate.** This criterion may indicate the commitment of woreda staff to achieving graduation as well as graduation potential.

- **The capacity of the woreda to deliver timely transfers.** According to the Information centre or the IFPRI assessment. The data set was not complete and was supplemented by discussions with the region.

15. In addition to the above criteria efforts were made to ensure a geographic spread of woredas, to ensure that no more than two NGO supported woredas were sampled, and to ensure that there was some overlap with the variable levels of support pilot. Furthermore, some overlap with the IFPRI Impact Assessment has been achieved. The regions engaged strongly with the woreda selection and have endorsed the final woreda selection. The table below presents the ranking of selected woredas against the criteria:

Table 1: Assessment Woredas and Criteria for Selection

Region	Woreda	% PSNP Clients	% Graduates	Capacity
Amhara	Lasta (NGO)	H	L	M
	Kalu (Variable support) (IFPRI)	M	M	L
	Wegdie	L	H	-
Oromiya	Adami Tulu Kombolcha Jido (ATJK)	M	L	L
	Fadis (IFPRI)	H	H	H
	Oda Bultum	L	M/H	-
SNNP	Damot Gale (IFPRI)	H	L	M
	Halaba (IFPRI)	L	M	H
	Kemba (IFPRI)	M	H	-
Tigray	Ofla	L	L	H
	Ahferom (IFPRI) (NGO)	H	M	M
	Tahtay Maichew	M	H	-

16. Kebeles were selected in consultation with the Woreda Food Security Task Force. Key criteria used in kebele selection were:

- Proportion of the Population in the PSNP
- Proportion of Clients Graduating
- Livelihood zone or agro-ecological zone

1.3.2 RESEARCH METHODS USED

17. In line with the Terms of Reference the team used qualitative data collection approaches. The reasons for this being that, such approaches are most appropriate for understanding process questions, understanding the ‘hows’ and ‘whys’ regarding what is going on in practice in relation to graduation.

18. The use of qualitative research methods does not imply simply discussing with people, writing down their answers and accepting their answers as fact. Such research methods are applied with a science and a skill to ensure that findings reflect reality, and are more than just a collection of individual experiences. The nature of this process is as follows:

- Looking at an issue from different angles, talking to different people about the same issue, supplementing discussions with other sources of information, and developing a consistent view over time which withstands scrutiny and is an accurate reflection of reality – the process known as ‘triangulation’;

- Conducting conversations in such a way that checks the logic and internal consistency of what is being said with other sources of information and also other points made in the same conversation to make sure that reality is being properly understood and also to identify any potential obscuring of facts by the respondent;
- Ensuring that when discussing with groups or key informants the difference is clear between when individuals are talking about their own experiences and when talking about more generally-experienced patterns with wider applicability;
- Ensuring that when talking to individuals in case studies their specific details and explanations are clearly understood;
- Ensuring that discussions cover not only what is happening, but also how and why it is happening; this allows a much greater understanding of the dynamics of reality, and also allows much greater predictive power of what will happen under different scenarios than simply understanding the 'what' of the current situation;
- Ensuring that opportunities are taken to establish how widely the issue under discussion applies – whether it is specific to an individual (in which case it is of less interest to a study such as this one) or whether it is more widely applicable and represents a process which affects a greater population. In this way an understanding of the scale and importance of an issue is developed which is not statistical but nevertheless is quantitative in nature. So the study produces quantitative information which is indicative, but not statistically representative.

19. The adoption of these methodologies informs the use and understanding of the data from this Assessment.

- Since the study is not statistical in nature, its findings cannot be used to describe the prevalence of the issues and trends described in the study in a statistical way. Sample sizes are intentionally small to allow in-depth understanding of processes observed rather than the incidence of those processes.
- The Assessment does however provide an understanding of what is happening, why it is happening, how it is happening, and how things might be expected to change in the future under different scenarios. It also provides an understanding of how prevalent and important issues are, but without statistical representativeness
- This means that study findings are best used to open up discussion of possibilities for future action rather than prescribe what needs to be done. They inform understanding of what is happening, that there may be departures from plans, and how and why this is happening, with some indication of its importance. Whether or not the issue is sufficiently important to require action is then a matter for discussion, with the possibility of further investigation, if needed, to establish scale with more confidence.

20. A combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches was used in the fieldwork and analysis including:

- Review and analysis of documentation including data from all levels concerning graduation; existing reports and studies; the graduation guidance notes; regional benchmark criteria; PSNP documents and other key reports.
- Semi-structured key informant interviews guided by checklists.
- Focus group discussions particularly at community, kebele and woreda levels.
- Household level case studies.
- Observation.

21. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with a significant range of stakeholders and key informants as indicated below:

- Federal Government Departments
- Donors
- Regional Government Departments
- NGOs
- Woreda Food Security Taskforce
- Kebele Food Security Taskforce
- Development Agents
- Community Food security Taskforce
- Kebele Appeals Committee (KAC)
- Clients
- Non-Clients
- Graduates

22. Findings from each interview were validated in subsequent interviews, and cross-checked with available data to ensure that they were robust and accurate. Discrepancies were explored when possible, and often highlighted either key misunderstandings at different levels or differences between what people thought they should be doing and actual practice.

23. A specific set of tools were developed to support the assessment of the household food sufficiency status of households graduated from the PSNP. Household case studies were the principal instrument. A total of 27 case studies were conducted with 19 men, 2 husbands and wives together 1 woman in a male headed household and 5 women headed households. The participants were largely identified through the focus group discussions with PSNP graduates. Tools included:

- A food sufficiency self assessment tool which looked at what the food needs for households were and how they accessed these food needs over the year;
- A self-reported wellbeing assessment which asked households to rank their situation at different points in the last five years and asks them to explain the reasons for the ranking and the causes for any changes; and
- A semi structured interview which elaborates the above and also explores their experience of the graduation process.

24. In addition to the primary data collection, the consultancy team have reviewed a significant range of secondary literature and collected substantial secondary data. Information from these data sources are also incorporated in the study findings and analysis undertaken. Where information and data sources are secondary full references are provided in the bibliography.

25. The Assessment Team mainstreamed gender within the study design by looking at gender disaggregated data (where available), ensuring that gender issues were incorporated into interview checklists, and ensuring that bodies responsible for representing women were consulted. This included meeting with women's affairs representatives in all twelve woredas and Women's Affairs Bureaux in three of the four regions.

1.4 Analytical Framework

26. The Assessment followed an analytical framework developed during the inception phase, which may be found in Annex One.

27. In brief, this analytical framework asks the following questions:

- What does the guidance on graduation state is meant to happen?
- What is happening in practice?
- How can we improve the system?

1.5 Structure of report

28. This Report has six key sections, divided into 3 parts:

- **Part 1: Introduction and conceptualisation**
 - **Chapter 1.** This **Introduction** section which describes the origins of the Graduation Assessment; and the objectives, methodology, analytical framework and process followed in this assessment.
 - **Chapter 2.** The **Background** section which describes the history of the PSNP, the history of graduation in the PSNP and introduces the current guidance on graduation.
 - **Chapter 3.** The **Understanding Graduation** section which defines some of the key terms used (Graduation, Food Sufficiency and Food Security) to understand graduation before providing new analysis on the concept of graduation in order to provide conceptual clarity to inform the remainder of the study
- **Part 2: Assessment Findings**
 - **Chapter 4.** A large section on **Graduation Systems, Processes and Procedures**. This chapter and its sub-sections describe both the key attributes of the graduation processes as designed at federal and regional levels, but also what is actually being implemented by woredas and in communities.
 - **Chapter 5.** A section on **Graduation from the Perspective of Graduates** which considers graduates' views on the graduation processes, describes how graduates report their food sufficiency and wellbeing (in comparison with non-clients); and the experiences of graduates post graduation.
- **Part 3: Conclusions and Way Forward**
 - **Chapter 6.** A brief **Conclusion** section follows which highlights major themes emerging from the study
 - **Chapter 7.** The **Way Forward** section which details both key areas where improvements are required, as well as how these areas should be improved. This section will describe the issues and recommendations that have been agreed by key stakeholders.

2. BACKGROUND

29. This section provides background information needed to understand the analysis which follows in subsequent chapters.

- First it traces the history of the PSNP
- Then it maps out the history of the graduation issue and how it has developed during programme life
- Finally, this is followed by a description of current guidance on graduation in the context of the PSNP.

2.1 History of the PSNP

30. Ethiopia has experienced a long history of food insecurity with a corresponding long history of assistance. For many years this assistance was provided in the form of emergency assistance, despite growing evidence that increasing demands for relief assistance were not the product of greater rainfall failures but rather were the result of an increase in the depth and extent of poverty. Faced with 15 million people in need of emergency food assistance in 2002/2003, the Government of Ethiopia launched a consultation process with development partners called 'The New Coalition for Food Security' (Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia 2006).

31. This nine month consultation process both resulted in a change in mind-set and stronger collaboration between the Government of Ethiopia and its development partners. The change in mind-set was signified by a shift away from characterising Ethiopia's recurrent food needs as a short-term problem caused by specific shocks. The new understanding was a recognition that the food needs were a result of chronic poverty which could not be addressed by short-term consumption smoothing efforts only – such as emergency response – but instead required these consumption smoothing efforts to be complemented by livelihood enhancing interventions. The greatest impact of the increased collaboration was seen in the launch of the Productive Safety Net Programme in January 2005.

32. The Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP) was designed to make a transition from the traditional, short-lived, model of responding to chronic food insecurity by creating a programme which not only met food deficits, but did so in a way which protected household assets and built community assets. The objective of the Programme is to assure food consumption and prevent asset depletion for chronically food insecure households, and stimulate markets and enhance service provision and access to natural resources in chronically food insecure woredas¹.

33. The programme was designed as one component of the Government of Ethiopia's overall Food Security Programme (FSP), with other components focusing on the livelihood enhancing aspects. In previous phases there were two complementary components; the 2010 – 2014 phase of the programme incorporates three complementary components, as illustrated in Table 2:

¹ Government of Ethiopia. *Productive Safety Net Programme 2010-2014. Programme Document*. Addis Ababa, August 2009, from logical framework

Table 2: Past and Present Components of the Government of Ethiopia’s Food Security Programme

Previous Components of the FSP	Present Components of the FSP
<p>The Productive Safety Net Programme</p> <p>Provides food and cash transfers to chronically food insecure populations in a way which smoothes consumption, protects assets at the household level and builds community assets through a large scale public works programme</p>	<p>The Productive Safety Net Programme</p> <p>Provides food and cash transfers to chronically food insecure populations in a way which smoothes consumption, protects assets at the household level and builds community assets through a large scale public works programme</p>
<p>The Other Food Security Programme</p> <p>Provides a range of complementary activities including soil and water conservation, road construction, maintenance and support to livestock, and household packages. The household package element is a credit instrument supporting a menu of packages.</p>	<p>The Household Asset Building Programme (HABP)</p> <p>Ensures the provision of credit and technical support to chronically food insecure households in order to build household assets and increase incomes.</p>
	<p>The Complementary Community Infrastructure Programme (CCI)</p> <p>Supports the creation of an enabling environment in chronically food insecure woredas by funding small-to-medium scale community infrastructure programmes.</p>
<p>The Resettlement Programme</p> <p>Facilitates the movement of chronically food insecure households interested in settling in identified resettlement areas and provides access to key services in these areas</p>	<p>The Resettlement Programme</p> <p>Facilitates the movement of chronically food insecure households interested in settling in identified resettlement areas and provides access to key services in these areas.</p>

34. Within the 300 woredas determined to be food insecure, it is the combination of PSNP, HABP and the CCI – together with the assistance from a broader range of enabling programmes, conditions and services – which is expected to achieve firstly food sufficiency and ultimately food security. Food sufficiency is expected to coincide with households exiting (or graduating) from the PSNP, while the achievement of food security should correspond with their graduation from the overall Food Security Programme.

35. In the initial years of the PSNP, the focus was on improving capacity and enhancing overall programme implementation. In addition, greater emphasis was put on ensuring that food security inputs, such as credit and household packages, were focused on PSNP clients in order that households might not only meet food needs but build their assets and move out of food insecurity. As programme implementation has proceeded and greater complementarity of resources been achieved, greater focus has been placed on ensuring that households which no longer require assistance in meeting consumption needs (support from the PSNP) exit the programme through graduation.

2.2 History of Graduation in the PSNP

36. Graduation has always been a part of thinking around the PSNP, with the Government of Ethiopia (GoE) not only committed to providing households with support to their subsistence but also dedicated to improving livelihoods so that food insecure households no longer need subsistence support. The PSNP was conceptualised as providing support which met consumption and protected livelihoods alongside other efforts aimed at improving livelihoods; with

the combined efforts allowing programme clients to become food sufficient and leave the programme.

37. This logic was codified in the original 2004 PSNP PIM, which stated that ‘Graduation is a key goal of government to which the PSNP contributes’ (MoARD 2004). This acknowledged right from the start that the PSNP could not itself deliver graduation, but it had an interest in achieving graduation and could provide a stable livelihood platform from which households could graduate from the programme with the support of other programmes operating in a supportive environment.

38. Little further analytical work was conducted on graduation during the early years of the PSNP. The ‘PSNP Policy and Institutional Linkages’ study² included some early fieldwork and thinking on graduation, and recommended the development of a full logical framework for the PSNP – which had only existed in partial form prior to that – to address an identified concern that views on the relationship between PSNP and graduation differed widely among key stakeholders.

39. Subsequent to the linkages study, discussions of the PSNP, for example in Joint Review and Implementation Supervision (JRIS) Missions (MoARD 2006b, MoARD 2007d etc.), suggested that the issue of graduation remained controversial. It was apparent that key PSNP stakeholders, especially on the donor side, tended to fall into two camps: those who believed that the PSNP was a safety net whose job was to protect livelihoods, and those who believed the PSNP was a means by which food insecure people could be assisted to graduate out of food security. Discussion on graduation continued during JRISs, and progress was made on the concept of graduation as it related to the programme. For example a graph was produced in October 2007 (MoARD 2007c) in which the process towards graduation and the inputs required were related (see Chapter 3).

40. One year after the linkages study, the full PSNP logframe was developed (MoARD 2007e). Following much discussion in three separate multi-stakeholder workshops, the logframe reaffirmed what was initially stated in the PIM and then – based on village-level fieldwork – the linkages study: that the PSNP could contribute to graduation but could not achieve it on its own, at scale. For this to be achieved, other elements of the FSP, and wider support, was required.

41. At around the same time as the logframe process, IFPRI reported on their commissioned assessment to develop conceptual thinking on what graduation is, and how it might be measured, using the data collected for the PSNP baseline survey. They proposed that graduation was closely related to having no food gap (Gilligan et al. 2007a), but that more important than the food gap itself were the resources that households accessed that enabled them to have no food gap. IFPRI proposed a number of region-specific benchmarks (see section 4.2.1) against which PSNP client households could be assessed. If the benchmark in a given region was exceeded, the household was ready to graduate from PSNP.

42. Shortly after the circulation of the IFPRI benchmark proposals the key event on graduation took place: the PSNP graduation workshop in November 2007 (Ashley 2007). This workshop was tasked with pulling together thinking on graduation and providing clear guidance on how it was to be understood and how it should be assessed in practice. The product from this workshop formed the basis for the Graduation Guidance Note, which was rolled out in 2008 and describes current recommended practice for addressing graduation in the PSNP. Section 2.3 below summarises this guidance.

² Slater et al. 2006

43. Since then, successive JRIS Missions have highlighted concerns raised by Government staff and development partners regarding the current system of graduation. These concerns include:

- The complexity of the current graduation system given implementation capacity.
- Confusion at community level regarding both the concept of and process to measure graduation.
- Increasing reports of appeals concerning premature graduation.
- Partial implementation of safeguards outlined in the Graduation Guidance note (MoARD 2009h).

44. As a consequence the June 2009 JRIS agreed ‘to carry-out an assessment of the current system to determine its strengths and limitations’ (MoARD 2009h: 5). The Graduation Assessment reported here reflects that commitment.

2.3 Current Guidance on Graduation in the PSNP

45. The key source of guidance is the Graduation Guidance Note, produced following the Graduation Workshop in November 2007. This has not been modified since. The Graduation Guidance Note clarifies the following issues:

- It defines graduation from the PSNP
- It encompasses key agreements regarding the steps that regions, woredas, kebeles and communities should undertake in identifying graduates
- It outlines the key principles guiding how they should conduct these steps
- It outlines the key responsibilities with regards to graduation held by different institutions at woreda, kebele and community level.

46. The seven core principles and sixteen steps are outlined below (these principles and steps are referred to throughout the remainder of the document):

Box 1: Core Principles for Introduction and Use of Benchmarks

1. Do not undermine core function of the PSNP #
2. Transparency: the system must be transparent to external actors (donors and federal/regional government) and to PSNP beneficiaries
3. Accountable: the system must be accountable to PSNP beneficiaries
4. Simple, responsive and relevant: the benchmarks should be easy to use, livelihood specific and revised periodically to remain relevant
5. Flexible: the system should be implemented in a flexible manner (similar to targeting)
6. Balance incentives: the system needs to be responsive to both positive and negative incentives.
7. Community awareness and involvement: communities are best placed to operationalise graduation

#The Assessment team interpreted this to mean that the graduation process should not compromise the role of the PSNP in ensuring that chronically food insecure households are able to meet their food needs.

Box 2: Sixteen Steps for Using Benchmarks to Identify Graduates

- Step 1. Preparation of regional guidelines for graduation
- Step 2. Awareness raising and training of woreda representatives on the graduation criteria and process.
- Step 3. Awareness raising among kebele representatives, elders and CFSTF representatives on the graduation criteria and process.
- Step 4. Briefing on the graduation criteria and process to all kebele members
- Step 5. DA's prepare an overview of household assets of all PSNP participants who have taken a household package and credit
- Step 6. Using the Graduation guidelines, CFSTF prepares the list of proposed graduates for the coming year. As outlined above this includes three sets of analysis, including a detailed assessment of household asset holdings to determine who can graduate from the Programme (see section 5 II)
- Step 7. CFSTF post list of proposed graduates and seeks comments and endorsement from the general community meeting
- Step 8. CFSTF finalizes the list of proposed graduates and forwards it to the KFSTF for verification and further action.
- Step 9. KFSTF and Kebele Council verify the list, correct possible errors and submit the list of proposed graduates for approval to the WFSTF.
- Step 10. WFSTF verifies, corrects possible errors and submits the list of proposed graduates to the Woreda council for final approval.
- Step 11. Woreda council approves the list of proposed graduates and submits it to the Regional BoARD.
- Step 12. WFSTF sends approved list of households graduated from the PSNP to KFSTF for posting at community level.
- Step 13. CFSTF briefs community on the final list of households graduated from the PSNP and raises awareness that they can raise complaints through the appeals committee.
- Step 14. Kebele council and the appeals committee collects graduation-related appeals, respond and correct the list of households graduated from the PSNP where appropriate.
- Step 15. Kebele council submits final list of households graduated from the PSNP to WFSTF for verification and approval.
- Step 16. WFSTF verifies, approves and informs the Woreda council and regional BoARD on adjustments to the list of households graduated from the PSNP based on the appeals process.

- Through this process it reveals a number of issues for which the current guidance is unclear, or which are unaddressed. These issues should be resolved in any future guidance.

3.1 Analysis of how graduation is applied

49. As described in Chapter 2 above, graduation from the PSNP happens when households reach the point of food sufficiency, which is defined in the GGN as:

‘A household has graduated when, in the absence of receiving PSNP transfers, it can meet its food needs for all 12 months and is able to withstand modest shocks.’

50. This definition raises a number of important questions, which are discussed below. These are:

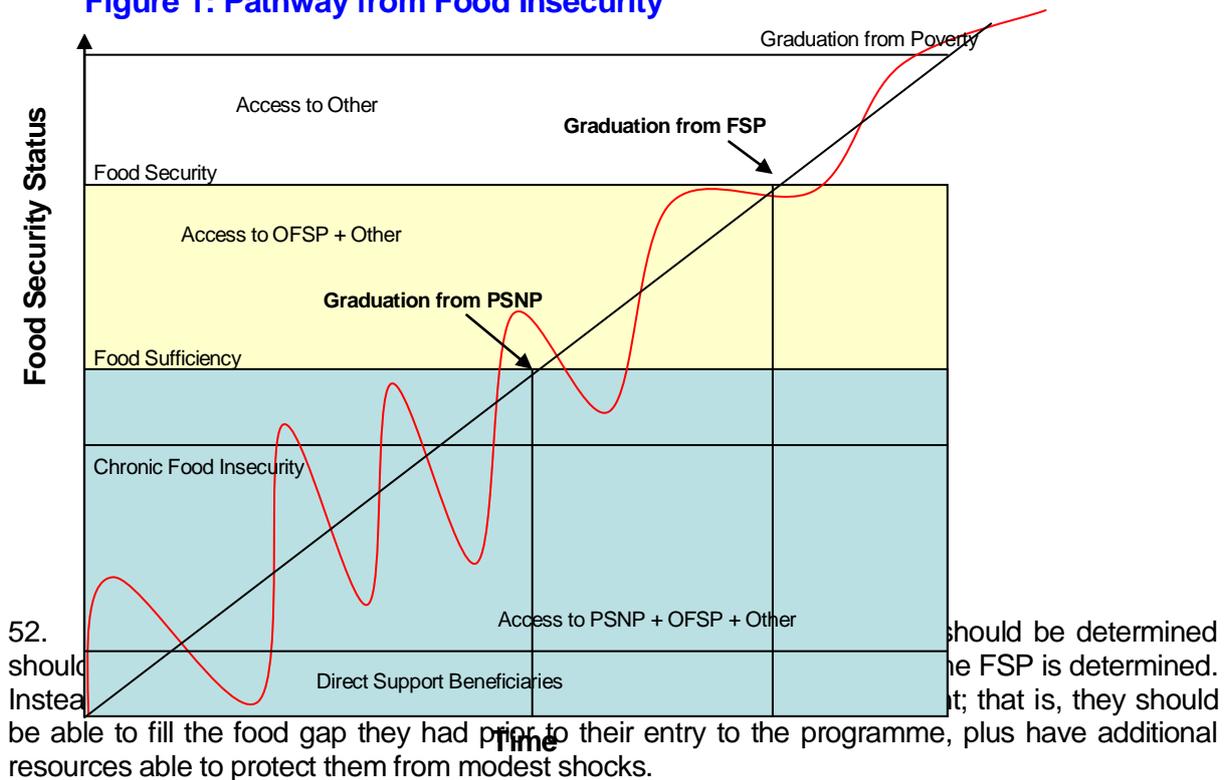
- What do we mean when we talk about meeting 12 months of food need?
- What do we mean when we refer to withstanding a modest shock?

- What is the difference between this definition of food sufficiency and food security, in practice?
- Does the concept of graduation imply some process of improvement?
- Are graduates required to have accessed to OFSP or HABP?

3.1.1 MEETING TWELVE MONTHS OF FOOD NEED

51. The concept of food sufficiency was introduced to the Food Security Programme during September – December 2007 when graduation was being discussed. It was discussed both during the October 2007 JRIS and during the Graduation Workshop in November 2007. The understanding at the time was captured in Figure 1, from the GGN:

Figure 1: Pathway from Food Insecurity



53. However, filling the food gap, or meeting twelve months of food need, is a more complicated concept than it first appears. Four key issues together mean that the concept is difficult to apply in practice:

54. **Measurement of food needs and gap.** There are two actively used measures of whether or not households are meeting their food needs practiced by Disaster Risk Management and Food Security Sector (DRMFSS) at present. The first is the 'number of months' measure included in the IFPRI/CSA baseline and household surveys (see section 4.2.1), the second is a kilocalorie measure used by the Early Warning and Response Department (EWRD) and the LIU.

55. IFPRI/CSA³ include in their baseline and household surveys a question to interviewees about whether any households struggled to meet food needs any time during the past 12 months. If the response is yes the household is requested to state how many months they struggled to meet food needs. Such a question includes a subjective assessment of what a monthly food need is, as well as a subjective assessment of whether it was a struggle to meet it.

³ IFPRI CSA 2007a, 2007b, 2007c and 2007d

56. The LIU/EWRD's⁴ measure assesses whether or not households are able to meet their total annual kilocalorie requirement (through detailed questioning on production and consumption). It does not question whether or not it was a struggle to meet these needs, but it will review how income was generated in order to meet the costs of any food purchased (and therefore identify any debt incurred or assets sold).

57. **Variable levels of consumption.** Complicating the above is the reality that different people in different communities are likely to have varying quantities and qualities of consumption which they consider acceptable; that is, acceptable standards of consumption may vary. In some parts of Ethiopia, households may consider it normal to only eat meat two to three times a year, whereas in other areas households might consider meat consumption to be a monthly, weekly or even daily necessity. Such variations are likely to highly colour people's responses to questions concerning food gap; as well as affecting how they prioritise expenditure. This is particularly an issue with regards to the IFPRI/CSA assessment of food gap which uses a self assessed measure.

58. **Diet quality.** This is linked to a third issue about whether the definition of food sufficiency is only concerned about quantity, or whether it is also concerned about quality. Weight-based measures of cereals do not necessarily comprise a healthy diet and although they may enable households to meet annual kilocalorie requirements. As self assessed measure potentially captures this issue, but not definitively; a measure looking at annual kilocalorie requirement does not.

59. **Distribution over time.** Aggregate annual food supply for a household may be adequate in theory, but the timing of the availability of that food is an important determinant of whether households are able to meet their consumption needs in each of the 12 months of the year. If not, then households may apply negative coping strategies that compromise either their food consumption or their asset holdings, and as such would not be qualified for graduation from PSNP. Conversely, seasonality is a feature of life in rural areas globally, including Ethiopia. While it should not be acceptable for food quality and quantity to fall below a minimum standard, some variation is always likely.

3.1.2 INCORPORATING SHOCKS IN THE DEFINITIONS

60. In addition to meeting food needs for 12 months, graduation from PSNP requires households to withstand 'a modest shock'. This is the key difference with the definition of food security, which includes the ability to withstand most shocks. However, the concept of a modest shock has not been fully defined. Until a definition is agreed, it will remain difficult to establish what level of resources equate to being food sufficient, and therefore allow graduation. Given that the PSNP approach to assessing graduation is based on enumeration of assets and incomes to make this assessment, this is problematic.

61. The rationale for including the ability to withstand a modest shock was considered strong because it was felt important not to have households leave the programme whose livelihoods were in practice extremely vulnerable to minor shocks so that there was a high likelihood of their needing to soon re-enter the programme. This process was described as 'churning': households moving in and out of the Programme as they build assets in the programme, lose them again when they leave, only to have to re-enter the programme because they would no longer be able to meet food needs.

62. The LIU recently proposed, during their analysis in support of the Variable Levels of Support Study (FEG Consulting 2008), that a modest shock should be defined as three months of

⁴ Livelihoods Integration Unit 2007

food needs. In effect this means that graduates from the PSNP are households which have resources to meet 15 months of food needs in addition to making expenditures on maintaining their livelihoods. But is this in a good year, every year, or an average year? And what does it mean for development of appropriate graduation benchmarks?

63. Since the approach to assessing graduation in practice was agreed in 2007/8 this issue has not received much attention; there has been no pressing need to address it. However if the current assessment leads to revision of the assessment process, this issue may need to be resolved.

3.1.3 THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SUFFICIENCY AND SECURITY

64. Conceptually food sufficiency and sustainable food security appear to be distinct, with one a progression from the other. However the definitions of each of these terms applied in the Food Security Programme are very similar, differing only in the extent of the shock that can be safely resisted.

65. The difficulties described in section 3.1.2 above about the ease of accurately assessing resistance to moderate shock apply equally to the difference between these two states. While conceptually this makes sense, it raises real issues of measurement in practice.

66. The focus within the FSP has to date been placed on identifying graduates from the PSNP rather than the FSP. However as the programme develops and graduates from the PSNP receive further support from HABP, it may be expected that this issue will require further attention

3.1.4 UPWARD TRAJECTORY TOWARDS GRADUATION

67. The word graduation implies the concept of improvement: people achieving something and their success being recognised. This is also implied in the Food Security Programme Design Document 'The programme aims to put CFI⁵ households on a trajectory of asset stabilisation first, then asset accumulation. That is, a series of inputs from the programme and from other development interventions makes households become food sufficient first, then sustainably food secure. In this way they will graduate from the PSNP first, then from the FSP⁶.

68. A number of issues are raised with this idea:

- Progress towards graduation may not be linear. As implied by the intentionally wavy line describing the potential livelihood trajectory in Figure 1 above, households are likely to experience good and bad periods on their way towards graduation. This may slow their progress, and has implications for projections of rate of graduation, for example driven by access to HABP support.
- Is it necessary to be improving to graduate from PSNP? Looking at this another way, if households are in the PSNP due to a targeting inclusion error, they may already meet the criteria for graduation. But if they are required to improve then they may not be graduated.

3.1.5 ACCESS TO HABP AND GRADUATION

69. The GGN describes the steps to be followed in managing the graduation process. Step 5 out of the 16 described in section 2.3 states that:

'DA's prepare an overview of household assets of all PSNP participants who have taken a household package and credit.'

⁵ Chronically Food Insecure

⁶ Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development 2009a,

70. This implies that only households that have received OFSP or, in future, HABP support are considered for graduation. This ignores the possibility of positive livelihood transformation outside of the influence of OFSP and HABP and yet all stakeholders acknowledge that this is possible.

3.1.6 QUESTIONS RAISED BY THIS ANALYSIS

71. This section shows that the clarification of graduation from the PSNP provided by the GGN in 2008 was helpful in bringing consensus on the meaning of graduation, and allowed a way forward to be developed. However that guidance did not resolve all issues and questions related to graduation; some conceptual and methodological issues were glossed over and some questions left unanswered.

- The concept of graduation relies heavily on the ability to assess food gap, but this concept is difficult to apply in practice
- Food sufficiency requires resilience in the face of modest shock, but what is one of these and how do we know when households are resilient to them?
- Food sufficient households are expected to become sustainably food secure given continuing support from the FSP, but the difference is expressed only in terms of ability to withstand shocks, and the assessment of this has not yet been clarified.
- How should PSNP deal with inclusion errors given that such households may not be on an upward trajectory during graduation assessments?
- Access to enabling support beyond the PSNP is believed to be necessary to allow households to graduate. But is it a programme requirement to have received such support, and what happens when households which have not received such support meet graduation criteria?

Part 2:
**Findings of the Graduation
Assessment**

4. GRADUATION SYSTEMS, PROCESSES AND PROCEDURES

72. As indicated in the Graduation Assessment analytical framework described in section 1.4, a key question addressed by the Assessment is whether graduation systems, processes and procedures are being implemented as intended. This major section reports the findings of the Assessment on this question, in the following areas:

- Structures involved in the graduation process, their roles and responsibilities [4.1]
- The quality and availability of documentation which provides guidance on the graduation process [4.2]
- The nature of target setting and how graduation steps are planned [4.3]
- The types of programme exit, and whether they should all be considered graduation [4.4]
- Steps taken to identify graduates, and how these correspond with the steps and processes outlined in the guidance note [4.5]
- The measures for addressing grievances, and ensuring safeguards [4.6]
- Perceptions of fairness and transparency [4.7]
- Balancing incentives for and against graduation [4.8]

73. Each sub-section follows a standard structure, in which the guidance on what is expected is described, the Assessment findings of current practice are described and the situation is analysed by the Assessment Team.

4.1 Graduation Structures, Roles and Responsibilities

74. This subsection reviews the extent to which structures responsible for graduation exist, are functional, and are playing their roles effectively as prescribed in guidance – in this case from both the Graduation Guidance Note and the PIM. It looks at each level in turn.

75. The section finds that:

- Those structures for which roles are defined largely exist and play expected roles
- Extension Directorates are not allocated a significant role at Regional and Federal levels, despite the critical role of DAs in assessing graduation

4.1.1 FEDERAL

76. The Graduation Guidance Note does not detail responsibilities of federal level institutions with regards to graduation. According to the Programme Implementation Manual (MoARD 2006a), the Federal Food Security Programme Department (previously the Food Security Coordination Unit: FSCD) has overall responsibility for the coordination and oversight of the PSNP and other elements of the Food Security Programme. Its responsibilities include the provision of technical support and guidance, review and feedback of reports and plan submissions by the region, monitoring and evaluation of the PSNP including adherence to systems and procedures, and implementation of the Rapid Response Mechanism.

77. The Assessment found that in general the FSCD is playing the role expected of it. Regions report that they have been provided guidance materials (benchmarks document and graduation guidance note) by the federal level, and have received support through monitoring and supervision visits from relevant staff from the FSCD. The FSCD collate information received on graduation from the different regions to provide overall figures concerning graduation, and on occasions comment on the numbers of graduates submitted

by the region. Apart from the monitoring and supervision visits and report review, the other main mechanism for monitoring graduation activities is the Rapid Response Mechanism. In the past two years graduation has been a topic included on the multi-stakeholder Rapid Response Team checklist and information highlighting challenges has been collected.

78. No specific roles are outlined in any of the documentation with regards to Federal Agricultural Extension Directorate (FAED). To date their involvement in discussions around graduation has been limited to the participation of FAED in the re-design of the Food Security Programme and design of HABP; and their roles in HABP service provision. They have not been involved in discussion regarding benchmark-setting or the development of the graduation guidance note, and in fact have limited understanding of the benchmarks beyond an awareness that they exist.

79. Development Partners also play a role in the graduation discussion through their participation in review and design exercises (such as the JRIS and the Graduation Workshop), their involvement in Rapid Response Teams (RRTs) and their regular participation in Joint Strategic Oversight Committee and General Management and Transfers Joint Technical Committee⁷. As such development partners were involved in the design of the graduation processes; have fed into discussions on projected graduation figures to support resource planning; and play a role in monitoring graduation processes. In addition to their participation in joint processes with government, a number of development partners also undertake independent monitoring visits.

4.1.2 REGIONAL

80. According to the Graduation Guidance Note, the Disaster Prevention and Preparedness and Food Security Commissions (DPPFSCs or regional food security offices) are expected to prepare regional guidelines for graduation and to undertake awareness raising and training of woreda representatives on the graduation criteria and process⁸. Furthermore, regions also have responsibility to provide technical support, monitor and support implementation and collate information for inclusion in reports.

81. In addition to the above roles which regions are undertaking, they play an important role in target-setting, as discussed further in section 4.3.1. The DPPFSCs in both Amhara and Tigray have provided all woredas with graduation targets, which they call indicative plans. SNNP region has directive graduation plans (80,000 clients) for 2003 EC which were presented to the FSCD, while Oromiya region has been requesting woredas to come up with their own graduation plans⁹.

82. Similar to findings at federal level, Regional Agricultural Extension Departments (RAEDs) do not play a role in graduation identification processes, despite their involvement in the HABP and their line management responsibility for Development Assistants.

83. Similar to findings at federal level, Regional Agricultural Extension Departments (RAEDs) do not play a role in graduation identification processes, despite their involvement in the HABP and their line management responsibility for Development Assistants.

84. Women's Affairs Bureaux in Amhara and Tigray are actively involved in PSNP discussions, including graduation. Those in SNNP and Oromiya are not.

⁷ In previous years the functions of these committees were covered by the Joint Coordination Committee

⁸ The Graduation Guidance Note does not actually state who in the region fulfils this function, but it seems fair to assume that the DPPFSCs are the agencies responsible.

⁹ In the first year of graduation (2007/2008) Oromiya also provided proposals of 50% graduation.

85. In all regions, the zones also have some role to play, although their level of involvement varies. In Amhara and Tigray, zones play a critical role in cascading training. In Oromiya and Amhara zones play important roles in the collection of information in graduation. In Amhara, Tigray, Oromiya and SNNP zones play roles in providing technical support. In Tigray and Oromiya some graduation ceremonies have been held at zonal (considered as regional level graduation), although at other times or in other locations ceremonies have been limited to woreda and kebele levels.

4.1.3 WOREDA

86. The Graduation Guidance Note specifies roles for the Woreda council/cabinet, Woreda Office of Agriculture and Rural Development (WOARD), and Woreda Food Security Task Force (WFSTF).

87. The Assessment Team found that these structures are in place and functioning, although a key overall finding of this Assessment is that there is enormous variation in the extent to which guidance is being implemented as intended. Section 4.5 details more fully exactly what is and is not happening in the assessed woredas.

88. Some variability is seen in the roles played. In some woredas the council does not play a significant role (for example, Kalu woreda of Amhara region) in approving graduation lists because their meetings are too infrequent for them to perform this function practically. However, the Woreda Council often plays a role in graduation ceremonies with representatives awarding certificates and other incentives.

4.1.4 KEBELE

89. The PIM specifies that the Kebele Food Security Task Force (KFSTF) comprises of Kebele Administration; development agents; health extension workers; teachers and community members such as Youth and women's associations. The Assessment proved that membership is as per the PIM. Though the GGN specifies the key roles for the Kebele Council/cabinet and KFSTF separately and yet most of the members, including the Chair, of the KFSTF are members of the kebele council/cabinet it seems there is an overlap of activities in the process of graduation. For example, as detailed in section 4.5, the submission by the KFSTF of the list of graduates to the Kebele council for approval implies a submission by a committee chaired by the kebele Chair to another committee also chaired by the kebele Chair.

90. In the majority of kebeles in most regions the Community Food Security Task Forces (CFSTFs) existed and were functional. However, in some of the kebeles of SNNP – Donbe Dolba and Balta Bake kebeles of Kemba, and in Wandara Gale kebele of Damot Gale – CFSTFs did not exist as a task force. Instead a delegate from the community represents the community task force in the KFSTF.

91. In most villages consulted by the assessment the members of the CFSTF are comprised of farmers, a DA, youth and women's association representatives, elders, and chairs of development teams (as indicated in the PIM). Members of the CFSTF tended to be a mixture of clients and non-clients (including graduates), with the majority of members made up of non-clients. However, in most cases representatives from the KFSTF and a Health Extension Worker or Volunteer Community Health Worker are not members of the CFSTF, although the PIM does expect such membership.

92. DAs play the major role in the asset registration process. This can take significant amounts of their time, particularly when they are solely responsible for data collection. In many of the assessed kebeles other members of KFSTF and CFSTF play a role in data collection in order to alleviate the workload pressures.

93. DAs perform a significant number of functions at kebele level, as they are the key interface between all functions of MoARD and farmers. These roles include:

- Weekly reporting on activities and agricultural conditions
- Providing general support in their area of expertise
 - Supporting crop production through advice on planting, fertilizer use, crop management and harvesting.
 - Natural resource management
 - Livestock
- Public works planning and supervision
- PSNP Payment processing
- Specific support to household package provision in area of expertise
- Graduation
- Participation in a range of kebele and woreda level meetings

94. Most DAs report that graduate identification activities compete with other areas of their workload, particularly when such activities coincide with the agricultural season. A sample work calendar for a DA is included in Annex Two. This calendar demonstrates that there are times of the year where the differing priorities of DAs compete, including their priorities concerning identifying potential graduates.

95. In Ahferom and Lasta, where REST and ORDA respectively are operational, their kebele based staff also play a role in graduate identification.

4.2 Documentation and Guidance on how to identify graduates

96. This section reviews the extent to which guidance on how to manage the graduation process has been developed and then distributed to, and understood by, the various levels of programme management and clients. It specifically considers:

- The background to the development of benchmarks (specifically the IFPRI benchmarking analysis);
- The development of regional benchmarks and guidance, including participation in their establishment;
- Provision of manuals and guidance notes to implementers of the programme;
- Provision of training on the graduation process; and
- Levels of understanding of key graduation concepts by stakeholders

97. It finds that:

- The IFPRI benchmarks helped to identify the role of assets as the means by which households can sustainably meet food needs.
- There was limited buy-in by regional and woreda stakeholders of the actual benchmarks produced by their analysis.
- Given the variability in livelihoods within regions, some of this scepticism was valid.

- All regions have translated some form of guidance into the local language. In 3 regions this has been a slightly edited version of the GGN, in SNNP this has been an alternative system of analysis based on regression.
- With the exception of SNNP there have only been minor adjustments to the numerical benchmarks proposed during the graduation workshop.
- There have been limited adjustments of benchmarks by livelihood system or woreda with exceptions found in SNNP and Oromiya.
- None of the regions are implementing the benchmark system as originally designed, and use of benchmarks differs greatly, with variation found:
 - in terms of assets measured,
 - in the mixture of assets and income being measured (sometimes mandated at regional level, and sometimes decided individually by woredas), and
 - in how valuations of assets are undertaken.
- Few are content with the system as it stands today.
- There is variation in the degree of dissemination of documentation on graduation in terms of what was disseminated, how often, and how much of it remains available at lower levels as a result of staff turnover.
- All regions have delivered training although the frequency and adequacy of this training varies, as does its dissemination down to lower levels.

4.2.1 IFPRI BENCHMARKS AND THEIR CONTRIBUTION TO THE GRADUATION GUIDANCE NOTE

98. At the request of the Government of Ethiopia and its development partners, IFPRI undertook an analysis of the 2006 baseline data to 'develop benchmarks that can be used by the Government of Ethiopia and other stakeholders to assess whether beneficiary households have graduated from the FSP'¹⁰. They reviewed the available data to assess which criteria from the baseline data were most appropriate as indicators for food sufficiency, and what information could be simply collected in order to reliably identify graduates who could be considered food secure.

99. As graduate households¹¹ are expected to be food sufficient, IFPRI decided that the most direct criterion was a self-reported food gap of less than one month. The actual question asked during the baseline data collection was 'how many months in the last 12 (13 Ethiopian) months did you have problems satisfying the food needs of the household?'¹² IFPRI found that the responses to these questions were correlated with other food security-related indicators such as whether households experience a food gap during the hungry season, number of meals a day served to children during periods of food shortage, consumption of seed stocks, consumption of preferred foods, and self-reported wellbeing.

100. However, as IFPRI noted in their concept paper for this analysis 'Underpinning the notion of graduation is the idea that households have sufficient resources so as to be no longer food insecure: measures such as the number of months that a household had problems satisfying its food needs are a *consequence* of these levels of resources and not a measure of the underlying resources themselves' (Hoddinott 2006).

101. Or to put it another way, graduation is not about whether people met food needs in the past 12 months, but whether they have sufficient resources to reliably meet their food needs

¹⁰ Hoddinott, J. 2006:2

¹¹ Key sources of data for this section include the Gilligan et al. 2007a, 2007b, 2007c and 2007d

¹² Module 6, Baseline Survey Module, IFPRI/CSA 2006b

going forward into the future. As such, measuring food gap is not the best way to assess food sufficiency (not least because it can only assess the past rather than make judgements about the future). It is more appropriate to understand the extent to which the resources that households have at their disposal are sufficient. This same line of reasoning relates to income. Income is the consequence of the underlying resources people have. For this reason IFPRI strongly reasoned that an asset benchmark was an appropriate way forward.

102. In addition to the above reasoning, IFPRI also supported the use of asset benchmarks as they are more easily measurable than other information. Even without intentional bias, households may not be able to accurately recall their food access or income, but will more easily report asset holdings. Furthermore, any intentional bias in reporting is more easily verified, given the wider community’s likely knowledge concerning a household’s asset holdings.

103. The IFPRI team therefore analysed the asset holdings of **non-PSNP clients** and compared them to self-reported food gap. They found that as asset holdings increased, the numbers of people reporting a food gap and the extent of this food gap decreased. IFPRI presented a range of potential benchmarks for graduation based on asset holdings which could give implementers differing degrees of confidence that a household holding the benchmark value of assets would report a less than one month food gap. The full range of potential benchmarks for each region arising from the IFPRI study are presented at Annex Three.

104. As a consequence, the IFPRI has a de facto definition of food sufficiency of less than one month reported food gap. This definition differs from that subsequently adopted for the GGN.

105. The ranges presented are wide. For example in Amhara for implementers to have 90% confidence that a household is food sufficient the benchmark should be set at ETB 7,500¹³ (Ethiopian Birr). However, 60% of households are likely to be food sufficient at the much lower benchmark of ETB 1,900¹⁴. This highlights the fact that although there is a correlation between asset holdings and food gap, there are large amounts of variation in the data. Some households report a low food gap on relatively low asset holdings, while others report a substantial food gap despite having a relatively high value of asset holdings.

106. As noted above, the analysis undertaken by IFPRI was conducted on non-client households. Table 3 below compares the median with the mean asset holdings of the IFPRI sample. It shows that the majority of (non-client) households in the sample are below the asset benchmark – given that half the non-clients will fall below the median asset value. In other words they should have been in the PSNP, not outside it. This is explained by the fact that the IFPRI/CSA baseline shows that the average food gap of non-clients is greater than one month (the cut-off used by the benchmark analysis).

Table 3: Comparing mean and median IFPRI benchmark values

	Tigray	Amhara	Oromiya	SNNP
Median ¹⁵ asset value of non-clients	2,979	2,866	2,719	1,306
Mean asset value of non-clients	4,451	4,417	6,200	2,235
Asset benchmark 75% confidence ¹⁶	4,300	4,800	10,000	2,700

¹³ For a household with less than 1 ha land, and a household head who has received no schooling

¹⁴ With the same parameters of land size and schooling.

¹⁵ The median indicates the point at which half the respondents fall above this point and half the respondents fall below this point. In this instance this shows that half the non-client respondents report that they have asset holdings of a value below the figures indicated.

¹⁶ For a household with less than 1 ha land, and a household head who has received no schooling

107. This indicates an operationally challenging aspect of the IFPRI benchmarks. If the baseline situation still holds today, implementers are expected to support PSNP households to reach benchmarks which are significantly beyond current holdings of most non-clients, and have to continue including such households at the exclusion of many other households with lower asset holdings. While this is, in part, consistent with the idea that the exit criteria from the programme should be higher than the entry criteria, the potential degree of difference is significant.

108. During the Graduation Workshop, it was agreed that benchmarks for graduation would be asset based. In acknowledgement of the continuing reservations with the actual benchmark proposed by IFPRI (both with regards to its value and the specific assets it was expected to measure), regions were given time to further review the specifics of the benchmarks in their region, as long as the resulting Birr level of the asset-based benchmark adopted would be, at a minimum, equivalent to the 75% probability Birr level proposed by IFPRI (with the exception of Oromiya¹⁷). These refined benchmarks were then documented in the Graduation Guidance Note.

109. Due to the concerns expressed about the variability of livelihoods within regions, provision was made in the Graduation Guidance Note for woredas to propose adjustments to benchmark values specific to their area for approval by the region. Ongoing concerns in this area, and in the lack of inclusion of perennial crops in the benchmark analysis, resulted in the significantly different process trialled by SNNP and described below.

4.2.2 REGIONAL BENCHMARKS AND GUIDANCE

4.2.2.1 Choice, use and guidance on regional benchmarks

110. The Graduation Guidance Note and the Graduation Workshop stated that regions have flexibility to review the benchmarks and to provide their own regionally appropriate guidance on what constitutes benchmarks in their regions. According to the fourth principle for graduation in the GGN, the graduation process should be ‘simple, responsive and relevant: the benchmarks should be easy to use, livelihood specific and revised periodically to remain relevant’.

111. All regions provided guidance translated from the federal guidance note with few changes in a relevant local language. In three of the regions, the guidance provided was based on the GGN, whereas in SNNP a different approach to identification of clients for graduation was adopted, based on use of regression equations, developed with some input from IFPRI staff.

112. Oromiya, Tigray and Amhara have continued to use the benchmarks outlined in the Federal Graduation Guidance Note without making further adjustments to them as the table below indicates.

Table 4: Comparison of Benchmarks

Region	Initial IFPRI Benchmark ¹⁸	Average Asset Value according to GGN	Benchmark as indicated in regional guidance
Oromiya	Birr 10,000 per capita	Birr 19,187 per HH	Birr 19,187 per HH
Tigray	Birr 4,300 per capita	Birr 5,600 per capita	Birr 5,600 per capita
Amhara	Birr 4,800 per capita	Birr 4,200 per capita	Birr 4,200 per capita
SNNP	Birr 4,000 per capita	Birr 2,998 per capita	75% or more based on regression analysis

¹⁷ Oromiya was given an exception, as it was felt that the high asset holdings indicated by the benchmark analysis were a result of the analysis being undertaken in a year of poor rainfall.

¹⁸ Based on the 75% mark (a potential exclusion error of 25%) and a landholding of less than 1 ha.

113. In SNNP, the initial proposal was not to use a regional benchmark. Regional officials stated that the assets identified in the IFPRI benchmarking document failed to take into consideration critical factors determining food sufficiency in their region, in particular the dependence on perennial crops. Furthermore, they were not convinced by a consistent region-wide benchmark given the variability of livelihoods present in SNNP. Instead they attempted to roll-out an approach based on a regression analysis, using some of the calculations undertaken during the development of the IFPRI benchmarks. This approach aimed to factor in the following criteria in a formula to help identify graduates:

- Landholding,
- Level of schooling,
- Capital based on agricultural tools and livestock availability,
- Family size,
- Sex of the household head
- Area of dwelling(SNNP) and
- a constant

Further information on the SNNP regression analysis, including an example of how it was implemented is included in Annex Four.

114. All four regions assessed have departed from the initial list of assets recommended by IFPRI as the basis for regional benchmarks, which were livestock and farm tools, modified by education. Additional elements introduced into the benchmark calculation by regions include crop production, income, credit repayment and, in one region, level of schooling and sex of household head. Note that these elements include both assets and incomes, contrary to the agreement reached during the Graduation Workshop ‘Benchmarks for graduation will be asset-based, for the whole programme’ (Ashley 2007: 14) . Table 5 indicates the benchmark elements assessed by each region and other key criteria.

Table 5: Elements of Benchmarks in four regions

Region	Benchmark elements
Amhara	Livestock, agricultural technologies, perennial crops, saving, capital, store, weaving equipments and other income generating items
Tigray	Productive assets ¹⁹ and must have repaid 75% of outstanding loan
SNNP	Landholding, level of schooling, capital based on agricultural tools and livestock availability, family size and sex of the household head
Oromiya	Livestock, crop production, perennial crops, income from IGA

115. The benchmarks and their elements have not been revised or adjusted after the initial design in all regions. However, all regions expressed concern that the benchmarks were out of date given the significant levels of inflation since 2006, which is the year the data was collected on which the IFPRI benchmark setting process was set.

4.2.2.2 Woreda variation in benchmark use, and community views

116. The national Graduation Guidance Note states that the woreda officials can refine the graduation benchmarks designed by the regions annually based on their knowledge of the local

¹⁹ Not specifically defined in the guidance document, but further details are found in the data collection formats distributed by the region. This format includes: livestock, beehives and colonies, irrigation equipment, eucalyptus grown for sale, crop production value (both irrigated and rainfed), and rental house as well as including space for “others”.

livelihood systems²⁰. In practice this has not happened. However, there are variations in the value of benchmarks used in different parts of Oromiya and SNNP and in the elements measured in all regions. However, these variations are not on the basis of annual refinements according to local livelihood system.

117. Prior to setting their regional benchmark Oromiya did undertake a study to assess what might be an appropriate benchmark in different parts of the region. The result of this study (which engaged local stakeholders), the IFPRI benchmarks and inputs provided by CARE Ethiopia were all taken into consideration in determining the ETB 19,187 per household benchmark. According to the regional guidance note, the benchmark varies between woredas with minimum of ETB 11,853 and maximum of ETB 23,994. The average regional benchmark is ETB 19,187 per household.

118. In the visited woredas, the Assessment Team did find some variation in the benchmark used. However, in one woreda (ATJK) the benchmark varied because of a misunderstanding by the woreda of the value of the regional benchmark (and the lack of available documentation), while in another (Oda Bultum) there were variations at kebele level²¹.

119. In SNNP there are variations in the benchmark used by woredas as regression analysis system is used. In Damot Gale the benchmark is based on the regression analysis described above. In Kemba the benchmark is ETB 2998 per person accounting for farm tools and family size. In Halaba kebeles with information on the benchmark, the value of the benchmark according to the woreda is ETB 5600 per household regardless of the family size (it should be noted that at kebele level there was a lack of knowledge of the value of the benchmark).

120. In reality, there is significant variation in how benchmarks are being applied even where the same benchmark is used, including variation between different woredas of the same region. Although outside of SNNP, there is no variation in the benchmark value between woredas, there is in reality variation in the elements counted to contribute towards the benchmark. Table 6 illustrates the variation between woredas in the elements which are counted in assessing household progress towards benchmarks.

Table 6: Elements included in benchmarks, per woreda

Woreda	Livestock	Bee hives	Farm Tools	Irrigation Equipment	Housing	Perennial Crops	Crops	Income	Land size	Gender HH Head
ATJK	✓			✓	#		✓			
Fadis	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓		
Oda Bultum	✓				✓	✓				
Lasta	✓	✓		✓	#	✓		✓		
Kalu	✓	✓		✓	#	✓	✓	✓		
Wegdie	✓	✓		✓	#	✓	✓	✓		
Halaba	✓		✓			✓	✓		✓	✓
Damot Gale	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓

²⁰ 'The Regions will provide guidance on the benchmarks applicable for each woreda. Woreda officials will refine these benchmarks annually based on local knowledge of livelihood systems present in the woreda. The final benchmarks proposed by the woredas will be approved by the Regions'. P 6 Graduation Guidance Note

²¹ In Oda Bultum the kebeles reported different benchmarks. The KFSTF in Guba Gutu stated that the benchmark was between ETB 16,000 and ETB 23,000, while the KFSTF in Kara Kurkura said that it was between ETB 17,000 and ETB 19,000, and the woreda ETB 21,000-25,000.

Woreda	Livestock	Bee hives	Farm Tools	Irrigation Equipment	Housing	Perennial Crops	Crops	Income	Land size	Gender HH Head
Kemba	✓		✓						✓	✓
Tahtay Maichew	✓	✓		✓	#	✓	✓	✓		
Ahferom	✓	✓		✓	#	✓	✓	✓		
Ofla	✓	✓		✓	#	✓	✓	✓		

N.B. # shows only houses rented out are considered as benchmark element while the tick in this column indicates that iron sheet living houses are considered as benchmark elements.

121. A number of woredas and communities expressed concerns with the current benchmarks. Common concerns included:

- Failure to take key assets into account (such as perennial crops)
- Limitations in an asset only benchmark because of importance of income and crop production as factors in ensuring food sufficiency
- Benchmarks based on 2006 data and have not been adjusted in line with inflation (which has been significant).
- Risk prone nature of livelihoods which mean that people can easily lose assets

122. Most community members were not aware of current benchmark elements, but did have views over what were the important contributing factors for graduation and appropriate benchmark elements. These items listed included:

- Livestock, particularly oxen ownership
- Sufficient crop production
- Perennial crops (particularly in Haraghe and SNNP)
- Irrigation (particularly Tigray)
- Having savings

4.2.3 PROVISION OF MANUALS AND GUIDANCE NOTES

123. Effective implementation requires that all staff/implementers with a role in assessment of graduation have clear guidance on their role. This requires that documentation is available at all levels where understanding is needed. This section assesses the extent to which this is the case.

124. The Graduation Guidance Note states that:

- Regions should prepare regional guidelines for graduation, and
- Using the graduation guidelines, CFSTF prepares the list of proposed graduates for the coming year.

125. The Assessment Team reviewed whether regional guidance materials had been distributed and whether woredas still retained copies of them. The team also reviewed whether woredas had other relevant material, particularly the PIM.

126. The regions have prepared the graduation guidelines and benchmarks in an appropriate language as outlined above. These regional guidance materials were distributed to woredas.

127. Table 7 below presents the Assessment Team’s findings on whether materials were still present at woreda level. As the table shows, the Graduation Guidance Note was generally available, the PIM less frequently so. However, the team also found that in a number of woredas only the older (2004) version of the PIM was available.

Table 7: Availability of PIM and graduation guidance notes in woredas

Type of Manuals	Amhara			Oromiya			SNNP			Tigray		
	Lasta	Kalu	Wegdie	ATJK	Fadis	Oda Bultum	Halaba	Damot Gale	Kemba	Tahtay Maichew	Ahferom	Ofa
PIM	A4, E	A4, E4	A4, E4	_	_	A4	A4, E4	_	E4	A4, E	A4, E	A4, E
GGN	A	A	A	_	O	O	A	A	A	T	T	T

Note: A = Amharic; E = English; O = Oromifa; T = Tigrinya; 4 = 2004 version; 9 = 2009 version; _ = not present

128. Only 5 out of 24 kebeles visited by the Assessment Team had the GGN, all of these kebeles were in Tigray.

4.2.4 TRAINING

The Graduation Guidance Note states the envisaged steps to introduce the use of the graduation benchmarks in the participant selection process. These include:

- Awareness raising and training of woreda representatives on the graduation criteria and process
- Awareness raising among kebele representatives, elders and CFSTF representatives on graduation criteria and process
- Briefing on Awareness on graduation criteria and process to all kebele members (GGN , MoARD 2007b: 9)

129. All regions have provided training to woredas regarding graduation processes and benchmarks. However the frequency of this training varies. Amhara has provided training annually for the past three years, while other regions have not trained woreda staff since 2008. As a result in some woredas, for example ATJK, Oda Bultum and Fadis, no trained staff are currently in post.

130. Woredas have also provided training to some extent to the kebele level staff. Records show that training duration varies. In some instances it is recorded in days, in others hours and sometimes only orientation is recorded with no indication of time allotted. Generally speaking training is provided to DAs, and possible one or two other members of the KFSTF. However, the information gained in these trainings is not adequately passed onto other members of the task force. As a consequence, the Assessment Team found that there was no consistent information and knowledge about graduation and benchmarks (see section 4.2.5 below).

4.2.5 UNDERSTANDING OF GRADUATION

131. In order for implementers to effectively achieve and monitor graduation, and to identify graduates they need to have a clear understanding of both the conceptual definition of graduation and the criteria by which graduates are to be identified. Key implementers include:

- Federal stakeholders (including FSPD and FAED),
- Regional stakeholders (particularly the DPPFSC, but also the Regional Agricultural Extension Department),

- The Woreda Food Security Task Force and
- The Kebele and Community Task Forces (including members such as the DAs).

132. Furthermore, graduation processes can benefit from broader community engagement: greater openness by, and more community press on, clients to working towards graduation and accepting ones identification as a graduate. The strong involvement of community based structures (KFSTF and CFSTF) as well as this broader community engagement is the reason that one of the core principles of the graduation identification process is ‘Community awareness and involvement: communities are best placed to operationalise graduation’. Furthermore, the Charter of Rights and Responsibilities currently being distributed to all clients states that ‘You have the right to know the criteria for graduation and to remain in the programme if you do not meet these criteria’.

General Understanding

133. Throughout the different implementation structures there was good knowledge of the conceptual definition of graduation. Almost all stakeholders would repeat or elaborate on the definition outlined in the guidance note ‘A household has graduated when, in the absence of receiving PSNP transfers, it can meet its food needs for all 12 months and is able to withstand modest shocks.’ Often supplementing this definition were statements concerning building assets beyond a benchmark threshold, and, in some instances, the receipt of households asset building support.

‘If a household managed to fulfill the food needs of his family for one year through improving his assets he will be graduated. This household will not fall back to the program if he faces a drought.’

Sorba kebele FSTF, Lasta

134. The picture of good conceptual understanding is similar at community level both amongst implementers and with members of the broader community (particularly clients). In almost all cases respondents talked about meeting food needs, from a combination of own production and other sources. Also frequently mentioned was that graduating households were expected to have built assets, improved their lives and to now be better off than non-graduating clients. Less commonly mentioned was the concept of being able to withstand a modest shock, although such an understanding did come out in other areas of the interviews.

Understanding of how Graduation can be Achieved

135. Throughout the different implementation structures there was strong understanding that graduation would not be the result of the PSNP alone, DPPFSC and extension departments, WFSTFs and frontline implementers (both DAs and KFSTFs) all talk about the need for complementary support from the rest of the Food Security Programme. Credit was the most commonly mentioned requirement, with irrigation also featuring strongly.

136. In Amhara region, where self-graduation is being explicitly promoted, there was also significant mention of other income sources – particularly labour opportunities – being a factor in enabling and encouraging self-graduation. The reasons mentioned by self-graduates were more varied and included:

- Ad hoc events (such as the inheritance of money or property), and
- The understanding, largely gained through specific awareness creation, that their time might be better spent working on their own land rather than engaging in public works.

Understanding of Criteria to Identify Graduates

137. Implementers at different federal, regional, woreda have an understanding of the criteria by which they are expected to identify graduates as indicated in the regional guidance materials.

In most instances DAs. This understanding is less strong among other members of the KFSTF and gets weaker among CFSTF members in all regions.

138. As mentioned below in section 4.5 and above in section 4.2.2, there are sometimes differences in understanding, even within the same woreda, of the exact elements which make up the data to be collected and compared with the benchmarks. Therefore while the threshold may be commonly understood, the understanding of the exact criteria making up this threshold differs.

139. Understanding of benchmarks and the assets being measured to assess whether households have reached the benchmarks was much weaker amongst clients and graduates with few able to state the benchmark and the assets to be assessed. See the table in Annex Five for more details.

140. A number of studies have highlighted lesser awareness by women (whether in male or female headed households of key elements of PSNP implementation (Winter 2008, HELM 2008). Assessment Team findings were consistent with this view. For example, even women in possession of newly distributed client cards were unable to state the rights and responsibilities listed on the back.

141. In conclusion, there is strong understanding by stakeholders (including clients and graduates) consulted by the Assessment of the concept that graduation is related to food needs. Most implementers also have some level of understanding of the benchmarks, although there is varying understanding of what assets should actually be measured. The greatest weakness in understanding is amongst clients and graduates, where there is limited knowledge of either the benchmarks or which assets are measured. As is discussed further in sections 5.1 and 4.7 of the report, this has implications for people's perceptions of the fairness of the process, and their willingness to accept their identification.

4.3 Planning

142. This section describes the process by which targets or plans for graduation are set at federal and regional level. It also describes how graduation is scheduled (the time of year) and the role out of implementation of the October 2009 JRIS decision to provide identified graduates with an additional year of support.

143. It finds:

- There are a number of different target/plan setting processes in place, including regional targets and plans, federal budget processes, and the targets outlined in the logframes.
- There is a variation between the target exercises undertaken in the different regions, which means that the resulting targets or plans need to be understood differently by stakeholders. While targets in Amhara have been set as a first step in assessing the level of effort required to achieve graduation in three years, the targets in the other three regions are more efforts to estimate graduation rates on the basis of existing conditions such as the presence or absence of a recent drought. Conflating targets set for such different reasons does not produce a clear indication of anything.
- As with other areas of programme implementation, the role of targets is not consistently understood throughout different levels. Care needs to be taken to ensure that indicative planning figures are not understood by those lower in the hierarchy as quotas which have to be achieved.
- The actual scheduling of graduation varies enormously between woredas, with an impact in the amount of time this allows for undertaking the steps required to identify graduates. This is having impacts on the quality of the process.

- The major explicit link between graduation and targeting is the backfilling of places vacated by graduates to accommodate new clients either as a consequence of the need to undertake full-family targeting or because of a need to accommodate food insecure households not currently covered by the programme.
- The decision to keep graduates in the programme for an additional year has caused confusion in some implementers and amongst some graduates. While most implementers felt that the agreement was valid and should continue, there is room to improve graduates understanding of the process.

4.3.1 TARGET OR PLAN SETTING

144. The Graduation Guidance Note and other guidance materials do not specifically mention the process by which targets or plans for the number of graduates might be set at national, regional or woreda, levels. However, target setting is a common practice to support the effective management of programmes. Targets play a number of differing, but important, roles in their support of management, as discussed in more detail below:

- In programme planning, a target is a key step in defining the level of resources a programme needs.
- In performance monitoring, targets can help managers to identify individuals and departments with good performance and those who need further support.
- In budget forecasting, indicative plans can help to estimate the budgets required for further years of implementation.

145. **Programme Planning Targets:** As stated above target setting is a key step in programme planning. For example it is only by deciding how many people one wants trained that one can decide how many training workshops are needed, how many per diems need to be paid etc. Normally a two way process is involved whereby planners first assess what resources are needed to achieve their initial target; and, secondly, planners may revise their targets in the light of actual resources available. The resulting plan should ensure that targets and the resources planned to achieve them are comparable.

146. **Performance Monitoring Targets:** Performance monitoring targets are used to guide implementers as to acceptable standards of implementation and assess whether implementers are performing better or below such standards. They are sometimes used in conjunction with incentive systems so that good performers are rewarded (either through specific benefits or through recognition) and remedial action is taken in the case of poor performance. A common challenge with implementing performance targets is that implementers focus on achieving the target, rather than on achieving the underlying improvements which the targets are trying to measure.

147. **Indicative Plans to Support Budget Forecasts:** In many instances the actual numbers of people to be covered by a programme may not be known prior to the period being budgeted for. For example, in health sector planning it's not possible to know how many people will need malaria treatment. However, estimates are needed in order to allow budgets to be drawn up, and it is necessary for these estimates to be as accurate as possible.

Federal Targets and Targets

148. At Federal level a number of targets are in place. In the Food Security Programme document and its accompanying logframe, part of the expected outcome of the Food Security Programme is graduation of all public works clients to either food security or food sufficiency²².

²² The actual outcome statement is 'Food security status for male and female members of food insecure households in CFI woredas, and resettled people, improved'. This is elaborated by a number of indicators

This statement was expected to guide the level of investment in the programme and resulted in the substantial redesign of elements of the Food Security Programme. However, this target figure is not used in the PSNP programme budget. Instead the budget assumes an annual graduation rate of 10% a year; with this figure reviewed annually in the light of actual graduation (and subsequent years budgets amended accordingly).

149. In agreeing the 10% graduation a year assumption, the World Bank made use of the LIU analysis of prospects for graduation. This analysis suggested that between 50 and 65% of those receiving household packages could be expected to graduate after 5-6 years.

150. The logframe targets and the assumptions used in the PSNP programme budget correspond to the Programme Planning Targets and Budget Forecasting plans mentioned above. However, it is not clear the extent to which the logframe targets actually reflect the level of resourcing available to achieve them.

151. In addition, USAID has encouraged its NGO partners to identify target graduation rates for those receiving support from USAID financing for PSNP and PSNP plus activities²³. 70% of clients receiving support from both USAID financed PSNP and PSNP Plus activities are expected to graduate by the end of the funding-cycle on September 2011.

Regional and Woreda Targets and Plans

152. All regions have target setting processes in place, however they differ as to whether they are set at the regional level (Amhara and Tigray) or the compilation of targets set at a woreda level (Oromiya and SNNP).

153. Amhara region currently has targets (they prefer the term 'indicative plans') for the region to achieve 100% graduation over the next three years. The indicative plans broken down by year are:

- 2002 (Ethiopian Calendar): 40%
- 2003: 35%
- 2004: 25%

154. These indicative plans are contained in a regional planning document²⁴ and formed the basis of planning resource needs for the Household Asset Building Programme. As such they correspond to the Programme Planning Targets mentioned above. However, these targets have not been adjusted following an understanding of the actual resources available. Regional Food Security staff highlight the reality that resources are insufficient to provide credit for all households to graduate, but have yet to revise their indicative plans accordingly. However, the

Example of Mismatch between Indicative Plans and Actual Resources

Kalu WFSTF report that 40% of clients represents 4,351 households. However, the budget for EFY 2002 has only been sufficient for 656 households.

including two specifically related to the PSNP: 50% of male and female members of chronically food insecure households participating in PSNP public works access sufficient food at all times for an active and healthy life in the absence of PSNP transfers by 2014 [food security]; and 50% of male and female members of chronically food insecure households participating in PSNP public works yet to achieve food security have sufficient food for 12 months and can resist moderate shocks in the absence of PSNP transfers by 2014 [food sufficiency]

²³ PSNP Plus incorporates a range of activities many of which are equivalent to interventions under HAPB.

²⁴ Different but Feasible Household Packages for Food Security Programme Implementing Woredas in Six Development Zones of Amhara, Bahir Dar 2002 Eth. Cal.

Balanced Score Coding Strategic Planning, currently underway, may emerge with new indicative targets of the region. Furthermore, the same indicative plans are in place for all woredas of the region (i.e. all woredas have been informed of the figures of 40%, 35 and 25%).

155. However, the Amhara DPPFSC staff are clear that these are not quotas which woredas are expected to achieve, but rather a guidance on how 100% of graduation might be achieved. However, this understanding of the role of these indicative plans is not consistent as we go to lower levels particularly kebele and community level. Kebele and community task forces express concern that they have to try and identify 40% PSNP clients for graduation, but are under the impression that this is something that they have to achieve. For example, in Lasta, a list of names has already been drawn up in the two kebeles visited representing the 40% figure, although the vast majority of those listed have not crossed the benchmark. The Woreda stated that this was not a final list of graduates, but indicates the pressure communities are under. Similarly in Wegdie, in 2001 kebele officials received a letter from the woreda identifying specific households which had not crossed the benchmark – but were closer than other clients to the benchmark; and stating that the Kebele extension/DA office should encourage the listed households to volunteer for self graduation. Despite, this perception that efforts need to be made to reach targets, it should be noted that actual graduation up to 2001 Eth. Cal. was 44,479 households (10%) out of the total 452,822 households compared to regional targets of 100,000 households from 1998 up to 2002 Eth. Cal.

156. In Tigray, a target of 5% was set for 2009 and a target of 7% has been set for 2010. The Regional Food Security Task Force (RFSTF) stated that the target was informed by analysis conducted by Adigrat Catholic Diocese Secretariat and Irish Aid²⁵. The RFSTF consider such target levels appropriate given the prevalence of recurrent drought, high levels of poverty and low potential affecting many of the PSNP woredas. However, they are planning to increase the target in 2011 to 10%. Similar to Amhara region, the same target is in place for all woredas in the region, although the RFSTF accepts that actual potential to graduate may differ. Similar to Amhara, the RFSTF states that the targets are indicative only and individual woredas can exceed or under achieve against the target.

157. Although no specific performance monitoring targets have been set with regards to graduation, there are examples of recognition being formally provided to woredas who achieve high levels of graduation in both Tigray and Amhara. Two of the woredas visited during the Assessment have received such recognition: Tahtay Maichew in Tigray and Wegdie in Amhara region (although Wegdie received recognition, regional implementers in Amhara expressed reservations whether or not the apparently high graduation figures in Wegdie represented actual changes in levels of food security).

158. As mentioned previously, the target setting in Oromiya and SNNP is the compilation of woreda level estimates of the amount of graduation which might be achieved. However, woredas are not provided with any guidance on how to set targets, although they do try and take into account factors such as rainfall and production, land fertility etc.

4.3.2 TIMETABLING GRADUATION

159. Neither the current PIM nor the Graduation Guidance Note provide suggestions on scheduling graduation. The current draft of the PIM for the new programme phase does state that identification of graduates should happen prior to the annual targeting exercise to correct for inclusion and exclusion error. Furthermore, all stakeholders recognise that the current graduation

²⁵ The Assessment team was able to review the first document, but not the second. The first document highlights some of the challenges in achieving graduation but does not recommend any specific graduation targets.

procedures require time and need to be conducted in a planned way if they are to be implemented appropriately and accurately.

160. In addition, the October 2009 JRIS agreed that households who are identified for graduation following the process outlined in the Graduation Guidance Note will remain in the PSNP for one additional year in order that they build further assets and increase their resiliency. As a consequence it was expected that all 2009 graduates remain in the programme for 2010.

161. The timing of graduation varies significantly both between different woredas (even those of the same region) but also occasionally at different times of year in the same woreda. Two common reasons were provided for the timing of graduation:

- Receipt of a request from the region for numbers of graduates, which in turn triggered the woreda to begin graduate identification related activities.
- Need to take into consideration current year's crop performance before graduation lists are finalised.

162. The timing of graduation appeared to be more predictable in Amhara, and less predictable in Oromiya (in both Fadis and ATJK different cycles of graduation happened at different times of the year). Where graduation timing was more predictable, it was evident that woredas, kebeles and communities were able to conduct a more thorough exercise with time for woreda training, community awareness raising, proper assessment of assets, and review of the data to identify graduates.

163. Although graduation may occur at very different times to the targeting period outlined in the PIM, in some woredas (particularly, but not exclusively, in Tigray) there was "backfilling" by new clients of the vacancies created by graduates. In Tigray, the main reason given for this practice was regional efforts to implement the commitment to achieve full-family targeting. Even when taking this back-filling into account, households who have not reached the benchmark are also exiting the programme in order to create space for family members of poorer clients who are currently not covered by the programme. In other areas, the need to accommodate food insecure clients not currently covered by the programme was also mentioned as a factor in the graduate identification process.

164. Most woredas and kebeles visited by the consultancy team were allowing graduates identified in 2009 to remain in the programme for one additional year, as agreed above. There were exceptions, however. In Ahferom, most 2009 identified graduates have left the programme and the 2010 budget has been used to cover additional beneficiaries (often as part of the full family targeting exercise) mentioned above. Similar examples were cited by regional officials in Amhara, for example Dawa Chafa.

165. In a number of instances the decision to keep graduates in the programme for an additional year has caused confusion. Concern was expressed by woreda officials in Amhara and reported by regional officials in Oromiya that this decision was sending mixed messages to graduates: first encouraging them to graduate and then postponing their exit from the programme. The consulting team found evidence of this confusion in Amhara, where some clients thought that their re-inclusion in the programme for 2010 meant that they would remain in the programme for the rest of the programme life. However, implementers also appreciated that graduates could benefit from the opportunity to further build assets. Furthermore, in SNNP the decision to keep graduates in the programme for an additional year was praised because it addressed concerns that last years' poor crop performance might have created problems for new graduates.

4.4 Types of Programme Exit

166. This section describes a number of types of programme exit viewed by the Assessment Team which are covered by the term graduation. It finds that not all programme exits termed graduation actually fulfil the definition of graduation outlined in the Graduation Guidance Note (that households can meet food needs for 12 months of the year and withstand a modest shock).

167. According to the PSNP design, PSNP clients graduate from the programme when they are food sufficient and no longer need transfers to ensure food for 12 months of the year and to resist moderate shocks. Having reached this level, potential graduates remain in the programme for a further year and then leave the programme, unless they successfully appeal against this decision.

168. In practice however, the team found that people leave the programme through a number of different mechanisms, as follows:

1. **Benchmark graduation.** Clients are identified through the graduation assessment process – the 16 steps – as having met the benchmark, and therefore leave the programme the following year, whether or not they would prefer to do so. This process was observed in the following locations:
 - All woredas of all regions
2. **Self-graduation when food sufficient.** Clients have not yet been assessed as food sufficient but they know they are and choose to leave the programme either before the assessment is conducted, or early on in the assessment process before the end of the extra year following the assessment. This was observed in:
 - Amhara
 - Tigray
 - Oromiya
3. **Graduation to correct inclusion errors.** Some households are programme clients without having met the entry requirements and may be considered as inclusion errors. They are graduated following assessment, in a specific case of category 1 above. This was observed in:
 - Oromiya
 - Tigray
4. **Self-exit without food sufficiency.** For a number of reasons²⁶ households may choose to leave the programme prior to reaching food sufficiency. This was observed in:
 - All three woredas of Amhara
 - Ofla Woreda of Tigray
5. **Graduation below the benchmark.** This is when households are selected for graduation without having reached the graduation benchmark signifying food sufficiency. This was observed in:
 - All three woredas of Tigray (although was not called graduation)

²⁶ The most commonly mentioned reasons were: a desire not to be 'dependent', potential to earn better income through other sources, a belief that time might be better spent working on a household's own land rather than participating in public works.

- Oda Bultum of Oromiya

169. A number of other types of programme exit were observed, including through death, moving home, changing family circumstances, etc.

170. The Assessment found that all of the 5 categories of programme exit above are referred to as graduation. The exception is with category 4 – self-exit without food sufficiency – which was not considered to be graduation in Tigray.

171. If graduation is defined by the achievement of food sufficiency, then only categories 1 to 3 fulfil this criterion, since categories 4 and 5 involve departure from the programme without achieving food sufficiency.

172. A further question is whether category 3 – exclusion errors – should be considered as graduation. If graduation implies improvement and progress from below the food sufficiency line to reach food sufficiency, then this is not graduation. However since these households are in the programme and are judged as food sufficient the GGN categorises them as graduates.

173. Category 4 is a special case since it describes households which are still food insecure but find their time is better used with alternative livelihood options. The GGN would not consider these households as graduates; rather they are food insecure households who have chosen to exit the programme for other reasons.

4.5 Steps taken to Identify Graduates

174. This section reviews the actual processes in place to identify graduates. It includes the following key sub-sections:

- Implementation according to steps 5-16 of Graduation Guidance Note
- Variable Levels of Support
- Record Keeping
- Graduation Ceremonies
- Monitoring of Graduation Processes

175. It finds that:

- No woreda is following the sixteen steps as indicated in the Graduation Guidance Note. While in some cases this may be about variable quality of information, a major reason is because implementers feel that not all the steps are necessary and following them completely would be laborious without additional benefits.
- However, there are also inconsistencies in how some of the core steps are applied, particularly steps 5 and 6, registration of assets and identification of clients. Inconsistencies in this area mean that the actual threshold of graduation in one area is likely to be different from the threshold in another area (even if the benchmark is the same). For example, if one household has its crop production measured, another does not; then the first household is more likely to be identified as a graduate than the second even if they have the same assets and they are being assessed against the same benchmark.
- The Variable Levels of Support study is widely perceived to have identified positive lessons with regards to gradually diminishing levels of support to PSNP clients as they improve assets and income levels. Both implementers and clients view it as an appropriate method of easing clients off PSNP support.

- The Assessment Team found there are a number of opportunities to improve record keeping and data management without adding to implementers' workloads.
- While all woredas and regions keep some gender disaggregated data, such data is not consistently kept.
- The Assessment Team found there were varying levels of oversight and supervision of graduate identification work by woredas. Where oversight and supervision is limited, there is no ability to detect early challenges and errors in the graduation identification systems.

4.5.1 IMPLEMENTATION ACCORDING TO STEPS 5-16 OF GRADUATION GUIDANCE NOTE

176. This section considers the actual steps taken by the woreda, kebele and community level implementers in comparison the relevant steps outlined in the Graduation Guidance Note. It looks at where implementers are following the steps, how they are deviating from the steps and describe their reasons for the deviation.

177. The Graduation Guidance Note reaffirms the PIM statement that the food security status of households is assessed annually as part of the targeting process. It states that the 'Graduation Guidance Note adds a step to this process to determine:

- The number of households currently participating in the Programme that are assessed as food sufficient and therefore no longer eligible for the programme. Only those households participating in the PSNP that have taken an OFSP household package and credit will be assessed to determine their possible graduation from the Programme' (MoARD 2007b: 4).

178. Steps 5-16 of the Graduation Guidance Note then describe how this process should be followed at woreda and community level. These steps are detailed in the table below. In addition to these steps, the Graduation Guidance Note also states, 'when the status of a household's assets is reviewed, those assets that are owned by the household are considered. Assets not yet fully-owned by households (an asset bought with credit that is not fully paid-off) will be considered by assessing the value of the asset and deducting the outstanding debt' (MoARD 2007b: 5). This aspect of the graduation assessment process is covered by Step 5 (the step which provides an overview of household assets).

179. As the following table demonstrates, no woreda is completing steps 5-16 of the Graduation Guidance Note. The following key will guide the reading of the table:

- ✓ indicates that a woreda is following the step as stated
- # indicates that a woreda is following a variation of the step
- Where the step is not being followed or a completely different system is followed the cell is left blank.

Table 8: Woredas Completing Steps Laid Out in Graduation Guidance Note

Step	Amhara			Oromiya			SNNP			Tigray		
	Kalu	Lasta	Wegdie	ATJK	Fadis	Oda Bultum	Damot Gale	Halaba	Kemba	Ahferom	Ofa	Tahtay Matchew
Step 5. DAs prepare an overview of household assets of all PSNP participants who have taken a household package and credit	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	✓		#	#	#
Step 6. Using the Graduation guidelines, CFSTF prepares the list of proposed graduates for the coming year. As outlined above this includes ... a detailed assessment of household asset holdings...	#	✓	✓	#	#	#	#	#	#	✓	#	✓
Step 7. CFSTF post list of proposed graduates and seeks comments and endorsement from the general community meeting	#	#	✓			#	#			#	#	✓
Step 8. CFSTF finalises the list of proposed graduates and forwards it to the KFSTF for verification and further action.	✓									✓	✓	✓
Step 9. KFSTF and Kebele Council verify the list, correct possible errors and submit the list of proposed graduates for approval to the WFSTF.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Step 10. WFSTF verifies, corrects possible errors and submits the list of proposed graduates to the Woreda council for final approval.	#	#		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓
Step 11. Woreda council approves the list of proposed graduates and submits it to the Regional BoARD.								✓		✓		✓
Step 12. WFSTF sends approved list of households graduated from the PSNP to KFSTF for posting at community level.					#	#	#					#
Step 13. CFSTF briefs community on the final list of households graduated from the PSNP and raises awareness [on appeals process]	#	#	#	#		#	#	#	#	#	#	#
Step 14. Kebele council and the appeals committee collects graduation-related appeals, respond and correct the list of households graduated from the PSNP where appropriate.	#	#	#	#		#	#	#	#	#	#	#
Step 15. Kebele council submits final list of households graduated from the PSNP to WFSTF for verification and approval.	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#
Step 16. WFSTF verifies, approves and informs the Woreda council and regional BoARD on adjustments to the list of households graduated from the PSNP based on the appeals process.	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#

4.5.1.1 Key Areas Where Steps are not followed

180. As the above table illustrates, steps 11²⁷, 12, 15 and 16 are rarely followed. These steps relate to some of the formal approval processes which many implementers report as being over complex and in some cases redundant.

181. Step 11 (Approval by the Woreda Council) is rarely undertaken because key council members are already members of the WFSTF and therefore there is no value in having a separate Council approval process. Furthermore, such Council meetings happen infrequently (usually once a quarter) and so awaiting formal Council approval could add an unnecessary delay to the process

182. Step 12: (WFSTF sends approved list of households to KFSTF) also tends not to happen as posting has already happened in some form or other at the community level prior to sending the list of candidate graduates to the WFSTF. Some of the woredas such as Tahtay Maichew in Tigray sends back the list so as to prepare the candidate graduates for ceremony.

183. Steps 15 and 16, refer to a flow of information after the appeals process. Although some version of these steps is implemented it does not happen at this stage in the process. The approval actually takes place earlier. In most of the visited woredas the KFSTF and in rare cases the kebele council verifies the list of graduates in steps 9, 10 and 11, and no separate approval process happens after this. Implementers state that the process doesn't consider their workloads and that actually following these steps in their order would be time-taking and redundant.

4.5.1.2 Key Areas where Steps Vary

Step 5: Overview of Household Assets

184. The actual implementation of this step varies in a number of ways:

- **Whether or not the process is confined to only those 'PSNP participants who have taken a household package and credit':** In most of the assessed woredas, an overview of household assets is undertaken for all PSNP clients, but in some only those 'approaching graduation' have their assets assessed. It was only in Halaba, where only those households who received credit had their assets assessed.
- **Who actually records the assets:** In most of the woredas the DA is responsible for registration of assets but in some cases such as Lasta woreda the CFSTF informs the DA the asset holding of the clients. Also in Lasta, the Assessment Team found that SMEDO (Small and Micro Enterprise Development Office) was also actively involved in asset registration for clients involved in off-farm income generating activities (IGAs)
- **How and who values assets.** Assets are mostly valued by the DA either based on local market prices or agreement with the client. However, in a number of woredas, asset valuation is undertaken at woreda level, either using the market price at woreda level or an average of prices from all the markets in the woreda.
- **Use of regression analysis.** While this only refers to SNNP, and in two of the assessed woredas only took place in one year, it is a dramatically different approach.
- **How un-repaid credit is assessed in the overview of household assets:** In most of the reviewed formats for asset registration, a column is present to enable implementers to deduct the outstanding loans of the clients' assets. However, the Assessment Team found a number of examples where no deductions were made. Whereas in most regions, the outstanding balance of credit is deducted, in Tigray an asset will be fully counted if 75% of the loan is paid (and not counted until this point).

²⁷ Lists or numbers of graduates are submitted to regional offices, but the approval by the cabinet does not happen.

Steps 6 and 8: CFSTF prepares the list of proposed graduates for the coming year; and finalise list

185. In step 6 of the guidance note the CFSTF prepares the list of candidate graduates. In Kalu woreda the CFSTF are present during asset registration only as observer and doesn't have a role in identifying candidate graduates. In Ofla woreda the DA identifies the list of graduates in the presence of the CFSTF as most of the members are illiterate. In ATJK, Fadis, Oda Bultum, Halaba and Kemba woredas the list of potential graduates is prepared either by the DA, woreda experts, Got leaders or KFSTF but not by the CFSTF.

186. Self graduation is practiced at scale in Amhara region and to some extent in the other regions. The majority of self-graduates are the product of one of the following two processes:

- General awareness raising to all PSNP clients encouraging them to come forward for graduation. Some element of general awareness raising is present in all regions, but in Amhara it is particularly emphasised²⁸.
- Specific counselling of candidate graduates who have been assessed as closest to the benchmark, but who may remain significantly below it.

187. Step 8 states that CFSTF finalises the list of candidate graduates but in most of the visited woredas finalising of the list is undertaken by the DA, the woreda experts or KFSTF. After the list is finalised by the CFSTF, the list is verified by the KFSTF and Cabinet according to the guidance note of step 9. Almost all of the woredas implement this step but sometimes the verification is made only by the KFSTF where there is no overlap of the Cabinet and KFSTF members.

Step 7 and Step 11: Public Posting of Lists of Graduates and Community Briefing

188. These tended not to be two separate steps. More frequently was a community briefing concerning who had been selected for graduation, occasionally lists of graduates would be publically posted. The graduate case-studies also identified examples of clients who had not heard through any formal channel that they had been graduated, but rather were only told when they attended public works.

4.5.2 VARIABLE LEVELS OF SUPPORT

189. The variable levels of support project has been piloted in Endamehoni, Kalu, Deder and Boricha woredas of Tigray, Amhara, Oromiya and SNNP respectively. A terminal report and rollout plan specifies the added values of the piloting process in achieving the objectives of PSNP and among the values are '...facilitates step-wise exit and graduation from the program...; prepares beneficiaries to be effective in household asset building and income generation schemes that would ensure safe graduation from PSNP; and provides evidence to woredas to effectively plan and implement graduation by providing priority focus to households requiring lower level of support from PSNP' (Mulugeta Tefera 2010: iv). The Assessment Team visited one of the pilot woredas, Kalu woreda of Amhara Region.

190. The Assessment Team held discussions with woreda, Kebele, and community FSTFs and the clients placed in 3, 6, or 9 months support on the impact of the approach on graduation. The team found that the level of awareness at all levels on 3-6-9 approach is good. The process of wealth registration for placing clients for 3, 6, or 9 months support was done by CFSTF in collaboration with DAs and active participation of the community at large. Moreover, most of the benchmark base graduates are those clients from the three months support category. Since these clients have been provided various household packages and received frequent and

²⁸ There were examples some self-graduates emerging from this process being rejected by woreda officials because they were too food insecure (Lasta).

technical support from DAs and woreda experts their level of performance in asset building has been good as compared to clients of 6 or 9 months support. Apparently, 40% of the graduates of Kalu woreda came from the three months support program.

191. The Assessment Team also found that both implementers and clients valued the variable level of support approach's contribution to allowing gradual withdrawal from the PSNP and households equated being on three months of assistance as being a step towards leaving the programme.

4.5.3 RECORD KEEPING

192. Neither the federal nor regional Graduation Guidance Notes state how records should be completed and what reporting formats should be used to report information on graduation. However, all regions have provided woredas with reporting formats and these were seen by the Assessment Team in assessed woredas.

193. There is significant variation in the reporting formats used by woredas, largely determined by the formats provided by the regions. Sample copies of reporting formats have been included in Annex Six).

194. As indicated above, there are variations in the level of data collection undertaken as part of Step 5 (the asset registration process). As a consequence there are significant variations in the data available. For example, assets of clients are registered by the DA in most of the woredas except a few. In a few of the woredas only assets of those who are approaching the benchmark are registered in order to identify graduates. In Kemba assets of those who took credit are registered. This affects the available data in the respective woredas.

195. In a number of sites, the Assessment Team found that data which kebele and community level implementers stated had been collected were no longer available. Sometimes, data appeared to have been mislaid between the kebele and the woreda, whereas at other times data was lost because of a failure to handover information when a Development Agent was reassigned.

196. There have been some efforts by regions and woredas to maintain gender disaggregated data. All regions and woredas visited maintained some level of disaggregated data, but only one region and 7 out of the 12 assessed woredas maintained a complete set of disaggregated data. Three key types of data were assessed: clients, graduates and household package recipients. For data to be judged as fully available by the Assessment team, gender disaggregation needed to include male vs. female headed households for all three types of data; as well as male vs. female headed household members with regards to clients and graduates.

Table 9: Availability of Gender Related Data

Key Gender Data Elements	No
No of regions where some gender disaggregated data available	4
No of Regions where gender disaggregated data fully available	1
No of visited woredas where some gender disaggregated data available	12
No of visited woredas where gender disaggregated data fully available	7

197. As stated above, and repeated by all stakeholders, graduation is expected to be the consequence of the receipt of both PSNP transfers and credit opportunities provided by the OFSP or HABP. Despite this, data on these different aspects of FSP implementation (PSNP client lists, HABP client lists, and graduation) are not collected and held in ways which are easily compared:

- In the past lists of PSNP clients were often reproduced each month, frequently following a different order of names. The Assessment Team found that the further efforts to roll-out the PASS software have largely addressed this issue.
- However, data on household package provision is not collected against the same master list as is now used for the PSNP clients (the PASS client list).
- Furthermore, data on graduation (whether household asset registration or names of graduates) is also not collected against the same master list as is now used for the PSNP clients.
- Data on Household Package provision is always reported on a household basis (the number of households who have received household packages)
- Data on the PSNP is frequently only reported on an individual basis at woreda and regional level with the number of PSNP clients recorded, but not the number of households. Regions will often estimate the number of PSNP client households by dividing the number of clients by five as this is assumed to be the average household size. However, actual household sizes vary with poorer households often containing fewer members. Furthermore, incomplete full family targeting also means not all households members are included within the PSNP.
- Data on graduation is sometimes reported on an individual basis and sometimes reported on a household basis. Regions will then either multiply or divide the numbers provided to convert them from one to the other, with all the challenges outlined above.

198. It should be noted that only one of the above is a current requirement of the record keeping system – the use of PASS. In the woredas visited by the Assessment Team, this is in operation.

199. The lack of systematic record keeping and reporting systems increases the workload of implementers at kebele, woreda, and regional level; increases the likelihood of errors in reporting; and reduces the potential to monitor programme progress in simple ways. The team found the following examples of these challenges and lost opportunities in practice:

- Although data is collected on who is in the PSNP and who is in receipt of household packages in any given year, this is rarely kept in a way which allows implementers to quickly see and report how many times a household has received package credit prior to graduation, and how soon after taking credit (and repaying it) a household most commonly graduates.
- When reports are generated which state how many households have received household credit, they do not take into account whether or not such households have received credit in the past. This can result in erroneous totalling of multiple such reports to suggest that more households may have received credit than actually have (if a household has received credit on two separate occasions it is reported as if it is two households).
- When numbers of individuals are divided by five to produce a number of households (or vice-versa), this leads to inaccurate information being held and reported. Where real data is available on how many PSNP clients are actually in a household, the average is rarely as high as five (whether because some PSNP households have very small households or because full family targeting has yet to be achieved) and often varies significantly between woreda and woreda.
- Using the above data to compare with household asset provision can therefore provide inaccurate data on the number of households receiving packages.

200. Correcting or enabling the above requires no additional data collection, just different management and reporting of existing data collection.

4.5.4 GRADUATION CEREMONIES

201. The Graduation Guidance Note does not make any statements concerning graduation ceremonies, but in many woredas they are included as part of the graduation process. Implementers value ceremonies because they provide an opportunity to provide graduates with recognition for their achievements, whether: simply in the form of public appreciation, more formally through certificates, or with rewards in the form of farm-tools or per diems.

202. Graduates from 7 of the 12 Assessment woredas participated in graduation ceremonies²⁹. In most instances such ceremonies are held at the woreda or zonal level, although there were also examples of kebele level ceremonies. In Amhara region, a special ceremony was also held at regional level to provide recognition to those graduates who are the highest achievers from throughout the region.

203. Graduates received a range of rewards for graduating at these ceremonies:

- Where graduation ceremonies take place outside of the locality (at woreda, zone or regional level), graduates receive per diems, but where ceremonies took place at a kebele level no such payments were made.
- In 9 of the 12 visited woredas graduates received certificates acknowledging the progress they had made
- In 4 of the visited woredas a proportion of graduates received a gift of farm tools. In some instances, these gifts were provided to all graduates, in others only to self graduates, and in yet others only to those graduates who were considered 'model'.

4.5.5 MONITORING OF GRADUATION PROCESSES

204. The Assessment Team found that there were varying levels of oversight and supervision of graduate identification work by woredas. The degree of supervision is high in Tigray and Amhara, where woreda experts and the regional RRT have regular visits to the kebele level apart from the provision of training and formats for data collection and follow-up.

205. In Halaba, Oda Bultum and ATJK woredas, the oversight and supervision of woreda experts go up to identification of graduates together with the KFSTF. But the supervision of woreda experts in the identification process of graduates for Fadis, Demote Gale and Kemba is low. The reports of the regional RRT also confirms that there was a focus on the overall program implementation with less emphasis on graduation process, but on number of graduates & targets, household package provision and appeals.

4.6 Grievance Procedures and Safeguards

206. The Graduation Guidance Note includes a number of safeguard provisions. It states that:

- 'The current appeals mechanism will respond to appeals related to graduation'
- 'Graduated households who subsequently become chronically food insecure can re-enter the Programme.... [They] will re-enter the Programme through the annual community needs assessment'
- 'The check lists and tools for the RRM³⁰ will be revised to detect problems related to graduation that warrant immediate attention'

²⁹ In a two of these woredas, Kalu and Wegdie, the ceremonies have only happened for graduates in one of the two kebeles visited in each woreda.

³⁰ Rapid Response Mechanism

207. This section reviews the extent to which these safeguards are in place. It finds that:
- Some form of appeals process is in place. However, knowledge varies about its existence and clients and graduates express concern about its independence. Furthermore, the Assessment Team found that a number of those responsible for appeals were not aware of their decision making powers.
 - Amhara and Tigray have decided that any re-entry by graduates hit by shocks should be covered by the contingency or risk financing rather than by the main safety net caseload as indicated in the GGN.
 - Oromiya and SNNP have practiced some level of re-entry to the PSNP for clients hit by shocks.
 - The RRTs now discuss graduation issues as part of their visits. However, discussions commonly focus on implementation and there is less evidence of attention being paid to safeguard issues.

4.6.1 APPEALS PROCESS

208. In all Assessment kebeles, some form of appeals process was in place. In 19 of the 24 kebeles visited there was a Kebele Appeals Committee. In Sorba and Tila Asferi kebeles of Lasta, responsibility for appeals was exclusively the task of the Kebele Manger. In both kebeles of Fadis and Donbe Dolba kebele of Kemba, appeals are addressed by the KFSTF. The Roving Appeals Audits of 2008 and 2009 also found that appeals structures were largely in place, with KACs present in 38 and 36 out of 40 kebeles visited, respectively.

209. As the Roving Appeals Audits (RAA) mention, composition of appeals committees frequently varies from the composition outlined in the PIM³¹. The findings of the consulting team confirmed these results. The following deviations were noted from the PIM:

- Low representation of women, except in Tigray
- Poor representation from community members in kebeles without formal KACs

210. Although appeals processes are largely in place, there was some variation in the knowledge of clients and graduated households on the grievance process. In 14 out of the 24 visited kebeles, either clients or graduates reported that they did not know the appeals process or incorrectly stated who they should present their appeal to.

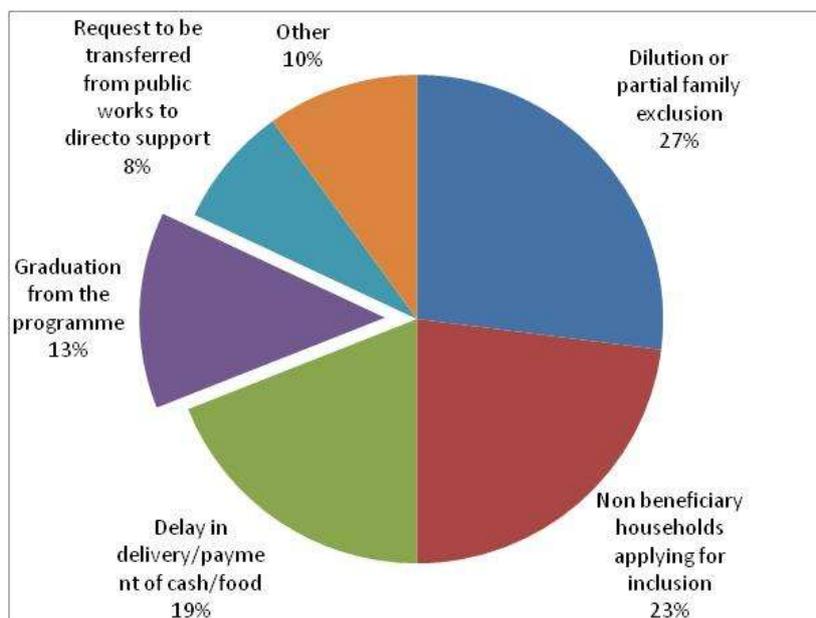
211. In a number of cases, even those responsible for appeals were not fully aware of their responsibilities. For example, in Lasta, all PSNP appeals are forwarded to the woreda with no resolution at kebele level, while in Halaba the KAC reported that the appeals they can resolve largely relate to land disputes and cases of theft. With regards to questions concerning graduation or other safety net questions *'sometimes appeals related to PSNP or graduation come, but there is nothing we can do so we advise appeal presenters particularly to work hard and we pray for them'* (KAC member in Aymele Kebele of Halaba). As indicated in the RAAs, and confirmed by the Assessment Team, few KACs keep records of appeals. Furthermore, the consulting team found that the outcomes of appeals were not posted publically.

212. According to the Roving Appeals Audit (RRA) in 2009, the major causes of appeals were as follows³²:

³¹ The PIM requires the following composition: 1 kebele council member (not chair); female representatives of the KFSTF and CSFTF (1 from each); 1 DA, 1 health work, and 2 elders (1 of whom should be female).

³² Data taken from Wabekbon 2009: 36

Figure 2: Main Reasons for Appeal (2009 RAA)



213. The same audit found that number of appeals on graduation varies across regions with low number of appeals in Tigray and relatively high in SNNP and Oromiya. The reason for the low level of appeal on graduation in Tigray, as it was explained during the discussion with focus group discussions (FGDs) at different levels, is that due to the process is transparent and fair and the names of the candidate graduates are read-out and decided in the public assembly.

214. The Assessment Team interviewed a range of graduates either through FGDs or during household case-studies. Those expressing dissatisfaction with their selection as graduates, were asked if they had appealed and, if not, why not. In these cases the most common response was that households saw no point in appealing to a committee that was largely made up of people who had been involved in their selection. It should be noted that the PIM expects some overlap in membership between KFSTFs, CFSTFs and KACs.

4.6.2 RE-ENTRY

215. Regional DPPFSC staff and most woreda stakeholders report the possibility of re-entry into the programme should graduated households fall back into chronic poverty. In practice the team found limited experience of re-entry to date. Only in Oromiya (for example Oda Bultum) did an assessed woreda report re-entry by graduated clients; while regional discussions in Oromiya and SNNP provided data on significant levels of re-entry in among graduates in some PSNP woredas.

216. In Amhara and Tigray, regional stakeholders have made the decision that any re-entry by graduates should be covered by the contingency or risk financing rather than main PSNP financing as suggested by the Graduation Guidance Note (MoARD 2007b: 11).

4.6.3 INCLUSION OF GRADUATION IN THE RAPID RESPONSE MECHANISM

217. The team found that issues related to graduation are now included in the RRT checklist, and Rapid Response Teams use these revised checklists during 2008 and 2009. Furthermore, special RRTs focusing on graduation were undertaken in 2009.

218. However, in many instances the RRTs focus on implementation issues such as whether training has happened and whether graduate identification is ongoing, rather than focusing on safeguard issues. The vast majority of text concerning graduation in RRT reports focused on these issues, as well as detailing numbers of graduates identified.

219. When RRTs did address graduation safeguard issues, common points emerging included:

- Difficulties in achieving the necessary changes in people's livelihoods to achieve graduation because of low coverage by OFSP, drought, and lack of enabling conditions
- Limited dissemination of graduation procedures to kebele and community level,
- Lack of relevance of the benchmark, and
- Lack of commitment from implementers or clients towards graduation.

4.7 Fairness and transparency

220. The Graduation Guidance Note outlines a number of key principles for the implementation of the benchmarks system including the following two related to fairness and accountability:

- The system must be transparent to external actors and to PSNP beneficiaries
- Accountable: the system must be accountable to PSNP beneficiaries

221. Furthermore, the Charter of Rights and Responsibilities (included in recently disseminated client cards) state: 'You have the right to know the criteria for graduation and to remain in the programme if you do not meet these criteria.' This section discusses the consulting teams findings with regards to this statement and these principles.

222. The section finds that:

- GoE and its development partners agreed to have an asset based benchmark in order to have a transparent system to identify graduates. However, lack of confidence in the benchmarks and their elements, and lack of understanding on how they are set does undermine the extent to which benchmarks are transparent.
- Information on who has been identified is made publically available and is often open for discussion by the wider community. This is a core element of accountability to clients which is upheld.
- Lack of knowledge concerning benchmarks, their elements, and how assets are assessed means that clients and graduates rarely know 'the criteria for graduation', which is a key right outlined in the Charter of Rights and Responsibilities.
- However, in most visited kebeles community members confirm that graduates to have greater asset holdings and income than non-clients, indicating some degree of fairness in the graduate identification process. However, although graduates are usually considered better-off than other clients, their level of food sufficiency is frequently questioned

4.7.1 TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

223. The team considered the following issues in relation to transparency and accountability:

- Is there a clear system for identifying graduates which can be understood by external actors?
- Do clients have knowledge of graduation procedures and understand the principles behind them?
- Is information on who has graduated publically available?

224. The commissioning of the IFPRI benchmarks analysis was an attempt by the GoE and its development partners to develop an evidence based system for graduation. However, as section 4.2.1 indicates the available data was not able to provide a robust set of guidance. Furthermore, few stakeholders (whether amongst donors or government) actually understood the analysis which was undertaken, although many expressed concerns with its conclusions.

225. The benchmarks which resulted from a combination of the IFPRI analysis and regional deliberations do provide a clear graduation threshold, and in principle external actors should be able to assess whether or not graduates have crossed this threshold. In practice, this is largely the case. However, variability in which assets are measured and the existence of graduation from systems independent of the benchmark (particularly self graduation) make it less easy to review the decision process.

226. The resulting benchmarks and the reason for their level are not easily understood by frontline implementers or clients who continuously questioned their appropriateness, particularly with regards to variability within the region and the elements of the benchmark (what assets etc. are assessed). This undermines their usefulness as a clear and transparent evidence based system. Furthermore, as indicated in sections **Error! Reference source not found.** and **Error! Reference source not found.** very few clients and graduates have an understanding of the benchmark, what assets are measured and how they are valued (in some instances graduates were not aware that any assets had been listed or valued).

227. The Assessment Team did find that some attempt was made to make publically known who had been identified for graduation. This rarely followed the steps outlined in the GGN, but did happen and was usually undertaken in the form of a public meeting. Only occasionally were these public meetings supplemented by the public posting of a list of names.

228. The Assessment Team also reviewed the extent to which the newly developed Client Cards had been distributed in kebeles covered by the assessment team. The Client Cards include a Charter of Rights and Responsibilities including the following graduation related right: 'You have the right to know the criteria for graduation and to remain in the programme if you do not meet these criteria'. The table below indicates the extent of client card distribution in the 24 visited kebeles (6 kebeles in each region).

Table 10: Extent of Client Card Distribution in Visited Kebeles of the Graduation Assessment

	Amhara	Oromiya	SNNP	Tigray
Complete		✓✓✓ ✓ ³³	✓✓✓	✓
In process	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓✓✓ ✓ ³⁴
Not yet Started	✓✓✓✓			

4.7.2 PERCEPTIONS REGARDING FAIRNESS

229. The team considered the following questions in relation to fairness:

- What are community perceptions concerning the relative wealth of clients selected for graduation?
- What are community perceptions regarding the food sufficiency status of graduates?

³³ A few households are still awaiting photos

³⁴ Client cards were distributed in Tahtay Maichew, but in Adi Hotsa they were recalled as they had not been signed and stamped. This is currently in process and they will be redistributed.

230. In almost all kebeles, clients report that those nominated for graduation have greater asset holdings and more income than other clients. Common responses included '*graduates are food sufficient and they can withstand shocks*' (Guba Gutu Kebele Client FGD) or that graduates are '*Like those middle class households of our kebele who don't face food shortage over the year*' (Choriso Kebele Client FGD).

231. In a small number of cases (Adi Hotsa kebele in Tahtay Maichew, Balla Koisha kebele in Damot Gale woreda and Halaba), clients, graduates or non-clients expressed concerns. In these instances, accusations were made of nepotism or personality conflicts contributing to decisions regarding graduation.

232. However, in 8 of the 24 kebeles visited by the Assessment Team community members, particularly non-graduating clients, expressed concern that graduating households were still not meeting food needs. However, in some instances their views were echoed by members of the KFSTF for example: '*The self-graduates of the past year are unable to fulfil their consumption needs and are selling their assets due to shortage of rain*' (Sorba KFSTF, Lasta woreda); and: '*I do not have the feeling the identification process is transparent and fair. Because the current graduates are not self sufficient and even there are cases whereby the ox bought on credit was dead. As I have indicated earlier, the graduates identified are not self sufficient but better than those remaining in the programme*' (DA in Aymele kebele, Halaba).

4.8 Incentives

233. The graduation guidance notes lists seven core principles to be adhered to during the introduction and use of the benchmarks for measuring graduation. In relation to incentives, principle six states that 'the system needs to be responsive to both positive and negative incentives'.

234. This section outlines the positive and negative incentives to graduation found by the Assessment Team, distinguishing between incentives for individuals, communities and woreda officials. It finds that:

- Both positive and negative incentives exist for households to graduate and for woredas to facilitate graduation.
- At a household level, incentives to remain in the programme are larger than incentives to graduate.
- At a woreda level there is more of a balance between positive and negative incentives. However, the risks relating to these incentives remain.

4.8.1 INCENTIVES TO GRADUATE

235. PSNP clients and graduates at the **individual and community level** shared five factors that motivate them to graduate: pride in graduating; receipt of agricultural inputs or other prizes during graduation; availability of other more attractive livelihood options and; encouragement by model farmers. Each are discussed in turn below.

4.8.1.1 Pride in graduating

236. Both clients and graduates in Tigray, Amhara and Oromiya stated that they had graduated, or would like to graduate, because of the recognition and respect that would bring them. This was particularly the case in Tigray and Oromiya where graduates are invited to ceremonies at kebele or woreda or zone/region level depending on their performance, and where they receive gifts of agricultural inputs or other prizes as well as certificates.

237. In some instances this desire to graduate, is reported to exceed the reality of households. In Lasta woreda, officials and PSNP graduates noted that some self-graduates choose to graduate based on emotions. PSNP clients in Tila Asferi kebele, Lasta woreda stated *'we know there are few self graduates who are short of food/not food sufficient....These people were very emotional when they volunteer for self graduation. In fact the WFSTF and KFSTF advised them publicly to think again before deciding for self graduation'*.

238. Desire to graduate was also attributed to a feeling of inferiority that accompanied they're being PSNP clients, particularly in Oromiya (Fadis woreda) where public works are seen as *kull*³⁵ work and in Amhara PSNP graduates in Dibibiso kebele of Wegdie Woreda, Amhara, stated: *'We have been treated by the non-PSNP community, experts and administration as a burden for the government because we get transfers. We were always told that the government is doing too much for us. Therefore, we were told to graduate and look for another job other than PSNP. Though we are not happy that we are out of the program, we are happy that people do not consider us as people who don't change. Now our name is relieved after we graduate voluntarily'* (Graduates in Dibibiso kebele, Wegdie).

4.8.1.2 Receipt of agricultural inputs or other prizes at graduation

239. Gifts of agricultural inputs or other prizes (radios, t-shirts, cash) are given during some graduation ceremonies in all regions. Special gifts (those other than t-shirts) are usually not given to all graduates but only those that are assessed as having performed the best, according to their assets or wealth. These graduates tend to be invited to ceremonies at woreda, rather than kebele or *got* level, further enhancing their recognition. During ranking exercises on the motivating factors to graduate, PSNP clients in SNNP and Oromiya all mentioned provision of seeds, fertilizer, and livestock, further confirming the understanding that if these were indeed provided as gifts on graduation more clients would be interested in working towards graduation.

4.8.1.3 Availability of other more attractive livelihood options

240. As discussed in the section on 4.4 above, there are a range of reasons why clients seek to leave the PSNP programme. They may have a change of circumstances (for example inheritance of land and livestock), there may be better paid labour work in the vicinity, they may choose to concentrate full time on farming, they may engage in on non-farm enterprise, or they may migrate to work elsewhere on a seasonal basis.

4.8.1.4 Encouragement by model farmers

241. Particularly in Tigray, graduates and clients stated that the example of model farmers inspired them to graduate/want to graduate. Thus PSNP clients in Erdi Jeganu kebele of Ofla woreda stated *'support is made to improve our lives by the DAs. In addition, farmers who improved their lives share their experiences in order to encourage us to graduate'*.

4.8.1.5 Woreda Level Incentives

242. Turning to woreda level incentives to graduate PSNP clients, two types were noted. Due to the desire of the Government at all levels to realise Food Security Programme targets of graduation, many woredas feel a motivation to actively pursue the identification of graduations. This motivation is particularly strong in Amhara region, where the Regional Government undertaken a planning exercise aimed at graduating all PSNP clients in the next three years. As stated in section 4.3.1, these targets are seen by the region as simply planning figures. However, woreda level staff are making strong efforts to achieve targets. In their efforts to do this, woreda staff are trying to meet targets by heavily emphasising self graduation.

³⁵ Low-grade daily labour

243. Furthermore, a desire to make the programme available to new poorer households in some woredas of Oromiya and to implement full family targeting in Tigray, is incentivising woredas to identify graduates who can make way for new entrants.

244. As a consequence of the above incentives, the Assessment Team came across examples of households who graduated from the programme before they had achieved benchmarks and before they had achieved food sufficiency.

4.8.2 FACTORS REDUCING GRADUATION (NEGATIVE INCENTIVES)

4.8.2.1 Individual/community level.

245. Many households are not willing to voluntarily give up PSNP support. They find PSNP support a useful complement to their livelihood strategies in areas where non-farm income opportunities are scarce and oversubscribed. Furthermore, most PSNP clients live in risk-prone environments. Even if they are able to meet their food needs this year, they know that further crises may be around the corner. They therefore wish to hold on to their PSNP entitlement as a risk management strategy.

246. Increasing these incentives to stay in the programme is the fact that OFSP support is prioritised to PSNP households. Although the government has a stated commitment to provide support to graduates, budget shortages mean little support has been provided to date.

247. In addition, many PSNP clients are afraid to take credit, for example they are afraid that if they buy livestock with the credit which subsequently dies then they will not be able to pay back. These risks are real in the environments where they live, but their concerns limit their access to the main source of government livelihood support.

4.8.2.2 Woreda level

248. There are two main deterrents which reduce woredas incentives to actively promote graduation:

- Ongoing demands from the community to maintain PSNP support. The factors creating reluctance amongst PSNP clients to graduate, combined with the desire of some non-clients to join the programme maintains pressure on woredas to preserve client numbers
- The loss of budget that will result from a diminishing PSNP. The PSNP has made up a significant proportion of the resources available to woredas, decreasing client numbers will reduce these resources.

4.8.2.3 Clients' Perceptions of the Risks of Premature and Limited Graduation

249. Male and female clients and graduates at the community level in all four regions were asked what they considered were the risks of premature graduation. Common responses were that people become food insecure and may starve, they are forced to sell their assets, contract out their land or migrate, they will face shocks and be in a worse position than before. In all the woredas visited in Amhara region, respondents expressed concern that much of the self graduation taking place was premature, and a similar view was held in Ofla woreda of Tigray region.

250. Male and female clients and graduates as well as kebele and woreda officials were asked what they considered to be the risks of having no, or very limited, graduation. A common response was that dependency will increase. One KFSTF in each of Fadis and Oda Bultum woredas of Oromiya state that clients will become '*maslufua*' (lazy) or sluggish. Respondents in

SNNP and Oromiya region also noted that limited or no graduation will not allow other poor people to enter the program, with the KFSTF of Kara Kurkura, Oda Bultum woreda, noting that *'if there is no graduation from the safety net, clients will get richer and richer and there will not be a chance for the poor to be supported'*.

5. GRADUATION FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF GRADUATES

251. This chapter of the report aims to illustrate the impacts of the above systems and processes on graduate households. It considers what the process of graduation looks like for those who have gone through it and how they report their wellbeing, food sufficiency and situation since graduation. Case studies are the main source of information, and these are supplemented by focus group discussions with other community members³⁶.

252. This chapter includes four sub-sections:

- The 'Graduates' views of the Graduate Identification Process' section [5.1] includes graduates' descriptions of the graduate identification process.
- The 'Wellbeing and Food Sufficiency' section [5.2] sheds some light on whether or not case study households have achieved food sufficiency, as defined in the Graduation Guidance Note.
- The 'Enablers of Graduation' section [5.3] reviews evidence on the enablers of graduation. It does so by looking at the varying levels of graduation and some of the reasons given for why proportions of graduates differ between different areas. It also considers how case-study households report they have achieved graduation and some of the pathways out of poverty they have identified.
- The 'Experiences of Graduates since Graduation' section [5.4] looks at how the livelihoods of case-study graduates have changed since graduation. In doing so it explores whether graduates continue to have access to FSP support, and enhance understanding of how a 'modest shock' fits into the definition of graduation.

5.1 Graduates' views of the Graduate Identification Process

253. A number of key issues have emerged from section 4 above with regards to graduates and the graduation identification process:

- Graduates' understanding of the concept of graduation is generally good (section 4.2.5)
- However their knowledge of the benchmarks and criteria is very limited (section 4.2.5)
- Despite this, the majority of graduates agree that they are better-off than other clients (section 4.7.2).
- Different graduation identification processes are happening in different kebeles and different woredas (section 4.5)
- Graduates have not always repaid credit prior to graduation (section 4.5)
- Graduates and clients frequently don't know who to appeal to (section 4.6.1)

³⁶ The case studies presented are intended to give a flavour of the range of responses received by the Assessment team. While they cannot be considered to be representative of all graduates, case studies which are inconsistent with information provided through multiple sources have not been included.

- 2009 graduates are not always clear as to why they have been kept in the programme in 2010, or how long they will remain in the programme for (section 4.3.2)

254. Analysis of the 27 case studies find confirm the above findings and highlight the following key issues:

- The majority of graduates agree that they are generally better-off than those continuing as PSNP clients. However, the lack of knowledge of the graduation process and criteria mentioned above in sections can leave graduates bewildered as the graduation process and unclear as to why they are in or out of the programme.
- Where group meetings are held publically which present the criteria and allow discussion on the selection of graduation the result is increased acceptance of graduation selection decisions, as graduates understand the reasons for their selection and feel bound by a community decision making process.

255. The following case study excerpts illustrate some of the above issues from the perspective of individual graduates. Graduates state, in their own words, their perception of how they were identified.

Satisfied Graduate, Oda Bultum

I was graduated in order that other people who are poorer than me might enter the programme. I am better off than other clients and am happy to graduate. It is fair that I was chosen to graduate and after being targeted I left the programme of my own free will.

The reason I was chosen is that I have built a new house; I have two oxen, two cows, two steers and two donkeys. Furthermore, I have 18 *katara* of chat, 300 coffee trees and 0.5 ha of agricultural land. I have never heard of the benchmark, nobody has told me about it; but I would estimate my property to be around ETB 50,000.

I was targeted for graduation at a meeting held at the kebele. The woreda people and the DAs were there. Those of us who have shown development were selected for graduation. I participated in the meeting at which I was selected and at that meeting I told other people that I would leave the programme to make space for others.

I did not complain about being graduated as it is fair I should graduate, and anyway the instructions about graduation come from above. I wouldn't know where to complain except to the Kebele Chairman.

I don't remember which month I graduated in. I was given one week's notice that I was graduating. I only took a transfer once after I graduated.

Dissatisfied Female Graduate, Halaba

I should never have been graduated from the PSNP. Before graduation I was working as a member of the KFSTF representing women, but after the change in the administration the new chairman had a conflict with my son. This is why I was told to graduate. I was told that I would graduate after I had started public works and after receiving one month of transfers.

When I asked the chairman why I had been graduated, he told me that I have taken credit and bought an ox. I said 'but I am not the only person who has taken a package, there are also others – mainly men – who have taken credit and they are still in the PSNP'. His response was 'it is the instruction coming from the woreda'. I have also the feeling other better-off people are in the PSNP.

Since that day I graduated I did not go to KFSTF meetings.

I do not know why I was selected for graduation. I don't know about the selection criteria and have not heard of benchmarks. I think I am selected by the kebele chairman, but I was not informed or consulted in the process. I heard I was graduated while doing public works. The foreman told me. I don't know the steps of graduation.

I have not presented an appeal, but did tell the Kebele Chairman verbally, but there was no response.

Satisfied Graduate, Ahferom

I have been in the PSNP since 2005. For me graduation is useful, it is like getting married and establishing a new home.

Before graduation, the DA and representatives from the sub-kushet were collecting information about asset holdings. However, we did not know why they were collecting this. The assets they asked about were livestock and savings. After we were asked about our assets, a meeting was called and the administration asked us if there was any voluntary graduation as there had been a direction from the woreda to graduate clients. Though they had a list of candidate graduates, they wanted to know if there are people who would graduate voluntarily. Only few people said they have improved their lives and would like to graduate and leave the space to other people who are worse off than them.

I did not volunteer but my name was read out with the list of graduates. At first I was not happy that I was graduating, but later on started thinking and realised how dependent I was. Now I am so happy that I am independent as I have the capacity to work on various daily labour activities and earn my own income. In addition, being able to be free from the naming of dependency feels very good as the transfer is very low but we were called dependents despite the amount we were getting.

In the public meeting understanding was reached by the candidate graduates, DAs and the community on who should graduate based on the asset holding. Comparison was made with those who volunteered and it was used to convince the candidate graduates to graduate. After a while we were called to the woreda to be graduated and were given T-shirts. After that public meeting was held I didn't work in public works. After graduation, some people came from the woreda to hold a meeting to evaluate the process of graduation.

I believe the process of graduation was fair as it was discussed by the community and was made by comparing households. Better-off households are the ones who have graduated. There were some people who appealed but their appeal was denied.

Self-Graduate, Wegdie

Prior to joining PSNP I owned 0.375 ha of land and after joining I bought a steer with 450 birr by saving part of the PSNP transfer. In 2006 I took 900 birr credit from ACSI³⁷ and bought a cow. I started ploughing my land with the ox and cow. I got 2 calves from the cow and I received credit from the FSP and bought five sheep. In 2008 my assets was assessed, by then I owned 1 cow, 1 ox and five sheep. As a result, my name was posted as a graduate. At that time I valued my assets at ETB 6600 birr (I was asked for how much my assets could be sold). I didn't appeal though I was not happy that I was a graduate. However, afterwards my case was reviewed at the woreda and I was told to re-enter the programme.

³⁷ Amhara Credit and Savings Institute

In June 2009 a public meeting regarding graduation took place and we were asked to voluntarily graduate. Myself and four others volunteered to graduate by stating that our livelihoods have improved and we are willing to work on our own. I decided to graduate as the kebele administration pushes us clients to graduate by stating that we clients are a burden and we are too lazy to work on our own. Therefore, I decided to graduate although I am not sure if I can meet my food needs by myself. When the PSNP started this year, a direction came from the government stating that the 2009 graduates should continue working on PSNP. As a result, I am currently working and getting transfer. I don't know for how long I will stay in the programme.

I am happy to have graduated as I want to spend more time on my farm. I have already contracted 0.375 ha land from another farmer and as a result am getting better production. However, there are other graduates who are unable to fulfil their food needs and I wonder how the kebele administration decided they should graduate. On the other hand, there are farmers who have enough land to work on and have good crop harvest who complain that they are graduates. These farmers can improve their livelihood by working hard on their farms instead of complaining.

256. As can be seen from the above examples, the lack of knowledge of the graduation process and criteria mentioned in section 4.2.5, can leave graduates bewildered at the graduation process and unclear as to why they are in or out of the programme. Despite this, and in line with the findings presented in section 4.7, the majority of graduates do agree that they are generally better-off than other clients.

257. However, this lack of knowledge of the process can leave graduates under the impression that personality conflicts or nepotism have played a role, whether or not this is the case. Where group meetings are held publicly which present the criteria and allow discussion on the selection of graduation, these perceptions seem to disappear. Such meetings also increase the acceptance of graduation selection decisions, as graduates understand the reasons for their selection and feel bound by a community decision making process.

258. As can be seen from the above case studies, some graduates can instantly agree with their selection as a graduate. The majority of graduates interviewed for case studies did accept their selection as graduates. It is also interesting to note that only a minority of those interviewed, who stated they were not happy with their selection, actually appealed.

259. The final case study illustrates some of the confusion caused by the 2009 decision to extend graduates' participation in the PSNP for one more year.

5.2 Wellbeing and Food Sufficiency

260. Three aspects of food sufficiency and wellbeing are described in this section:

- Aggregated data comparing graduates with non-clients on self reported wellbeing (using case-study material).
- Case-studies in which graduates describe in their own words but using a calendar tool how they access food post-graduation. Where relevant, information from non-client case studies and focus group discussion is used to compare the situation of the graduate with other community members.
- A description of how graduates, clients and non-clients describe a food sufficient household in their specific localities.

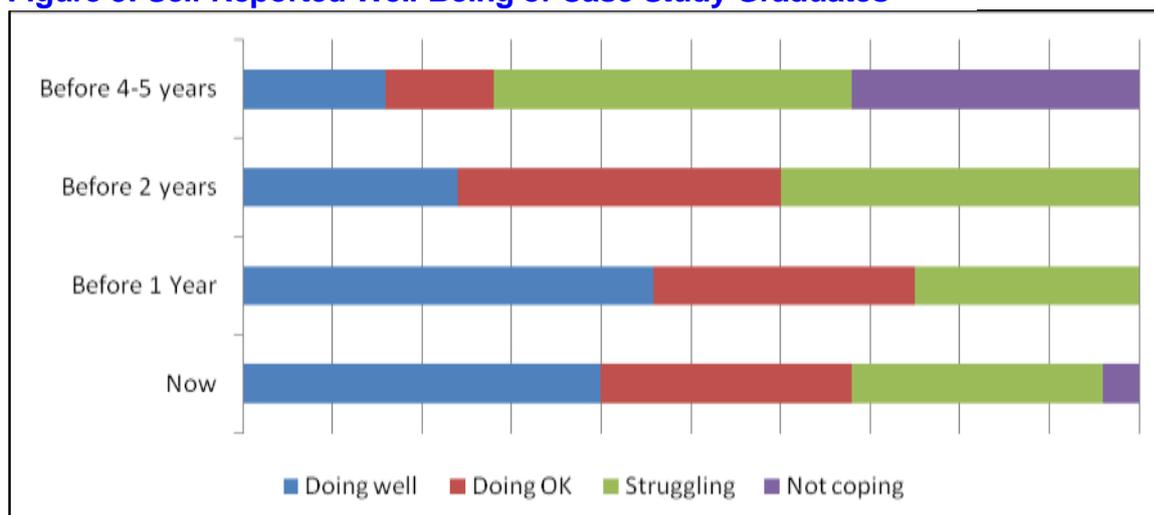
261. This section finds:

- Most graduates do report that their lives have improved over the course of their participation in the FSP.
- Most households who say they are doing well or OK also state that they meet their food needs. However, they do so through a range of income sources, including the sale of small livestock and they also change their consumption patterns throughout the year. .
- Some graduate households continue to report that they are struggling or not coping. These households are more likely to report that they are not meeting their food needs and tend to have lower asset holdings. They are also more likely to be engaged in labour activities to meet their food needs.
- This indicates that the current systems used to identify graduates do not consistently identify households who are food sufficient.

5.2.1 SELF-REPORTED WELL-BEING

262. As Figure 3 below suggests, the majority of graduate households interviewed report that their life has improved through their participation in the PSNP and their access to other support such as FSP credit. More than two thirds of graduates interviewed are now reporting that they are doing well or doing OK (and only one reported that they were not coping).

Figure 3: Self Reported Well-Being of Case Study Graduates

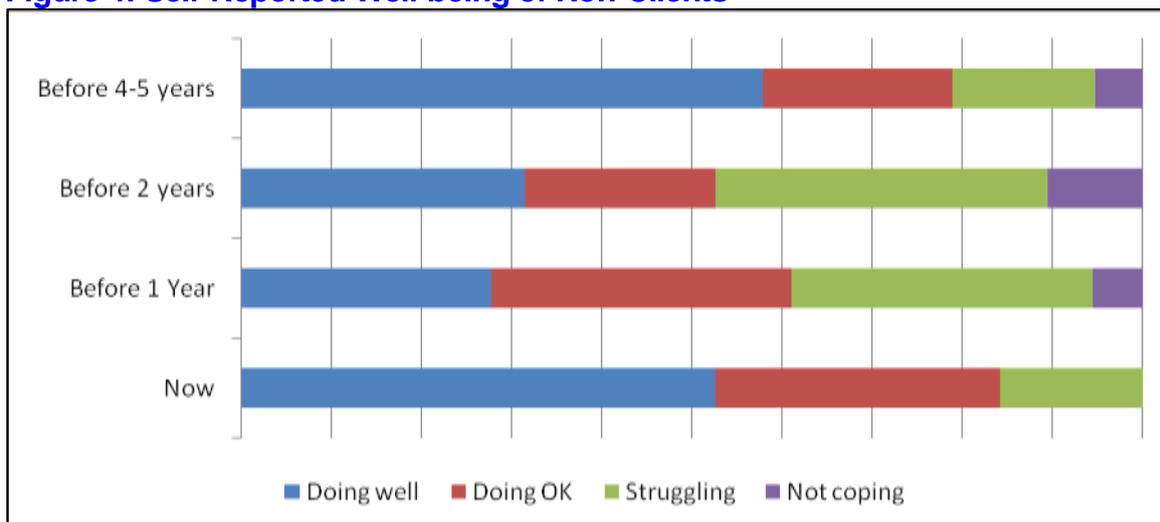


263. This analysis is consistent with findings from focus group discussions with graduates, clients and non-clients which state that graduating households have improved since they entered the PSNP, and tend to be better off than those who are remaining in the PSNP.

264. However, one third of graduates do report that they are currently struggling or worse. Most of these households disagree with their selection as graduates of the programme, some of them also reporting that they are still having to repay credit they took while in the programme. Some of them also report that their situation has recently deteriorated because of poor recent rains.

265. Non-clients can also report that they are currently struggling as demonstrated in the below figure. They also usually attribute this to poor rainfall and high food prices in recent years.

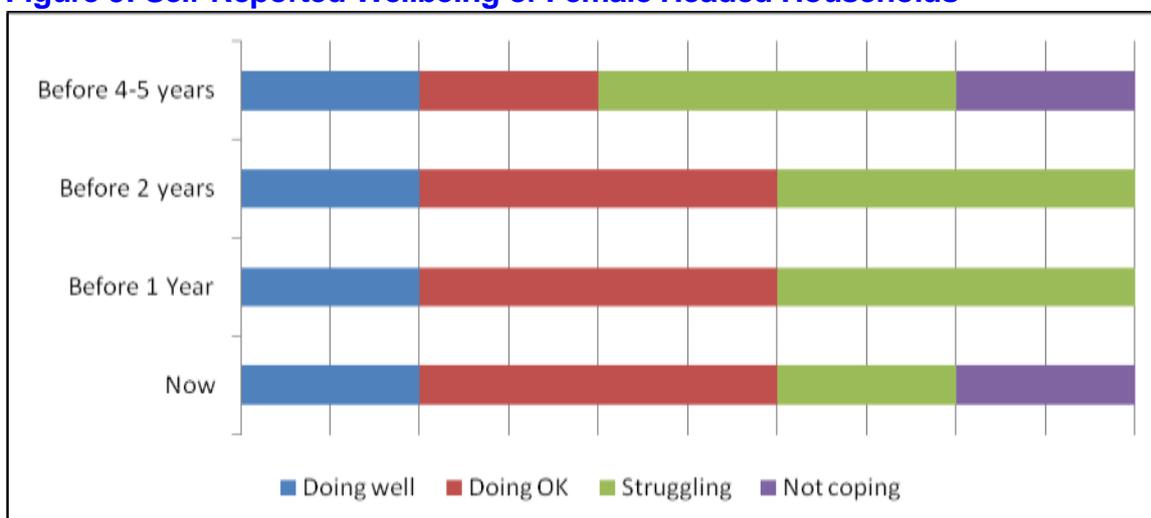
Figure 4: Self-Reported Well-being of Non-Clients



266. SNNP appears to have been particularly badly affected by poor rainfall and high prices. During the case studies and focus group discussions with clients, graduates and non-clients, the Assessment Team consistently heard of the detrimental effects of poor rainfall and high prices on food sufficiency in recent years. The majority of non-clients reported that they were struggling two years ago, with drought and high-food prices blamed for the deteriorating situation. None of the graduates in SNNP report that they are currently doing well, and less than half report that they are doing OK at present.

267. Female headed graduate households also report an improvement to their wellbeing as Figure 5 below shows:

Figure 5: Self-Reported Wellbeing of Female Headed Households



5.2.2 FOOD SUFFICIENCY CALENDARS

268. As already mentioned in this report, 'A household has graduated when, in the absence of receiving PSNP transfers, it can meet its food needs for all 12 months and is able to withstand modest shocks' (GGN 2007). The following case studies and their food calendars illustrate how graduates describe their food sufficiency status. The discussion around graduates' ability to withstand a modest shock is covered in section 5.4 below. During the case studies, graduates were asked to describe how much food they needed in a month and then to state by month how they filled these food needs. They were then asked whether or not this indicated that they were able to meet their food needs every month.

269. Information and extracts from the case studies are presented by well-being category. Where relevant and useful, information is also included from non-client focus group discussions happening in the same area. The paragraphs below derive from a combination of the case-studies and focus group discussions. They pull together the overall findings, which are then illustrated with case studies below.

270. All graduates who report that they are currently doing well state that they have not experienced any food gap in the past twelve months (working back from May 2010). The majority of households who report they are doing well are able to meet the majority of their food needs from their own production; some are even able to meet all their staple food needs from their own production only relying on the market for condiments. Despite this, only a few of the case-study households report eating meat more than two to three times a year, although milk featured more strongly in their diet.

271. Most graduates who report they are doing well purchase less of their food than their non-client neighbours who participated in the focus group discussion. This means they have to sell fewer items during the hungry period. In most cases, graduates were able to sell cash crops to meet food needs rather than selling livestock.

272. The majority of graduates who report they are doing OK state that they have not experience a food gap in the past 12 months. However, some do report hungry months. While a significant proportion of food needs are still coming from their own production, households often have to purchase more of their food particularly during the hungry season. This means that they in turn have to sell more or take loans to cover their food needs during this period. Again cash crops and livestock are the items sold, although labour also features as an income source in some of these households. No households report selling large livestock.

273. A number of graduates who state that they are struggling are also able to meet their food needs without reporting a food gap. However, more households in this category are reporting a food gap and describe eroding assets in order make ends meet. Graduates emphasise the fact that food costs are not the only expenses during the hungry season, this period also coincides with the time they have to purchase seeds and other agricultural inputs. Households in this category are often more engaged in labour, if they are able to work; and they also report selling livestock. In a number of cases the stock sold are large livestock (cows or oxen).

274. Only one graduate household stated that she was unable to cope (she was a woman-headed household living in Halaba). Now that she is graduated from the PSNP she is dependent on her sons for around a third of her food needs. Although she is dependent on her sons she does report that she does have access to meat and milk through her sons.

275. The following two case studies illustrate some of the above points from specific households: one which describes itself as food secure (and doing well) and another who described that he is struggling:

Doing Well:

Jemal Mohammed and his family of five joined the safety net in 2006 and left in 2009. While in the programme he received two rounds of household asset building support: an orange package (10 trees) and credit for two oxen. He also began to grow vegetables through irrigation. Jemal was rewarded as being a good performing farmer, and received a radio as a reward during the graduation ceremony. Although his assets were assessed, he volunteered for graduation.

My family normally eats a mixture of sorghum, wheat, teff, beans and pepper. Between the five of us we consume around 55 kgs per month. During the harvest season we get most of our food

from own production. In the remaining months starting from May to September most of the consumption is purchased from the market

HH Access to food (kg)	Jun	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May
Own Production	25	25	25	25	53	53	53	53	53	53	53	25
Purchase	28	28	28	28	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	28
Total	55	55	55	55	55	55	55	55	55	55	55	55

The major income sources for purchase come from the sale of oranges and vegetables. Once October arrives, a fast growing teff variety (called *bunni*) becomes ready for consumption and from this point onwards we only purchase pepper and beans for preparing sauce. Last season's production was not very good because of low rainfall during the months of April and September. I do not run short of food in any month.

According to the non-client focus group discussion, July to September are the difficult months in the area, during which they need to sell livestock in order to be able to purchase food and the inputs they need for crop production. However, the non-clients interviewed also did not report any months when they were actually short of food. Jemal actually is buying a lower proportion of his food than his non-client counterparts.

Struggling:

Deresa Dana and his family joined the PSNP in 2005 and graduated in 2008. While in the programme he took credit to purchase an ox and he disputes the assets which are recorded by the kebele in his name.

In a month my family will eat maize, haricot bean, faba bean, sweet potatoes and yam. I don't know the quantities. This last year, we started running short of food in January and the problem became severe in April and May.

HH Access to food (out of 10)	Jun	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May
Own Production	10	10	10	10	7	6	5	1	3	4	4	4
Purchase	0	0	0	0	3	4	5	9	7	6	6	6
Food gap months								*	**	***	****	****

In these months we had to reduce our food consumption to two meals a day and the amount of food we ate also decreased. When we are short of food we only eat a small amount of maize.

I get income to purchase this food from weaving and through petty trade. But it's difficult to make profit from the petty trade as the money I borrow to do it is from a private individual and I have to return it the same day.

During the PSNP I was able to eat meals three times a day throughout the year, but now during the hungry period I am eating only twice. This is the same as before I joined the PSNP. When I joined the PSNP I decided to send my son to college and sold my cow and ox for his college fees. Now he is graduating, and I must sell a sheep to pay for his graduation. He is graduating from Arba Minch.

5.2.3 CHARACTERISTICS OF FOOD SUFFICIENT HOUSEHOLDS

276. Clients, graduates and non-clients were all asked what were the characteristics of a food sufficient household in their area. As stated before, the commonly mentioned characteristics were:

- Livestock, particularly oxen ownership
- Sufficient crop production
- Perennial crops (particularly in Haraghe and SNNP)
- Irrigation (particularly Tigray)
- Having savings

277. Table 11 below includes a sample of graduate responses in response to the question 'what does a food sufficient household look like, what do they have?'

Table 11: Characteristics of Food Sufficient Households According to Clients

Oda Bultum Guba Gutu Kebele	Kemba Dome Dolba Kebele	Tahtay Maichew Adi Hotsa Kebele
Ranked in order of importance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oxen • Farmland • Chat • Coffee • Donkey • Cow, goat and sheep • House 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 oxen • 2-4 milking cows • Enough maize production for consumption and planting the following year • Able to cover HH expense and have some savings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 oxen • 1 cow • 10-20 shoats • A good house • Some money • Possibly a donkey

278. The above characteristics are similar to those households who have graduated and report they are doing well, see Table 12:

Table 12: Characteristics of Selected Households which Report they are Doing Well

Kalu	Lasta	Wegdie	Ahferom	Tahtay Maichew	Oda Bultum
2 x ox 1 cow 10 x orange trees Agricultural land Small area for irrigation	1 x ox 1 x cow 1 x donkey 15 x goats 5 x chickens 0.5 ha land	2 x oxen 1 x cow 5 x sheep Small <i>tela</i> shop Production from his own and from rented land	1 x cow 10 bee hives 6 calves 1 x donkey 5 chickens 5 goats 0.5 ha cactus Husband growing sesame in Humera	2 x ox 3 x cow 6 x goat ETB 5,000 savings 3 x beehive Drip irrigation 1 ha land Shallow well	2 x ox 1 x cow 2 x steers 2 x donkey 18 <i>katara</i> chat 200 coffee trees New house 0.5 ha land
Self graduate	Self graduate	Benchmark	Benchmark	Benchmark	Benchmark

279. Table 13 reports the characteristics of households which report they are struggling tend to be very different (although in some cases there are conflicting statements between what the graduate states he or she has, and what is recorded by the DA).

Table 13: Characteristics of Selected Households which Report they are Struggling

Lasta	Wegdie	Damot Gale
Female headed household 4 sheep (outstanding debt) 2 hens 10 eucalyptus Rent land out	1 cow 1 x ox (outstanding debt) Small house	1 x ox (outstanding debt) 1 x shared cow However according to assets register: 2 oxen, 1 ha. Of land, 1 cow, 4 sheep, 4 steers/heifers 1 donkey cart.
Self graduate (but due to ill health)	Benchmark	Benchmark

280. The tables above indicate whether the households' assets have been registered to be greater in value than the benchmark. As can be seen, not all households which state that they are doing well and can meet food needs are benchmark graduates; but also some benchmark graduates report that they are currently struggling.

5.3 Enablers of Graduation

281. This section looks at the range of factors reported which influence levels of graduation. It finds that there is no one magic bullet to create graduation. Instead graduation is the result of a combination of factors:

- Access to support (PSNP and/or credit),
- Hard work,
- Idiosyncratic factors (such as inheritance of land), and
- Economic conditions (whether in relation to prices of commodities or rainfall).

282. Most stakeholders consulted at regional, woreda and community level stated that there were variations in the number of graduates from woreda to woreda, kebele to kebele and village to village. In nearly all instances they attributed these variations to the following two factors:

- The natural conditions of the area (rainfall and susceptibility to drought, soil fertility, and agro-ecology).
- Attitude of programme clients and their willingness to achieve graduation – 'people are not equal in struggling to survive' (WFSTF member, Fadis)

283. In Tigray and Amhara (along with Oda Bultum of Oromiya) access to irrigation was also a frequently mentioned factor at woreda, kebele and community level. Other commonly mentioned factors in varying levels of graduation included:

- Differences in status of households when they joined the PSNP (including the mis-targeting of better off households)
- Market Access
- Relative wealth of different areas
- Access to household asset building support.

284. Evidence shows that female headed households make up a smaller proportion of graduates. Stakeholders state this is because female headed households tend to be poorer. They often lack labour, share cropping out their land and they can access less of the livelihood options that other poor households exploit (particularly labouring or travelling to other areas in search of work). This means that they have less ability to build assets and cross the benchmark. Efforts have been made to provide packages specifically to meet the needs of women, and stakeholders report that some of these packages are having impact. Such packages include beekeeping, petty trading and vegetable production through irrigation.

285. Graduates describe a number of different factors which helped them to improve their livelihoods and have enabled them to graduate. Key factors mentioned include:

- Credit (in some instances multiple access to credit)
- Access to irrigation
- Good harvest years
- Hard work
- Savings from PSNP transfers
- Income from PSNP transfers which allowed them to stop renting out land and work their own land

286. The following case studies of successful graduates illustrate these points:

Adami Tulu Jido Kombolcha

I was targeted for the PSNP due to the long drought this area experienced. I started getting transfers in 2005 and used to get 420 birr a month. My family's consumption was dependent on the PSNP transfer, while half of my income was from daily labour. I would save this income to buy fertilizer and improved seed for the coming rainy season. I had no oxen and would plough another man's land for two days in exchange for using his oxen for one day. The first year I did this the rains were very good and I got 67 quintals of maize from the 1 ha I was given by my father. I sold 45 quintals of maize for ETB 31,500 and with this I bought two oxen, two dairy cows and constructed a house. My father then gave me a further hectare of land and I rented an additional two hectares. In 2007 I harvested 80 quintals of maize, 16 quintals of wheat, 16 quintals of barley, 4 quintals of barley and 1 quintal of beans. Now all my children are going to school and I am continuing my education through distance learning.

Halaba (woman in male headed household)

I joined the PSNP in 2005. When I joined by husband and I had round ETB 500 for trading and a small house. We used the oxen of my father to plough our land. At that time my husband was a student.

In 1999 [Eth. Cal], I took a credit package of ETB 4,000. With this credit, I purchased an ox and used the remaining money for seed and fertilizer. Meanwhile my husband built up his trading business, first trading in sheep and goats and then moving to grain trade. Over time we have shifted from having a life mainly based on agriculture to one largely based on trade. However, we do still produce pepper and teff on land we rent, and grow maize for our own consumption on our own land.

Now we have two pairs of oxen and three cows as well as sheep and goats. We also have donkeys and a cart for training. Moreover we have now purchased land and constructed a house in town, with a small shop.

The triggering factors for our success are the package and the hard work of my husband.

Tahtay Maichew

Yes, I was poor and had nothing when I was targeted for PSNP, but now I have improved myself and become the owner of cattle and have irrigation. I joined the PSNP in 2005. I had started the package programme before being targeted for PSNP. I got credit from Dedebit MFI and bought a cow and around 5 goats. In 2007, I received technical support in constructing shallow wells. The main package was in 2007 mainly after constructing the shallow-wells. I took credit to purchase a treadle pump, cow, beehive and colony, poultry, improved seeds and fertilizer. My assets were registered soon after this and I graduated in 2008.

I had more than 6 months food gap when I joined the PSNP, and my life immediately improved because of the transfers. Then once I took credit, I was able to have my own production on top of the PSNP and things improved very well. Now I continue to invest in inputs and am establishing fruit trees. The market price for vegetables is very good and I have repaid my credit. I am now free of credit.

After the introduction of irrigation, I can say life has changed.

5.4 Experiences of Graduates since graduation

287. This section looks at the experiences of households since graduation. It considers the following key questions:

- Has graduates' wellbeing status stayed the same or improved, since graduation, or has it deteriorated?
- What does this, and other evidence, tell us about their ability to withstand a modest shock? and
- Have graduates continued to receive prioritised support since leaving the programme?

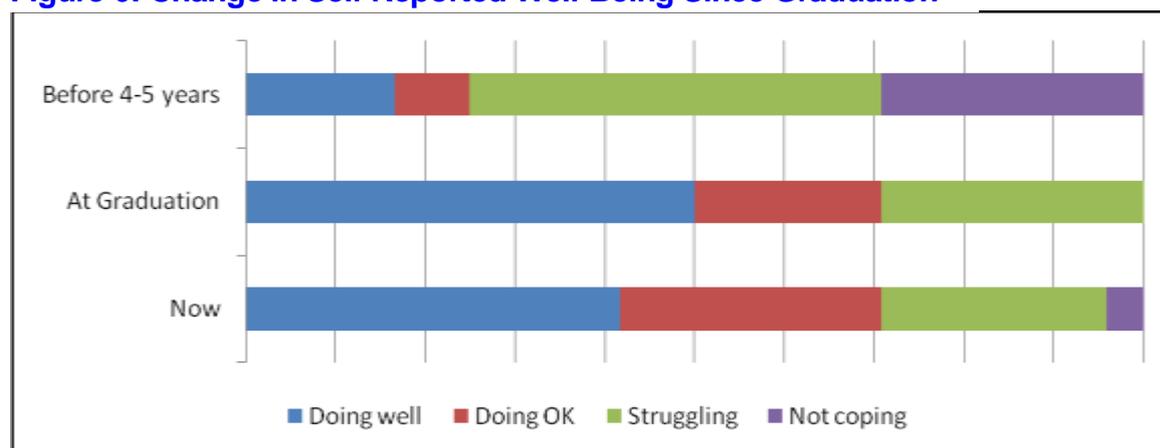
288. This section finds:

- The majority of interviewed graduates who reported that they were doing well or doing OK at the time of graduation have either maintained or improved their wellbeing status.
- However, there has been a deterioration for a quarter of case-study graduates which they largely attribute to poor rainfall.
- Few graduates in the assessment woredas (and none of the graduates interviewed) have received further support from the FSP programme. There are many explanations for this, including the reluctance of a significant number of graduates to take further credit in the near future.

289. The majority of interviewed graduates who reported that they were doing well or doing OK at the time of graduation have either maintained or improved their wellbeing status. Overall, however, there has been a deterioration for a quarter of case-study graduates which they largely attribute to poor rainfall. This reemphasises the importance that any graduation threshold should incorporate the ability to withstand fluctuating conditions.

290. This assessment has found that few graduates in the assessment woredas (and none of the graduates interviewed) have received further support from the FSP programme. There are many explanations for this, including the reluctance of a significant number of graduates to take further credit in the near future. This study did not explore this phenomena in depth, but others studies have previously found that such reluctance is often due to the limited availability of appropriate, low risk packages; absence or thinness of markets and inadequate technical support to accompany packages (FSPD, 2009 Review of Other Food Security Programmes). Without further support, however, the Government's plans to enable a significant number of food sufficient households to further improve their lives and become food secure are unlikely to be realised.

Figure 6: Change in Self Reported Well-Being Since Graduation



291. Figure 6 above indicates a slight overall deterioration in graduates' wellbeing since graduating. Within the case studies represented in this graph, some are reporting that life is continuing to improve, while others describe a deterioration in wellbeing. Reports of deterioration appear to be higher in female headed households. In almost all instances, households describe poor recent production (usually through poor rainfall, but also excessive rain and pests) as being the cause of the deteriorating condition. Less frequently, households also mention premature exit from the programme as being a critical factor.

292. While this does indicate that graduates are being affected by shocks, it is not possible to state with any accuracy whether such shocks should be considered moderate, or more. Furthermore, most of the households reporting this deterioration are those who stated that they were doing well at the time of graduation. Their degree of deterioration does vary significantly. However, those who believe they were exited inappropriately from the programme report the biggest deterioration, which indicates that they believe that premature graduation has meant that they are unable to withstand shocks.

293. Households, who reported that they were struggling at the time of graduation, tend to continue to report they are struggling now, with a loss of assets featuring in their descriptions. Such households cannot be described as able to withstand a modest shock.

294. As mentioned earlier, some graduates report that life has continued to improve post-graduation. In all cases good rainfall, on top of the improvements that had been made during the PSNP, were credited with allowing these improvements. This indicates that graduates, along with other rural Ethiopians, are still very dependent on the quality of rainfall for their livelihoods.

295. Interviewed graduates in the majority of kebeles mentioned that although they are aware that graduates are supposed to receive access to credit, none of the case-study households reported receiving any such credit. The reasons given by graduates are as follows:

- The promised credit never materialised
- Credit is available, but the interest rates are not currently favourable
- Credit is available, but they do not currently want to take further loans
- Outstanding loans prevent them from taking new credit

296. Outside of Tigray, woredas and regions also report that budget shortages mean they are yet to provide all PSNP clients with credit. At present they are still prioritising PSNP clients over graduates, with the result that few graduates are receiving any FSP support. However, this does not prevent graduates from accessing mainstream extension support or credit from micro-finance institutions.

297. Within Tigray, regional food security staff are currently designing a household package specifically appropriate to PSNP graduate needs with a view to enabling their full graduation from the FSP. As the draft package design is currently under review, the Assessment Team were not able to access a copy.

298. The majority of interviewed graduates who reported that they were doing well or doing OK at the time of graduation have either maintained or improved their wellbeing status. Overall, however there has been a deterioration for a quarter of case-study graduates which they largely attribute to poor rainfall. This re-emphasises the importance that any graduation threshold should incorporate the ability to withstand fluctuating conditions.

299. This assessment has found that few graduates in the assessment woredas (and none of the graduates interviewed) have received further support from the FSP programme. There are many explanations for this, including the reluctance of a significant number of graduates to take further credit in the near future. This study did not explore this phenomenon in depth, but other studies have previously found that such reluctance is often due to the limited availability of appropriate, low risk packages; absence or thinness of markets and inadequate technical support to accompany packages (FSPD, 2009 Review of Other Food Security Programmes). Without further support, however, the Government's plans to enable a significant number of food sufficient households to further improve their lives and become food secure are unlikely to be realised.

Part 3:
Conclusions and Way Forward

6. GRADUATION ASSESSMENT CONCLUSIONS

300. This section pulls together the conclusions of the Graduation Assessment, with a view to establishing the direction for measures required to improve the system in future.

301. The first sub-section reviews the main study findings, including strengths and weaknesses of the many areas raised in the Assessment Terms of Reference.

302. The second sub-section takes a step back and considers the implications of these findings for what needs to happen to graduation systems in the PSNP, and what a future more effective system might look like. Proposals for how this may then be achieved are described in the Recommendations section.

6.1 Summary of Assessment Findings

Defining graduation

303. The concept of graduation relies heavily on the ability to assess a food gap (or lack of it), but this is operationally difficult. However, in practical terms it is more important to be able to measure whether, or not, households have the resources to meet food needs consistently in the future and to withstand a modest shock (rather than whether they have a food gap now).

Presence of and effectiveness of graduation structures

304. The structures with responsibility for managing graduation exist at nearly all levels. Where responsibilities have been defined in the PIM or GGN these responsibilities are known, understood and largely implemented. There are some exceptions at lower levels, where CFSTFs in a minority of assessed woredas do not play the roles expected of them.

305. Extension Directorates are not allocated a significant role in the graduate identification process at regional and federal levels, despite the need for multiple interventions for graduation to be achieved (not just PSNP) and the critical role of DAs in assessing graduation.

306. Women's Affairs Bureaux in Amhara and Tigray are actively involved in PSNP discussions, including graduation. Those in SNNP and Oromiya are not.

Adequacy of graduation guidance

307. The Assessment found adequate efforts have been made to ensure necessary guidance is disseminated down to regional and woreda levels, although less effort has been made for kebeles and communities involved in the PSNP. Nevertheless this does not mean materials are available in practice. The high rates of staff turnover which are a feature of government offices in Ethiopia; the habit of personalising work-related materials; and the absence of a system of document management at woreda levels and below, means that many essential guidance documents are frequently not available where they are needed.

308. Training has also been provided in all four regions assessed, although again there is significant variability in frequency and adequacy of this training, with a general pattern of lower levels being least well-served. Where training has been provided regularly, the Assessment Team found staff in post who had a good understanding of systems and procedures.

309. As a result of these efforts, there is a widespread understanding that households who are food sufficient should graduate from the PSNP, and that complementary programmes are required to make this happen. While there is also fairly broad understanding that benchmarks are

used to screen for graduation, understanding of the operation of the benchmark system is weak at lower levels.

310. All regions made modifications to the system of benchmarks used for assessing households suitable for graduation, if not in the numerical value of the benchmarks then in the method for their application. Though the application of the benchmark system was indeed intended to be flexible, the result is a very diverse system, which only loosely follows the original logic and simplicity of the proposed system, largely designed in practice by staff with insufficient competence to play that role. Despite the huge focus on making the benchmark system work, there is widespread dissatisfaction with the benchmark system. In addition to this the current method represents an enormous workload, for DAs in particular, which distracts from their development functions.

311. The IFPRI benchmarks, which produced the basic analysis on which the benchmarks were based, helped to identify the role of assets as the means by which households can sustainably meet food needs. However, there was limited buy-in by regional and woreda stakeholders of the actual benchmarks produced by their analysis. Given the variability in livelihoods within regions and the reality that the majority of non-clients have asset holdings significantly below the benchmarks, this scepticism has foundation.

Planning for graduation

312. There are a number of different targets for graduation in process including federal targets, federal budget planning figures and regional targets. At a federal level, the programme document states the objective of graduation by 80% of public works clients, while the budget planning figure assumes only 10% graduation per year (40% in total).

313. There is a variation between the graduation target setting exercises undertaken in the different regions, which means that the resulting targets or plans need to be understood differently by stakeholders. Some targets have been set as a first step in identifying the resources needed to achieve them, while others are developed on the basis of an assessment of what level of graduation is achievable in a given year. Conflating targets set for such different reasons does not produce a clear indication of anything.

314. The role of targets is not clearly understood throughout different levels. In all regions there is a tendency for indicative targets at regional level to be interpreted as instructions further down the system. This has led to incorrect decisions on eligibility for graduation, notably in Amhara, in which households not reaching the benchmark are knowingly approved for graduation.

315. The decision to keep graduates in the programme for an additional year has caused confusion in some implementers and amongst some graduates. While most implementers felt that the agreement was valid and should continue, there is room to improve graduates understanding of the process.

Types of programme exit

316. The Assessment identified five different mechanisms by which clients are currently labelled as having graduated from the programme. Three of these required households to reach the specified eligibility criteria, and comply with GGN guidance on graduation. The other two involved firstly households choosing to leave the programme in favour of alternative livelihood options, despite remaining food insecure; and secondly households being graduated from the programme despite not achieving graduation benchmarks. Such 'graduation' is inconsistent with GGN guidance.

Steps taken to Identify Graduates

317. There is absolute variability in the application of guidance on how to assess households for graduation. Of the 12 woredas assessed in 4 regions, no woreda follows the full 16 steps of the GGN, and no two woredas follow the same variation of this system. In particular the final few steps, relating to formal approval – or in other words monitoring of lower level decision-making – are very rarely followed. It is widely felt by implementing staff that the full 16-step process is laborious and unnecessary to follow.

318. There is further variability in how some of the core steps are applied, in particular registration of assets and identification of clients. This is likely to have an important effect on actual graduation decisions, and yet management or control of such variation appears limited.

319. The Variable Levels of Support study is widely perceived to have identified positive lessons with regards to gradually diminishing levels of support to PSNP clients as they improve assets and income levels. Both implementers and clients view it as an appropriate method of easing clients off PSNP support.

320. Monitoring and keeping records of graduation is also highly variable. With regards to record keeping, the Assessment Team found there were a number of opportunities to improve record keeping and data management without adding to implementers' workloads.

Grievance procedures and safeguards

321. In all Assessment kebeles, an appeal process was in place. Appeal committees frequently however did not comply with guidance, and there was mixed knowledge of the appeals process among clients and graduates.

322. The RRTs now discuss graduation issues as part of their visits. However, discussions commonly focus on implementation and there is less evidence of attention being paid to safeguard issues.

Fairness and transparency

323. A number of measures have been taken to ensure that graduation principles of transparency and accountability have been met. The complexity of the benchmark-setting process has undermined this intention. The end result appears to be that graduates are selected from better-off households, although they may not have necessarily reached the graduation benchmark.

Incentives for graduation

324. Incentives are in play which both encourage and discourage graduation. At present the system is not succeeding in responding appropriately and effectively to these incentives. Overall measures to incentivise graduation by clients have remained superficial and have not addressed the real reasons why many are reluctant to leave the programme.

Key gender issues

325. While all woredas and regions keep some gender disaggregated data, such data is not consistently collected and maintained. This means it is difficult to fully understand any differences in PSNP participation, household asset receipts or graduation rates, between female and male clients.

326. The Assessment confirmed findings of other studies regarding lesser representation by women in key PSNP decision making structures (including those related to graduation) and inadequate understanding by women clients of key PSNP implementation issues. Resolving

these issues is beyond any graduation focused adjustments to the programme but should remain a focus of implementers.

Graduates' views of the Graduate Identification Process

327. The majority of graduates agree that they are generally better-off than those continuing as PSNP clients. However, the lack of knowledge of the graduation process and criteria mentioned above in sections can leave graduates bewildered by the graduation process and unclear as to why they are in or out of the programme.

328. Where group meetings are held publically which present the criteria and allow discussion on the selection of graduation the result is increased acceptance of graduation selection decisions, as graduates understand the reasons for their selection and feel bound by a community decision making process.

Wellbeing and Food Sufficiency

329. Most graduates do report that their lives have improved over the course of their participation in the FSP. The majority of graduates report that 4-5 years ago they were struggling or not coping, and now the majority state that they are doing OK or doing well. Households in these categories usually also report being able to meet food needs. However, such households may have to access additional income during the hungry season to meet needs. Better off graduates can often do this by selling crops, particularly cash-crops, those who report doing OK often also report selling small stock.

330. Some graduate households continue to report that they are struggling or not coping. These households are more likely to report that they are not meeting their food needs (although some still state that they are) and tend to have lower asset holdings. They are also more likely to be engaged in labour activities to meet their food needs. This indicates that the current systems used to identify graduates do not consistently identify households who are food sufficient.

Experiences of Graduates since graduation

331. The majority of interviewed graduates who reported that they were doing well or doing OK at the time of graduation have either maintained or improved their wellbeing status. Overall, however, there has been a deterioration for a quarter of case-study graduates which they largely attribute to poor rainfall. This re-emphasises the point that any graduation threshold should incorporate the ability to withstand fluctuating conditions.

332. This assessment has found that few graduates in the assessment woredas (and none of the graduates interviewed) have received further support from the FSP programme. There are many explanations for this, including the reluctance of a significant number of graduates to take further credit in the near future. This study did not explore this phenomena in depth, but others studies have previously found that such reluctance is often due to the limited availability of appropriate, low risk packages; absence or thinness of markets and inadequate technical support to accompany packages (FSPD, 2009 Review of Other Food Security Programmes). Without further support, however, the Government's plans to enable a significant number of food sufficient households to further improve their lives and become food secure are unlikely to be realised.

6.2 Implications for graduation processes

333. After an intensive burst of activity in late 2007 and early 2008 the PSNP graduation system has been established and has been used to manage the graduation process across the programme. Its development and use has required an intensive effort from programme implementers right from the top down to the bottom, to allow it to get this far. For a long time there

was a lack of clarity on how to address graduation; but for the last two years the programme has been able to do exactly that.

334. More than two years later it is time to review that experience with a view to seeing how it may best be improved.

335. The rules for managing graduation are set out in the Graduation Guidance Note. What this Assessment has shown is that these rules are not being accurately followed across the programme. There is local variation in almost every respect. What we do not currently have is a single system for managing graduation; in reality we have a framework which is being interpreted and applied differently in almost every location.

336. There are some positive reasons for this situation. The original process for developing the graduation guidance was not perfect. In many cases the result of this process did not elicit belief that following the guidance would lead to an effective graduation process. So in many cases the decision not to follow the guidance accurately was a choice.

337. However there are also many less positive reasons why the guidance is not being followed. These relate to a lack of capacity to decide what should be done, a lack of process management and supervision, a lack of guidance material, a lack of training and support, and also a felt need to graduate people from the programme in order to meet graduation targets or demonstrate progress rather than to reflect their livelihood status.

338. In summary, the process for assessing graduation has been established and is functioning, but it is not working in the best way it could. There is definite room for improvement. The following section outlines the necessary improvements that are suggested by the findings of the Graduation Assessment.

6.3 Priority areas for improvement: options and proposals

339. The objective of the Graduation Assessment was to understand current experiences, the strengths and weaknesses, of graduating households from the PSNP so as to be able to make improvements for the future.

340. Priority areas for improvement were discussed in regional consultation workshops and a federal retreat following the completion of Assessment fieldwork.

341. To respond to the analysis of this Assessment, and to improve the effectiveness of the process of graduation from the PSNP, a solution is needed with the following characteristics:

1. Re-establishment of a single harmonised system across the programme
2. Target setting process is clear and effective
3. Criteria for assessing graduates are appropriate and effectively applied
4. The graduation process is effectively managed
5. Capacity, documentation and training enable effective performance of all stakeholders
6. The balance of incentives support graduation
7. Safeguards are rigorously met

1. The graduation assessment system

342. As noted above, the current graduation system is not really a system at all, because of the variability introduced by woreda level choices on how to assess graduation. There are some

common themes, such as the notion of food sufficiency, the use of benchmarks, and the use of the Graduation Guidance Note. But first these are not always universally applied across the programme; and second, where they are there is variation on how they are applied which changes the very nature of the assessment process.

343. Two factors therefore need to be balanced:

- The need for a single system correctly applied across the programme, to ensure consistency and to facilitate effective management and monitoring.
- The need for the assessment system to be responsive to local realities

344. Two main options arise from this analysis:

- Option 1: Re-introduce a more harmonised system across the programme, or
- Option 2: Formalise a decentralised system

345. **Option 1.** This would involve revising guidance on how to conduct the graduation process, and then rolling out this guidance across the programme so that it was implemented as intended. This would not preclude evolution of the system over time; lesson learning and continual improvement are an essential element of an effective system. But in this case the lesson learning would lead to strategic improvements to the process as a whole rather than isolated departures from the agreed system.

346. The strengths of this option include:

- A well thought-through and technically correct system would be applied across the programme
- A single approach would be easier to manage
- Lessons learned could be used to improve the whole programme
- Flexibility can be built into the single approach, to allow appropriateness in all local contexts

347. The challenges of this option include:

- The new system will need to be developed, which will require further analytical / design work
- A re-orientation of stakeholders will be required

348. **Option 2.** This would involve an active decision to rescind the graduation guidance notes and to enable regions, woredas or some other level to define for themselves what approach should be adopted for graduate selection, and on what basis. Guidance could still be provided to ensure that key principles or requirements were incorporated in these approaches.

349. The strengths of this option include:

- The decentralisation of decision-making to lower levels
- In theory the ability to take account of local realities

350. The challenges of this option include:

- Capacity to make good decisions and to design technically appropriate systems
- Management of the complexity and quality control

- Absence of a system for graduation from the PSNP in which managers are confident that good decisions are made
- Inequities arising from different geographical bases for graduation

2. Target setting

351. The target setting process has been diverse, and has not necessarily contributed to effective management of graduation. As we have seen interpretations of targets at lower levels have led to premature graduation.

352. There is a need for clear and unambiguous guidance on how targets should and should not be used, and interpreted, at various levels.

353. Most important of all – and possibly the most important change needed to the system overall – is the need for absolute separation of the target setting process from the assessment of graduation of individual households. This would involve introducing the principle of ‘**the primacy of evidence-based graduation**’, and communicating this widely.

354. Following from this, it is critical that differences between graduation targets and actual rates of graduation are not addressed through the system of assessing graduation. A much more effective approach would be to address any such concerns through the allocation of resources and the enhancement of efforts to provide what is needed to enable higher rates of graduation.

355. A key distinction may be made between a development planning-oriented target system, which looks at graduation targets that need to be met so that all potential graduates will have left the programme by 2015, and evidence-based targets which describe realistic levels of graduation that may be achieved in a particular location, so as to allow improved planning.

356. This presents a choice between 3 options for target setting:

- Option 1: No targets established for graduation
- Option 2: The only targets for graduation are those established for development planning purposes, to achieve aggregate graduation levels needed to achieve programme objectives
- Option 3: Several types of targets are established and used at different levels, to support various aspects of planning and management

357. **Option 1.** This option would remove the use of targets in the graduation process.

358. The strengths of this option include:

- The temptation to link achievement of targets with assessment of graduation would be removed

359. The challenges of this option include:

- The political need to assess progress against expectations would not be met
- The management need to assess effectiveness of implementation would not be met

360. **Option 2.** This option would apply targets only to establish overall levels of graduation required to meet national development needs during the life of the programme.

361. The strengths of this option include:

- Expected levels of achievement would be set

- The national need to assess actual graduation according to required levels would be met
- If targets were not being met the focus of discussion would usefully shift to what could be done to help PSNP clients to graduate, and away from the assessment system
- There does not appear to be strong demand for target-setting at lower levels to support management decisions, so the effort in delivering such a system would be saved

362. The challenges of this option include:

- While political needs would be met, the potential for more detailed management of plans and budgets at lower levels would not be addressed
- We would not have a system where targets are based on realistic assessments of likely levels of graduation

363. **Option 3.** This option would combine the use of targets at different levels. The degree of complexity would be defined but could potentially involve targets established at federal, regional, woreda, kebele and even community levels.

364. The strengths of this option include:

- National needs would be met, as per option 2
- Local needs for clear establishment of realistic expectations would be met
- The possibility would exist for more proactive management of the graduation process according to the evidence base

365. The challenges of this option include:

- The potential for confusion over how targets inter-relate would be maximised
- The potential for capacity weaknesses to result in inappropriate targets would be introduced
- The temptation for targets to influence graduation assessment decisions would be maintained
- There does not seem to be strong demand for such tools to enhance management and so the effort may be wasted

3. Criteria for assessing graduates

366. Despite an enormous effort in establishing the benchmark system, we do not have a system that gives the PSNP what it needs.

367. The key function of the assessment system is to identify the correct people for graduation at the right time, in a way appropriate to the resources available to those who have to do it. The current system achieves neither very well.

368. The Assessment reveals that current systems for assessing clients for graduation place emphasis on reconciling the concepts of food gap, food sufficiency, resilience to minor shocks, benchmarks, and readiness for graduation. The approach followed by the current system is on measuring assets and incomes in order to assess whether households have adequate resources to meet the benchmark, which is presumed to be an indicator of food gap plus resilience to minor shock, which is the definition of food sufficiency, which in turn is the criterion for graduation.

369. This is a lengthy analytical process with many potential problems. An alternative would be to focus directly on what really matters. What really matters for selecting clients for graduation is to understand people's '**readiness for graduation**': their ability to go forward to survive and thrive without the support of the safety net. Is there a better way than the current methodology for making this assessment?

370. Going forward a key choice needs to be made: do we continue with a system based on counting people's resources in order to estimate whether or not they may be ready for graduation, with all the methodological and practical flaws that this report reveals? Or do we develop a new approach focusing more on the outcome measure: whether people will be food sufficient in future and therefore not in need of PSNP support, and focus our efforts on assessing that accurately?

371. A further choice is needed on the extent to which we need a formal data collection system to deliver this assessment, as we have now, with all the challenges it has presented. Alternatively, would an informal community-based system, as is currently used to assess entry into the programme, through the targeting process be more appropriate? There are pros and cons for each method, and the programme will need to balance these and decide on the way forward.

The options are therefore:

- Option 1: Maintain a system of quantitative benchmarks against which data are collected to make an assessment of readiness to graduate
- Option 2: Shift to a community based graduation assessment system

372. **Option 1.** This would involve maintaining a system of benchmarks against which each household is assessed to assess their readiness for graduation. The assessment against the benchmarks would be done through the collection of quantitative data on individual households which would be used to decide whether they had reached the benchmark.

373. The strengths of this option include:

- It would involve a degree of continuity from the current system
- It would meet the needs of those who prefer quantitative data to inform the assessment

374. The challenges of this option include:

- It would require a major effort to resolve the many flaws encountered in the current system
- Its complexity makes it neither simple nor very transparent, especially for clients, as is required in the GGN principles
- It would be difficult to manage given known capacity constraints
- It would need a major effort to resolve the question of what to measure in different places – assets vs. incomes; which assets; valuation;
- It would not easily accommodate flexibility to incorporate local assessment of indicators for graduation
- It fails to resolve the challenge of equating food gap and benchmarks to food sufficiency to real readiness to graduate

375. **Option 2.** This would change the current system used and move instead to one in which the emphasis was placed on community level assessment of readiness for graduation. This could still involve quantitative data being collected at household level, and it could still involve

benchmarks. But the nature of the data collection system and the nature of the benchmarks would be different.

376. The strengths of this option include:

- It has similarities with the targeting system and therefore similar systems would be used for PSNP entry and exit
- It would be considerably less complex and less time-consuming for DAs time in particular
- Methodological problems would be eliminated on: linking benchmarks to readiness to graduate; counting assets vs. incomes; valuation of assets; and using locally-appropriate criteria for graduation.
- Difficulties with transparency and understanding at local level would be eliminated
- Benchmarks for graduation could still be used, based on discussion of the characteristics of households considered to be able to survive and thrive without PSNP support. Such benchmarks would be much easier to use and connect to 'readiness to graduate' than the existing system. They would also probably be broader and more accurately reflect important livelihood assets and activities than the current approach.
- Quantitative data could still be used if needed to support graduation assessments, but the method for collecting the data would be based on community assessment and interview rather than formal survey. If done properly the community method should be more accurate, due to local community knowledge and peer pressure
- The basis for all graduation assessments and decisions can be formally recorded by the DA facilitating the community discussions, resulting in formal and quantitative evidence to support decisions. This can also be used by the appeal committee as needed, and forwarded to woreda, region and federal through appropriate formats.

377. The challenges of this option include:

- A paradigm shift would be needed among programme implementers that counting assets and incomes is needed to make graduation decisions, and that community-based approaches could serve the purpose effectively and perhaps better
- The system would need to overcome any concerns about the possibility of widespread hiding of assets by the community
- Indicators or measures would be needed to provide early warning that incorrect graduation decisions were being made
- New skills would be required at local level to facilitate effective discussions on how clients were doing with PSNP support; the rules of the PSNP regarding graduation; local indicators (i.e. benchmarks) of readiness to survive and thrive without PSNP support (i.e. readiness to sustainably graduate); how to select specific households against these local indicators/benchmarks

4. Management of graduation

378. The lack of consistent management of the graduation process is startling, with woredas able to decide whether to follow the 16 steps outlined in the graduation process or not.

379. This study finds that there is a case for reviewing the 16 steps to make them more useable. However management of the graduation process should not be left to individual discretion. The management of the process needs to be much more tightly controlled, and should

also be effectively monitored to ensure that correct practice is being followed and correct decisions are being made. There is not really a decision to be made here about whether to improve management of the graduation process, rather just some decisions on what actually needs to be done. Consequently only 1 option is proposed.

380. **Proposal.** This involves reviewing the 16 steps of the current graduation guidance note in the light of experience with their implementation to date. In addition, provision of clearer guidance, tighter management and supervision, greater support, and improved monitoring.

5. Capacity and support

381. If the assessment of graduation is to be improved, greater understanding of roles and responsibilities and specifically how to manage the process will be needed at all levels, right down to PSNP clients.

382. This will require improvements in the following:

- The quality of guidance to explain key issues carefully
- Greater availability of guidance at all levels
- Better and more frequent training, including to lower levels, driven by the need to maintain capacity to play expected roles effectively
- More frequent and effective supervision and support
- Improved data management for graduation, especially at lower levels, and
- Closer monitoring of actions and outcomes to ensure what is done is consistent with what should be done and what needs to be done.

383. **Proposal.** Again these conclusions are uncontroversial and so no options are proposed here. Indeed there is considerable overlap with those for management of graduation. The recommendations will need to map out how to address each of these issues in practice in the context of adjustments made to graduation processes following this Assessment.

6. Balancing incentives

384. In general people respond to the incentives they face. Some efforts have been made to introduce positive incentives for graduation, for example graduation ceremonies, awards, etc. But analysis of the incentives around graduation suggests a number of incentives remain which do not favour graduation, operating at both individual and woreda levels.

385. Once more the only choice to make is whether or not to address incentives which the team believe to be uncontroversial.

386. **Proposal.** The PSNP will need to move to a point where the balance of incentives favours graduation. This will require the introduction of new and effective incentives for graduation, and the progressive removal – or counteracting – of existing disincentives to graduation. This will need to be achieved without encouraging inappropriate graduation, which will itself require a very clear understanding, based on very clear guidance, on what to do and what not to do – right down to the lowest levels of the system. The recommendations will outline how to progress this agenda.

7. Safeguards

387. Safeguards are of critical importance in ensuring that the graduation process is conducted effectively. If they are not applied correctly then not only do we risk making incorrect graduation decisions, but also it makes graduation risky for clients, which creates the incentive to avoid

graduation. When it comes to safeguards it is not enough that they exist; the key factor is that they are effective.

388. Two key safeguards relevant to graduation appear not to be operating adequately: the appeal system, and the re-entry system.

389. Given the importance of safeguards, these conclusions are again considered uncontroversial.

390. **Proposal.** The current weaknesses in these safeguards will need to be addressed as part of the forthcoming improvement of the overall process of assessing graduation.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS AND WAY FORWARD

391. This section presents the recommendations agreed in the 'Way Forward Retreat' and subsequent Steering Committee. As such they reflect the views of the wider stakeholders (regional and federal government and development partners) informed by the analysis presented by the Assessment Team. It also presents further analysis by the Assessment Team of how these agreements can be implemented.

392. The introduction to this section lays out the process by which the agreements regarding the way forward were reached. It briefly describes the key steps of the consultation process followed.

393. The main body of the section states the agreements reached in each of the seven key areas along with recommendations on how these agreements could be implemented. These are the same seven areas described in section 6.3 above:

1. Re-establishment of a single harmonised system across the programme
2. Target setting process is clear and effective
3. Criteria for assessing graduates are appropriate and effectively applied
4. The graduation process is effectively managed
5. Capacity, documentation and training enable effective performance of all stakeholders
6. The balance of incentives support graduation
7. Safeguards are rigorously met

394. The format followed in presenting agreements and recommendations for each of these seven areas is as follows:

7.2.1 TITLE OF ISSUE

Key agreements reached

395. This will detail any of the key agreements reached during the retreat and subsequent steering committee meeting. As already mentioned above, these agreements reflect the views of the wider stakeholders (regional and federal government and development partners), rather than the opinions of the Assessment Team. However these agreements were informed by the analysis presented by the Assessment Team.

Recommendations

396. This will include recommendations by the Assessment Team of how the above key agreements could be implemented.

7.1 Introduction

397. The Assessment Team's approach to developing recommendations has been based on an understanding that it is both important that the recommendations to improve the PSNP graduation system are technically correct, and that there is widespread buy-in to the need for change and the direction of this change.

398. The Assessment Team employed five key steps to ensure this buy-in and to ensure that the knowledge and experience of implementing stakeholders were built into the process of developing agreements and recommendations:

- 1) **Continuous consultation** about the scope and breath of the Assessment to ensure that the needs of all stakeholders were met. This continuous consultation also helped to build stakeholders' confidence that a rigorous methodology was used in the development of study findings and conclusions.
- 2) **Gaining inputs on what areas needed improvement and how they could be improved** from all stakeholders as part of the fieldwork process. Inputs were gained from clients, graduates, kebele and community level implementers and woredas as well as federal and regional level stakeholders.
- 3) **Exploring key issues in Regional Workshops** which ensured that regional stakeholders had adequate opportunity to discuss issues emerging from the assessment, ensure that their key concerns were addressed, and explore how issues could be addressed going forward.
- 4) **Reaching consensus in a Federal Retreat** composed of steering committee members and regional representatives. This day and a half retreat reconfirmed the priorities which had emerged through the Regional Workshop process and made key agreements on proposals and options presented.
- 5) **A Final Steering Committee meeting** reconfirmed these agreements and addressed a small number of outstanding issues.

399. It is the combination of the agreements reached during the Federal Retreat and the Steering Committee which are presented as key agreements below.

7.2 Key Agreements and Recommendations

7.2.1 RE-ESTABLISHMENT OF A SINGLE HARMONISED SYSTEM ACROSS THE PROGRAMME

Key agreements reached

400. The Retreat agreed the need to re-establish a single harmonised system for identifying graduates across all areas covered by the GoE's Food Security Programme (and rejected a proposal to formalise a more fragmented system). However, in reaching this agreement the Retreat also stated that such a harmonised system should still enable locally relevant criteria and local conditions to form part of the assessment. How this would be addressed will be spelt-out in 7.2.3 which describes the characteristics of the graduation threshold and criteria.

401. The Retreat confirmed the need for federal guidance on how to undertake graduate identification. This federal guidance will incorporate all the key steps of the graduate identification process.

Recommendations

402. Implementing the above agreement will require revisions to the Graduation Guidance Note (incorporating many of the agreements and recommendations indicated below) and the

formal roll-out of this new guidance note. This roll-out will include translation and dissemination of the guidance note and the roll-out of a training programme to ensure that front line implementers have the necessary knowledge and skills to implement (this is discussed further in section 7.2.4 below).

403. Furthermore, revisions will need to be incorporated in the Programme Implementation Manual during its next review.

404. At present there are no commitments to identify graduates in pastoral areas covered by the Food Security Programme. In the future it will be necessary to consider the implications of this agreement on graduate identification in pastoral areas as this sector of the PSNP and wider Food Security Programme moves forward.

7.2.2 TARGET SETTING PROCESS IS CLEAR AND EFFECTIVE

Key agreements reached

405. The Retreat agreed that there should be an absolute separation between target setting (how many households the GoE aspires will graduate from the PSNP) and the process of graduate identification. Targets are set to indicate the ambitions of the programme with the target setting process the first stage in identifying the resources necessary to achieve these ambitions. The graduate identification process will be based solely on the evidence that households have achieved food sufficiency and are able to survive and thrive without PSNP support, and will not be influenced by the existence of these targets.

406. If there are any differences between the numbers actually graduating and the targets, the Retreat agreed these differences will be addressed through increased efforts to create the conditions to enable graduation; whether through increased resourcing, improved programme performance or other efforts. Differences will not be addressed through the graduate identification process.

407. The Retreat agreed that targets remained a useful programme management tool and should continue to exist. The Retreat also agreed that it was valuable to have targets both at a national level and more localised in order to monitor programme performance more effectively. These more localised targets, the Retreat proposed, should be based on evidence of possible levels of graduation given resources, enabling conditions and other factors.

408. These agreements were supplemented by the subsequent Steering Committee meeting. During this meeting it was agreed that the targets stated in the Food Security Programme document (MoARD 2009a) will form the basis of targets used in the programme. The target expressed in this document is that 80% of public works clients will graduate by 2014. However, this 80% target is a national target and not all woredas are expected to have a target for 80% graduation, some woredas may be below the target while others may exceed it.

409. Woredas will be requested to identify development targets for graduation. These targets will be based on evidence of what is realistic given the resources and conditions available in the specific woreda. Woredas will be provided with clear guidance on how to develop these targets and what types of evidence should be used to support local woreda plans.

410. Clear and unambiguous guidance will be provided to implementing stakeholders on how targets should be used and interpreted. This guidance will make clear what is the role of targets (to support planning of inputs), the need for a complete separation of target setting from graduate identification, and the primacy of evidence based graduation.

Recommendations

411. The setting of development targets of number of graduates should fit into the overall woreda planning process for the Food Security Programme (which in turn is expected to be part of the Integrated Woreda Planning Process (MoARD 2009a pages 70-72). This will enable woredas to consider how all the resources available to them (not just FSP resources) can contribute to the achievement of graduation at scale.

412. The following three critical areas need to be considered when setting realistic development targets at a woreda level. For each area, suggested factors are included.

- **Context:**
 - Degree of poverty (how far below the graduation threshold the majority of clients currently lie).
 - Investment opportunities
 - Enabling environment
 - Vulnerability to drought and other risks
 - Current trends in poverty
 - Population pressure
- **Resources:**
 - FSP
 - Other GoE programmes and services
 - NGO
 - Bilateral
 - The above needs to consider past and present resources. After all, those graduating in 2011 are likely to be those who received credit in 2008 or before (and have therefore had time to build assets and repay credit).
- **Performance:**
 - Timeliness and sufficiency of transfers (and whether assets really are being protected)
 - Appropriate investment opportunities identified through HABP
 - Timeliness and appropriateness of credit, access to inputs, and technical support.

413. The resulting plan should ensure that the development targets and the resources planned to achieve them are comparable. Woredas where 80% graduation cannot be achieved given realistic resourcing possibilities will plan for a level of graduation and resourcing that they think is possible. Woredas which have the potential to achieve higher levels of graduation, should state how they will do this and what resources they will need to achieve them.

414. Development targets cannot remain static for the remainder of the programme, as they will be heavily influenced by both risk factors and programme performance. They will, therefore, need regular revision.

415. The number of graduates is an important criterion by which to measure Food Security Programme (but not PSNP) impact, but it should not be the only criterion, and should not be used without context. Given the significant depth of poverty in parts of Ethiopia and the risk prone environments in which people live, it is important that progress towards food sufficiency (as opposed to just the achievement of food sufficiency) is also measured. Taking into consideration risk and the shocks that client households have experienced is necessary to understand whether any observed lack of progress is the result of poor programme design or performance, or whether it is due to particularly poor conditions. In the event of a shock, the FSP may have actually enabled households to remain stable despite poor conditions.

7.2.3 CRITERIA FOR ASSESSING GRADUATES ARE APPROPRIATE AND EFFECTIVELY APPLIED

Key agreements reached

416. The Retreat and subsequent Steering Committee meeting endorsed the Assessment Team's findings concerning the problems faced implementing the current system of graduate identification. The Retreat confirmed the need for a system with an independently verifiable benchmark, but one which had much greater community involvement³⁸.

417. Based on the direction set by the retreat, the Steering Committee proposed a way forward which uses a mixture of quantitative data with a community based system, in order to identify possible and actual graduates.

418. The Steering Committee identified the need for a database which quantifies different livelihood characteristics of kebeles and enables the development of livelihood specific thresholds. They acknowledged that the EWRD already has such a livelihoods database (managed by the LIU) which already plays a major role in assessing relief needs. They agreed that a small joint GoE-DP team would discuss with technical staff directly from the LIU the feasibility of using the database.

419. The Steering Committee also suggested that the thresholds developed through analysis of the database be frequently verified in the field to verify their accuracy and usefulness

420. The Retreat also agreed the need for more robust early detection of any problems in the implementation of the graduate identification system, in order to resolve any inaccuracies in the graduate identification process.

Recommendations

421. The above agreements provide the framework for the future graduation system, and in particular the ability to have more livelihood-specific benchmarks for graduation. The recommendations below provide some guidance on how this framework could be applied. These recommendations fall into three distinct areas:

- The national graduation threshold
- Setting livelihood-specific benchmarks
- Identifying graduates in practice

422. **The national graduation threshold.** The Assessment Team recommends the continuation of the current principle that the threshold for graduation should be higher than the threshold for programme entry. The reasons for this are already explained clearly in programme documentation and relate to the desire to ensure that graduates from the PSNP are able to continue to not only meet food needs but also access credit and build household assets after graduation; and to ensure that few households fall back into chronic food insecurity once they graduate from the programme.

423. The Assessment Team recommends that there be one national threshold based on the ability of households to survive and thrive post-graduation. For example, if the use of the LIU database is agreed, this might equate with the ability to protect livelihoods and have sufficient

³⁸ The Retreat did discuss the possibility of a pure community system, but raised concerns as to its subjectivity and the challenges in monitoring it effectively. The Retreat also acknowledged that the current system already incorporates some community involvement. However, this involvement is limited to collecting data against already defined criteria, rather than using local knowledge to inform locally appropriate criteria.

resources to cover fifteen months of food needs (the 3 months beyond a year being a cushion in order that households can survive a 'modest shock')³⁹.

424. **Setting livelihood-specific benchmarks.** The Assessment Team recommends that a community consultation process is incorporated in the livelihood-specific benchmark setting process. If the use of the LIU database is agreed, analysis of this data will propose a series of locally appropriate benchmarks. These proposed benchmarks should be adjusted locally through a process of community discussions. The format for such a consultation could include:

- General discussion about what it means to be food sufficient, and what are the characteristics of food sufficient households in this particular locality.
- Presentation of a livelihood-specific benchmark proposed through analysis of LIU database, and discussion of whether this benchmark is comparable with the characteristics described above, and would indeed support the identification of food sufficient households.
- Discussion as to whether there are other important measures of food sufficiency that these benchmarks might fail to capture (for example off-farm employment or a locality specific opportunity).

425. **Identifying graduates in practice.** The Assessment Team would strongly recommend that a number of adjustments be made to the current graduate identification process, in particular the Step 5 outlined in the current Graduation Guidance Note. Key areas in need of adjustment include:

- That graduate identification discussions be contextualised in an overall community discussion regarding programme progress;
- That information collection on graduate identification be mainstreamed into the monitoring and evaluation of the Food Security Programme;
- That detailed information collection be minimised
- That the focus be on all FSP clients not just PSNP clients

426. The following proposal by the Assessment Team outlines one way of achieving the above. It encompasses an overall community discussion regarding programme progress and a data collection approach which not only identifies graduates, but also provides wider data on programme progress and impact.

427. An overall community discussion regarding programme progress is consistent with the commitment expressed in the Food Security Programme document (MoARD 2009a) that participatory monitoring and evaluation become a feature of the general programme monitoring and evaluation system. This overall community discussion regarding programme progress would provide immediate feedback to woreda stakeholders regarding programme performance and what is (or isn't) working; but will also provide an indication of the levels of graduation that might be expected.

428. Following this overall community discussion, the Assessment Team proposes that the following steps be undertaken to identify both progress towards graduation and graduates:

- **Step 1:** Wealth ranking of ALL FSP clients (not just PSNP clients) into 3-4 wealth groups, including what proportion of clients fall into which wealth category⁴⁰. Households' wealth category should be marked on the master list (mentioned in section 7.2.4 below).

³⁹ This is the threshold proposed by the LIU in their document considering potential levels of graduation (Coulter 2009).

- **Step 2:** Collection of information against the benchmark for all FSP clients falling into the better off wealth group, and the identification of PSNP clients who are equal or above the benchmark for graduation. The results of this detailed data collection should also be marked against the master list.
- **Step 3:** Repeat of Step 2 above for next wealth category until less than half clients in the wealth category under review are considered to be equal or crossing threshold (this may mean that only one wealth group actually gets assessed).
- **Step 4:** Discussion of candidate graduates in a public meeting to allow correction of any errors in the data collection process and to ensure community endorsement of the final list of graduates.
- **Step 5:** Completion of kebele level grievance procedures (see below in section 7.2.4)
- **Step 6:** Submission of report by KFSTF to woreda KFSTF stating:
 - How many FSP clients who have graduated from the PSNP fall into which wealth category
 - How many PSNP clients fall into which wealth category
 - A summary of the detailed data collection for new PSNP graduates
 - The numbers of previous PSNP graduates who have a) improved asset holdings since the last assessment and b) reduced asset holdings since the last assessment.

429. The above process can also be used to identify which households should receive what level of support, should the variable levels of support pilot be scaled up.

430. In addition to the above, the Retreat also agreed it was important to improve the early detection of problems in implementation. Such early detection could include a combination of:

- RRT visits, with questions focused on safeguard issues
- Monitoring and supervision of graduate identification processes
- Comparison of information concerning graduate numbers with:
 - Overall community discussion regarding programme progress;
 - Knowledge about whether or not shocks or unusually good production have been experience in the last year; and
 - Secondary data indicating what progress there might be towards graduation.

7.2.4 THE GRADUATION PROCESS IS EFFECTIVELY MANAGED

Key agreements reached

431. The Retreat agreed to review the sixteen steps outlined in the current Graduation Guidance Note in the light of experience to date. The objective of this would be to both simplify the steps and reduce redundancy as well as to provide clearer guidance to frontline implementers.

432. In addition the retreat agreed to improve the management and supervision of the graduation process in order to improve support to those engaged in graduate identification and to improve the monitoring of the graduate identification process.

⁴⁰ The Assessment Team recommend the assessment of all FSP clients given that the graduation safeguards state that graduated households will continue to be monitored through the FSP monitoring and evaluation system. Conforming with this safeguard both provides information which can improve safeguards, but also ensures that this data collection process provides monitoring information on the overall FSP programme (not just that portion of the programme focused on PSNP clients).

Recommendations

433. Major adjustments to the sixteen steps will need to be undertaken in the light of the revisions made in response to area 7.2.3 above, and other changes agreed as a result of this assessment. The development of a new Graduation Guidance Note should await these adjustments. These adjustments should reduce the variability currently seen in the implementation of steps five and six of the Graduation Guidance Note.

434. In addition, the Assessment Team can make the following recommendations regarding adjustments to the procedures on the basis of the analysis outlined in section 4.5.1:

- To the extent possible, community and kebele level steps in identifying graduates should be completed before lists of graduates are submitted to the woreda (and in turn to the region). If necessary, this may require the scheduling of a special graduation focused meeting of the Kebele Appeals Committee to consider any appeals related to the graduation identification process. Prior to such a KAC meeting taking place, graduates should be clearly informed of the appeals processes open to them and the deadline for submission of any appeals. This KAC meeting should take place after the general meeting in which proposed graduates' names are read out and discussed, and after agreed graduates have been informed of their graduation.
- It is critical that the reading and discussing of the names of graduates in a general community meeting takes place. This is one of the critical steps to build community ownership of the graduate identification process, and should reduce the number of unnecessary appeals⁴¹.
- As senior woreda council representatives are on the Woreda Food Security Committee, it is unnecessary for approval by the woreda council to be a separate step. Instead this approval should be automatic as long as the correct graduate identification procedures have been followed and the WFSTF has approved the list of graduates.

435. Furthermore, additions to the Graduation Guidance Note should incorporate findings from the Variable Levels of Support Pilot. This pilot found that the variable support facilitated stepwise graduation from the PSNP.

436. Lastly, if the decision is maintained to ensure that all identified graduates receive one additional year of support post their identification as graduates; this should also be documented in the Graduation Guidance Note and clearly communicated to clients and graduates.

7.2.5 CAPACITY, DOCUMENTATION AND TRAINING ENABLE EFFECTIVE PERFORMANCE OF ALL STAKEHOLDERS

Key agreements reached

437. The Retreat agreed that in order to enable more effective performance it was necessary to:

- Simplify the system;
- Ensure there was quality guidance to explain it better;
- Provide better and more training;
- Support and improve data management; and
- Develop better supervision.

⁴¹ If identified graduates understand the reasons why they were selected and are aware of community support for their identification as graduates, they are less likely to appeal.

Recommendations

438. Recommendations regarding simplifying the system are already covered in sections 7.2.3 and 7.2.4 above.

439. The future Graduation Guidance Note should focus on the steps which need to be undertaken at woreda, kebele and community levels. It should be written in a way which is easily understood by both woreda technical staff and DAs. The revised GGN should be translated into locally relevant languages and made available to both woreda level stakeholders and also kebele level (through the DAs).

440. Training on graduate identification should be considered one of the core trainings mentioned in the Food Security Programme document (MoARD 2009a: 48-49) which should be provided on an annual basis. This will help address issues on staff turnover. Furthermore, other actions regarding training mentioned in the Food Security Programme document should be operationalised. These include: the tailoring of training programmes to meet participants' needs through training needs assessments; more systematic follow-up of trainings to ensure that they have met needs, and the provision of manuals (or copies of the GGN) during trainings.

441. There are a number of mechanisms by which data management could be improved. It is critical that any changes to data collection and management take into consideration the levels of capacity available and the ability and need to utilise and analyse data (to date a lot of data has been collected which has not been used). The Assessment Team recommend the following actions to support the improvement of data management:

- To integrate any data collection regarding graduate identification with on-going monitoring of the PSNP and HABP programmes. There is no need to collect information separately for graduate identification and for general programme monitoring. This implies that standard data collection formats should be provided regarding graduation data.
- The roll-out of the PASS software has improved the consistency of information regarding PSNP service provision. The Assessment Team recommends building on this experience by developing a master list for all FSP service provision. All data regarding PSNP provision, HABP provision, progress towards graduation etc. should be collected against a master list of households at kebele level. This will allow implementers at lower levels to easily assess how clients are being impacted on by different aspects of programme implementation, and should also facilitate easy analysis of data for submission of reports to woreda (and beyond).
- Data on programme component provision and progress towards graduation should be collected and reported both on the basis of number of clients and number of households. The practice of multiplying or dividing figures by an 'average household size' leads to errors and should be abandoned.
- Gender disaggregated data should be collected for key FSP data including:
 - Male headed and female headed households receiving PSNP, receiving household packages and graduating from the PSNP; and
 - Male and female household members receiving the PSNP and graduating from the PSNP.
 - Gender of household member primarily supported by HABP service provision.
- Mechanisms to ensure the handover of key programme guidance materials (including the GGN) and key monitoring data should be mainstreamed when staff leave their post. At present, staff are required to handover assets such as furniture and staplers. The handover checklist should be extended to include programme guidance materials and key monitoring data.

442. The Assessment Team recommends closer monitoring of actions and outcomes to ensure what is done is consistent with what should be done and what needs to be done. This closer monitoring is particularly required at kebele level by woreda stakeholders; but should be supported by monitoring and supervision from zones and regions. Furthermore, there should be greater use of monitoring data at kebele and woreda level to inform local level decision making and to identify areas where programmes need to be adjusted or where implementers need greater support.

7.2.6 THE BALANCE OF INCENTIVES SUPPORT GRADUATION

Key agreements reached

443. The Retreat agreed that there is a need to work towards a balance of incentives which favour graduation at both community and woreda level. Such work should introduce new positive incentives, and remove – or counter-balance – disincentives. It should be developed on the basis of clear analysis and rolled out as part of the guidance provided regarding graduation. It is critical that such adjustments to the incentives do not encourage inappropriate graduation.

Recommendations

444. During the Retreat there were significant discussions about the pros and cons of providing differing incentives for graduation. For example, if we are to prioritise HABP support to graduates, how do we address the budget constraints which mean that a large proportion of non-graduating PSNP clients have yet to receive any credit support. The Assessment Team acknowledges these concerns but would re-emphasise the need to provide incentives and reduce disincentives to potentially graduating households if graduate identification is to proceed smoothly and if households are going to survive and thrive post-graduation. Key issues to consider include:

- If clients believe they will lose access to the HABP programme when they graduate this may cause them to resist graduation. Lack of access to HABP will also reduce their ability to continue to improve their livelihoods after graduation and to therefore become food secure (as opposed to food sufficient). However, any service provision under HABP does need to meet the requirements of households who have graduated. The requirements, and indeed the capabilities, of a graduate household may vary significantly from those who have yet to graduate.
- Households will be reluctant to graduate if they feel there is a high chance of a crisis in the future and limited possibility of support to enhance their ability to bear its effects. Addressing this reluctance will involve:
 - Ensuring that graduating households are indeed food sufficient, and can cope with at least the modest shocks which are common in rural Ethiopia
 - Guaranteeing the provision of support to affected graduate households in the event of a shock beyond that which can be considered modest. Given that such households should still be considered clients of the Food Security Programme the GoE may decide to provide them with not only guaranteed assistance in the event of a shock, but also an enhanced package of assistance to ensure that the assets built through the efforts of the FSP are not lost.
 - The extension of the variable levels of support system may reduce the strength of the disincentive felt by households leaving the programme. By reducing the support stepwise, households may grow in confidence about their ability to manage without PSNP support and appreciate the increased time available (as a result of not participating in public works) to further build livelihoods. In addition the use of the one additional year of support once a household has been identified for graduation, may allow households to prepare for life beyond the PSNP.

- There remains a role for both awareness-raising concerning graduation and the celebration of those who have successfully graduated. It is critical that the former does not incorporate false promises concerning service provision after graduation, nor unduly pressurises households to volunteer for self graduation. Awareness raising might include an emphasis on a contract between programme clients and the GoE. The current client card includes a section on rights and responsibilities including:
 - You have the right to know the criteria for graduation and to remain in the programme if you do not meet these criteria.
 - You must provide accurate and complete information to targeting committees.
 - You have a responsibility to build your assets and work towards graduation

Awareness raising can reinforce both the above rights and responsibilities and emphasise the responsibility of households to both work towards graduation and to inform 'targeting committees' of the progress they have made.

7.2.7 SAFEGUARDS ARE RIGOROUSLY MET

Key agreements reached

445. The Retreat agreed that it was necessary to address the current weaknesses in safeguards.

Recommendations

446. The current Graduation Guidance Note includes the following key safeguards with regard to graduation:

- a. Community awareness of and support for graduation.
- b. Graduated households will be monitored through the current FSP monitoring and evaluation system.
- c. Graduated household will continue to have access to OFSP packages on a priority basis
- d. The current appeals mechanism will respond to appeals related to graduation.
- e. Graduated households who subsequently become chronically food insecure can re-enter the Programme.
- f. Balancing incentives for graduation.

447. The Assessment Team has the following recommendations with regards to these safeguards:

- **Community awareness of and support for graduation.** In addition to the issues related to community awareness and support outlined in sections 7.2.3 and 7.2.6, the Assessment Team would strongly emphasise the need to ensure that community members are aware of the graduate identification criteria and process, and the appeals process. Without this awareness it will not be possible for the graduate identification process to be transparent and accountable to clients and any safeguards are unlikely to operate effectively.
- The safeguard '**Graduated households will be monitored through the current FSP monitoring and evaluation system**' has partially been addressed by sections 7.2.3 and 7.2.4 above but also relates to the use of the RRM to detect problems related to graduation. Future RRT visits need to focus on their role as a safeguard mechanism for graduation rather than collecting information concerning numbers of graduates and the progress of the graduate identification process.
- The safeguards **Graduated household will continue to have access to OFSP packages on a priority basis, Balancing incentives for graduation and Graduated households who subsequently become chronically food insecure can re-enter the Programme** have already been addressed in section 7.2.6 above

- **The current appeals mechanism will respond to appeals related to graduation.** The key steps to be taken with regards to this safeguards include:
 - Following up on recommendations from the Roving Appeals Audit to ensure that the overall appeals mechanisms is functioning properly
 - Ensuring better understanding by PSNP clients (and graduates) of the appeals process, both in general and in relation to graduation related appeals.
 - Better timing and organisation of graduation related appeals (as outlined in section 7.2.4 above).
 - Ensuring better understanding by KAC members of their responsibilities and powers with regard to graduation related appeals (and ensuring KACs are trained⁴²).

⁴² Neither the PIM currently in operation (MoARD 2006a, nor the draft recently revised PIM (MoARD 2010) list a body responsible for the training of KAC members.

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Annex One ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

Agreed Action Plan to enable improvements to the systems for identifying households which have achieved food sufficiency and are ready of graduation			
Endorsement of Report and Way Forward Brief			
<p style="text-align: center;">Development of Evidence on Key Themes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholder perceptions regarding graduation Procedures used in practice and why Capacity institutional and human Coordination and communication Transparency, accountability, safeguards, balanced incentives Food sufficiency status and prospects for graduate households 		<p style="text-align: center;">Consensus Building</p>	
		<p>Reaching conclusion and consensus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is and is not working? What requires improvements in implementation, and what requires changes to the approach? What should these changes look like? 	<p>Phase 5</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> July meetings in each of four regions with key decision makers August federal level retreat
			<p>Phases 2,3 & 4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feedback meetings with regions as needed Meetings with steering committee as needed
Core Area A		Core Area B	
<p>Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has there been graduation? Do procedures conform with guidance? Why not? How have challenges been addressed? How manageable are the processes? What has been the role of plans and targets? And what happens when they are not met? Are systems fair and transparent? What safeguards are in place and are they functioning? 		<p>Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have graduates reached benchmarks? How well are they able to meet 12 months of food needs? Have they already withstood a moderate shock or how confident do they feel about their ability to withstand such a shock. What has happened to graduates' livelihoods since graduation? 	
<p>Tools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional and woreda stakeholder interviews KFSTF interviews CFSTF and DA interviews Community Focus Group discussions Graduate Case Studies KAC Interviews Appellant interviews 		<p>Tools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional and woreda stakeholder interviews KFSTF interviews Community Focus Group discussions Graduate Case Studies Review of benchmarks against initial assumptions and LIU 	
Building Ownership of Process			
		<p>Asking Key Stakeholders:</p> <p>How can this assessment meet your agencies needs? What advice and inputs can you provide on methodology and process? Who are the key people to consult and involve in this process?</p>	<p>Steering committee meetings Federal Stakeholder Interviews Regional stakeholder Interviews</p>

Core Area C

Annex Two WORK CALENDAR FOR DA IN ANDEGNA CHOROKO KEBELE, HALABA WOREDA

Task	Notes	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug
Reporting	Weekly report												
Crops	Intensive during sowing time (advice on land preparation and improved seed). Sowing for belg, long cycle and krempt. Also support during harvest												
Women's groups	Meets women's groups twice a month. Support on e.g. fuel saving stoves, silk production.												
NRM	Tree planting is May-July												
Public works	Most intense during Jan-June, but some works e.g. road maintenance continue through year												
Payments	Every two months Jan-June. Linked with record keeping for above												
Livestock	Whenever there is an outbreak either within PA or neighbouring PA												
Household Package	Identification of households Jan/Feb. Purchase of package inputs March												
Graduation	Identification process starts June and is finished at harvest period. Collection of HH asset data time consuming as go to each HH to collect (although only the candidate graduates will be assessed)												

Annex Three ORIGINAL IFPRI BENCHMARKS

From pages 6 and 7 of **Benchmarks for Ethiopia's Food Security Program: Methods, results and commentary**, Gilligan et al. 2007a

Table 1: Probability of being food secure by asset holdings, Tigray

Probability of being food secure (Level of exclusion error)	Landholdings (ha)	Schooling of household head	Holdings of tools and livestock per person (Birr)
90% (Exclusion error = 10%)	1 ha or more	1 grade or more	3,000
	1 ha or more	No schooling	4,500
	Less than 1 ha	No schooling	5,600
75% (Exclusion error = 25%)	1 ha or more	1 grade or more	1,700
	1 ha or more	No schooling	3,200
	Less than 1 ha	No schooling	4,300
60% (Exclusion error = 40%)	1 ha or more	1 grade or more	500
	1 ha or more	No schooling	1,900
	Less than 1 ha	No schooling	3,100

Table 2: Probability of being food secure by asset holdings, Amhara

Probability of being food secure (Level of exclusion error)	Landholdings (ha)	Schooling of household head	Holdings of tools and livestock per person (Birr)
90% (Exclusion error = 10%)	1 ha or more	1 grade or more	3,000
	1 ha or more	No schooling	5,100
	Less than 1 ha	No schooling	7,500
75% (Exclusion error = 25%)	1 ha or more	1 grade or more	400
	1 ha or more	No schooling	2,200
	Less than 1 ha	No schooling	4,800
60% (Exclusion error = 40%)	1 ha or more	1 grade or more	0
	1 ha or more	No schooling	0
	Less than 1 ha	No schooling	1,800

Table 3: Probability of being food secure by asset holdings, Oromiya

Probability of being food secure (Level of exclusion error)	Landholdings (ha)	Schooling of household head	Holdings of tools and livestock per person (Birr)
90% (Exclusion error = 10%)	1 ha or more	1 grade or more	12,500
	1 ha or more	No schooling	12,700
	Less than 1 ha	No schooling	13,500
75% (Exclusion error = 25%)	1 ha or more	1 grade or more	9,500
	1 ha or more	No schooling	9,600
	Less than 1 ha	No schooling	10,000
60% (Exclusion error = 40%)	1 ha or more	1 grade or more	6,400
	1 ha or more	No schooling	6,500
	Less than 1 ha	No schooling	7,000

Table 4: Probability of being food secure by asset holdings, SNNP

Probability of being food secure (Level of exclusion error)	Landholdings (ha)	Schooling of household head	Holdings of tools and livestock per person (Birr)
90% (Exclusion error = 10%)	1 ha or more	1 grade or more	4,400
	1 ha or more	No schooling	5,200
	Less than 1 ha	No schooling	5,300
75% (Exclusion error = 25%)	1 ha or more	1 grade or more	3,100
	1 ha or more	No schooling	3,900
	Less than 1 ha	No schooling	4,000
60% (Exclusion error = 40%)	1 ha or more	1 grade or more	1,800
	1 ha or more	No schooling	2,600
	Less than 1 ha	No schooling	2,700

Annex Four SNNP REGRESSION

The overall formula used is:

$$B1 \times 1 + B2 \times 2 + B3 \times 3 + B4 \times 4 + B5 \times 5 + B6 \times 6 + 0.131$$

The tables below indicate the relevant variables and their values:

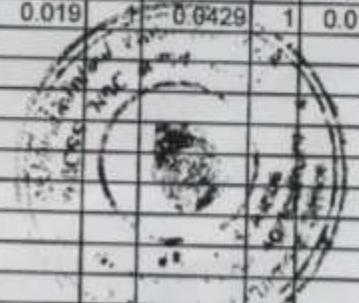
Partial regression coefficient	Value	Variable they represent
B1	0.00012	Agricultural tools and animals
B2	0.10189	Level of education
B3	0.04293	Land size
B4	0.019	Family size
B5	-0.20	Sex of HH
B6	0.004	Region of living
Constant	0.131	For all

Variables and their values:

Variables	Value
B1 Agricultural tools and animals	As per information collected
B2 Educational level	
Grade one and above	1
illiterate	0
B3 Land holding	
More than a hectare	1
Below one hectare	0
B4 Family Size	As per information collected
B5 Sex	
Male	1
Female	0
B6 Residential area	
SNNP	1
Out of SNNP	0

The following excerpt illustrates how this regression was applied. It is one page of the regression analysis undertaken in 1999 (Eth. Cal.) in Aymele Kebele of Halaba Woreda. The cut-off for graduation is 75% and therefore three households on this page have been identified for graduation (the relevant households have been highlighted).

የ ሀይመሌ ቀጥታ ስም ዝርዝር																
ተ.ቀ	የተጠቃሚው ስም	ቀበሌ	X6	B6	X5	B5	X4	B4	X3	B3	X2	B2	X1	B1	constant	b/mark
1	ሸምሱ ክዲር	ሐይመሌ	1	0.004	0	-0.2	1	0.019	0	0.0429	1	0.0189	7425	0.00012	0.131	1.0639
2	ሆሌን ሰይድ	ሐይመሌ	1	0.004	0	-0.2	2	0.019	1	0.0429	0	0.0189	4925	0.00012	0.131	0.8069
3	ሰሰማን ዲዶ	ሐይመሌ	1	0.004	0	-0.2	2	0.019	0	0.0429	0	0.0189	4025	0.00012	0.131	0.656
4	ወርቂተ ስደም	ሐይመሌ	1	0.004	1	-0.2	2	0.019	0	0.0429	0	0.0189	3837	0.00012	0.131	0.43344
5	አማን ስህመድ	ሐይመሌ	1	0.004	0	-0.2	2	0.019	0	0.0429	0	0.0189	4400	0.00012	0.131	0.701
6	መዘመድኑር ስህመድ	ሐይመሌ	1	0.004	0	-0.2	2	0.019	1	0.0429	0	0.0189	4562	0.00012	0.131	0.76334
7	ናደሞ ሸ/ክዲር	ሐይመሌ	1	0.004	0	-0.2	2	0.019	0	0.0429	0	0.0189	2287	0.00012	0.131	0.44744
8	ዘበይዳ ሸ/ክዲር	ሐይመሌ	1	0.004	1	-0.2	2	0.019	0	0.0429	0	0.0189	3775	0.00012	0.131	0.426
9	መሰገ ስሰሙ	ሐይመሌ	1	0.004	1	-0.2	3	0.019	1	0.0429	0	0.0189	3887	0.00012	0.131	0.50134
10	ኪረዖ ሞላ	ሐይመሌ	1	0.004	1	-0.2	3	0.019	0	0.0429	0	0.0189	2000	0.00012	0.131	0.232
11	ናሰር ወዲሶ	ሐይመሌ	1	0.004	0	-0.2	3	0.019	1	0.0429	0	0.0189	2866	0.00012	0.131	0.57882
12	ገሰተ ክዲር	ሐይመሌ	1	0.004	0	-0.2	3	0.019	1	0.0429	1	0.0189	3116	0.00012	0.131	0.62772
13	ራሙተ ሠ/ሠሰን	ሐይመሌ	1	0.004	0	-0.2	3	0.019	1	0.0429	0	0.0189	1533	0.00012	0.131	0.41886
14	ሶስማኤል ለ/ረኢማን	ሐይመሌ	1	0.004	0	-0.2	3	0.019	0	0.0429	0	0.0189	2633	0.00012	0.131	0.50796
15	ሸሰሞ መሀመድ	ሐይመሌ	1	0.004	0	-0.2	4	0.019	0	0.0429	0	0.0189	1568	0.00012	0.131	0.39916
16	ሸሊዖ ስደም	ሐይመሌ	1	0.004	1	-0.2	4	0.019	0	0.0429	0	0.0189	1236	0.00012	0.131	0.15932
17	ስህመድ ራዓተ	ሐይመሌ	1	0.004	0	-0.2	5	0.019	1	0.0429	0	0.0189	980	0.00012	0.131	0.3905
18	ሸዖኔ ክዲር	ሐይመሌ	1	0.004	1	-0.2	5	0.019	0	0.0429	0	0.0189	1620	0.00012	0.131	0.2244
19	ክማሰ ሙንዲኛ	ሐይመሌ	1	0.004	0	-0.2	5	0.019	0	0.0429	1	0.0189	1555	0.00012	0.131	0.4355
20	ደማሰ ክዲር	ሐይመሌ	1	0.004	0	-0.2	5	0.019	1	0.0429	1	0.0189	1615	0.00012	0.131	0.4856
21	ሱሩር ስህመዲን	ሐይመሌ	1	0.004	0	-0.2	5	0.019	1	0.0429	1	0.0189	2050	0.00012	0.131	0.5378



Annex Five TABLE INDICATING KNOWLEDGE OF GRADUATION CONCEPTS AND BENCHMARKS BY KEBELE

		Amhara			Tigray			Oromiya			SNNP		
		Kalu	Lasta	Wegdie	Ahferom	Tahtay Maichew	Ofla	Adami Tulu Jido Kombolcha	Fadis	Oda Bultum	Halaba	Damot Gale	Kemba
Meaning of graduation	WFSTF	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	KFSTF	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	DA	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	CFSTF	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓			✓		Only Wandara	
	Graduates	✓	Except Tila Asferi	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		Only Wandara	
	Clients	✓	✓	✓	Except Erdi Jeganu	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Except 1st Choroko	Except Wandara	Except Donbe Dolba

		Amhara			Tigray			Oromiya			SNNP		
		Kalu	Lasta	Wegdie	Ahferom	Tahtay Maichew	Ofla	Adami Tulu Jido Kombolcha	Fadis	Oda Bultum	Halaba	Damot Gale	Kemba
Understanding of the benchmark	WFSTF	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
	KFSTF	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	
	DA	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
	CFSTF												
	Graduates											Only Wandara	
	Clients												

Annex Six REPORTING FORMATS

The following reporting formats are included in this annex:

- Amhara Region, Lasta Woreda: Food Security Desk Format
- Amhara Region, Lasta Woreda: SMEDO Format
- Amhara Region, Wegdie Woreda
- Oromiya Region, Oda Bultum Woreda: First page of format
- SNNP Format provided in Regional Guidance Note
- Tigray Region, Ahferom Woreda

Amhara Region, Lasta Woreda: SMEDO Reporting Format

SMEDO

ቁጥር 06 ልዩ ገጽ 169
 የቤተሰብ ጋራ ስም 2392ይ.ላይ ስም ለአንድ ስም ገርተ
 ጠቅላላ የቤተሰብ ተገር 1
 አድማሪያቸው 18 አመት በላይ የሆነ (አዎ) ቤተሰብ ተገር
 ባደር ያገኘበት ዘመን 2000 የባደር ምንጭ ሌ.ጥዕዋገንጃ
 የቤተሰብ ሀብት ይዘት በገንዘብ የሚያሳይ ስንጠራዥ

ተ.ቁ	የሀብት ይዘት አይነት	መለኪያ	መጠን	በሰዎች የሰጠው የሰነድ ዋጋ		ጠቅላላ ዋጋ		ምር
				ብር	"	ብር	"	
1	የአንገላት ሀብት በራ + ላም በግ ናገል አህያ ራረስ ዘቅሎ	ቁጥር	2 1	2,225 300	00 00	4500 300	00 00	
2	የገቢና መሳሪያዎች ዘመናዊ ቀፎ ባህላዊ ቀፎ							
3	የአርሻ መሳሪያ የውሀ መሳሪያ ምተር							
4	ታሚ ተክል የፍራፍሬ ዛፍ ባህር ዛፍ							
5	ገንዘብ - መንጠል ክርታል ሽያጭተጥ ጣታ ፣ ክር ጣውላ ወዘተ ያበቃልላል ቶብ					5000	00	
6	የመሰሪያ ቤት /መሳሪያ/ - ስቅ - መዘዘን - ልብስ ስፊት መኪና - ዳቦ መጋገሪያ							
ሌላ								
	4 ጅግ ገርተኝ	11	800		0.4	320	0	
	12 ጅግ ገርተኝ		3600		0.4	1440	0	
	2 ጅግ ገርተኝ		800		0.5	120	0	
	ገደብ/አገልግ							6000
	ጸግር					11,680	00	

ጠቅላላ የሀብት መጠን
 ማሳሰቢያ- ቤተሰብ ተገር አንድ አይነት ሀብት ሆኖ (ምሳሌ 10 በግ ባደር ዋጋው ለላይይ ይቻላል) በግን
 ገዢ ጠቅላላ ዋጋው ተጸግሮ ለሁሉም ሰዎች ላይ የሰጠው የሰነድ ብር ይገባል (አብራሪ)

Amhara Region, Wegdie Woreda

Di 22-30

የቤተሰብ ኃላፊው ስም ቀበሌ ገደብ

የቤተሰብ ሃብት ይዞታ በገንዘብ የማስለያ ሰንጠረዥ

ተ/ቁ	የሃብት ይዞታ ዓይነት	መለኪያ	መጠን	በአጠቃላይ የአገድ ዋጋ ባር	ጠቅላላ ዋጋ ባር
	◇ የአገልግሎት ሀብት				
	◇ ሰፊ	ቁጥር			
	◇ በገ/ጥያቄ	ቁጥር			
	◇ አሁን ወዘተ...	ቁጥር			
	◇				
	◇				
	◇				
	◇				
2	የገባርና መሳሪያዎች ተክናሎቹ/				
	◇ ተር	ቁጥር			
	-ዘመናዊ (በገንገርና ዘመናዊ)	ቁጥር			
	-ባህላዊ	ቁጥር			
3	የአርክመሳሪያዎች				
	◇ የውሃመሳሪያ ሞተር /ተክናሎቹ	ቁጥር			
	◇ ትራኦል ፖምፕ	ቁጥር			
	◇ ታይሪደር	ቁጥር			
	◇ በቢሊም ወዘተ...	ቁጥር			
	◇				
4	ቋሚ ተክል				
	◇ የፍራፍሬ ዋና	ቁጥር			
	◇ ባህር ዋና	ቁጥር			
	◇				
	◇				
	◇				
5	ገንዘብ				
	◇ መገባደጃ ክፍያ	ብር			
	◇ ቁጠላ/Saving/	ብር			
6	የመስሪያ ቤት/መሳሪያ				
	◇ ስቅ	ቁጥር			
	◇ መጋዘን	ቁጥር			
	◇ ልብስ ስፈት መኪና	ቁጥር			
	◇ ኃሪ	ቁጥር			
	◇ የሽማ ሊቃ	ቁጥር			
	◇				
	◇				
ጽግር	ቁጥር				
የቤተሰብ ብዛት	ቁጥር				
የሃብት መጠን በቤተሰብ አባል (ጠቅላላ ሀብት መጠን በባር/በቤተሰብ ብዛት)	ብር				

