

# Improving drought response in pastoral areas of Ethiopia

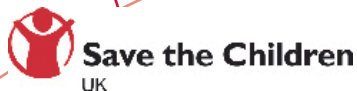
## Somali and Afar Regions and Borena Zone of Oromiya Region

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January 2008



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**Acknowledgements:**

The authors would like to thank the staff of the four agencies which commissioned and supported this study for their input throughout the research in-country, particularly Getachew Demesa and Mirafe Solomon (Save the Children US), Geraud Laval (Save the Children UK), Gedlu Mekonnen and Gijs VantKlooster (FAO) and Abay Bekele and Cary Farley (CARE). Adrian Cullis (Save the Children US) deserves special mention for the time and energy invested in initiating and designing the study and supporting every dimension of the research.

The authors would also like to extend their gratitude to the many people who contributed in numerous ways to the study, including research support, provision of documents and materials and revisions of earlier drafts. Particular thanks to Yakob Aklilu and Andy Catley (Tufts University), Ingo Wiederhofer (World Bank), Mathewos Hunde and Dagninet Yimenu (Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development), Mesfin Arega (PCDP), Getachew Gebru (ILRI), Beruk Yemane (Oxfam), SeonYeon Im (WFP), Jane Mcaskill (FEG), Seydou Dia (UNICEF), John Graham (USAID) and Lammert Zwaagstra (ECHO). We are particularly grateful to the people of Afar and Somali regions as well as those of Borena Zone in Oromiya region for participating in this study by providing local knowledge and experience of the drought. Key informants in Addis Ababa, Afar and Somali regions and Borena zone gave generously of their time to be interviewed, for which the authors are most grateful.

Finally, the authors wish to thank CARE, FAO Ethiopia, Save the Children UK and Save the Children US for providing financial support to the study. Save the Children US deserves particular gratitude for the logistical support provided to the study team.

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# Acronyms

<b>ACDI-VOCA</b>	Agricultural Cooperative Development International/Volunteers in Overseas Cooperative Assistance
<b>APDA</b>	Afar Pastoral Development Association
<b>BRP</b>	Business Reengineering Process
<b>CAHW</b>	Community Animal Health Worker
<b>CAMELIS</b>	Capacity Added by Mending Early-warning and Livelihood Information Systems in pastoral areas
<b>CARE</b>	Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere
<b>CBO</b>	Community Based Organisation
<b>CERF</b>	Central Emergency Response Fund
<b>CRS</b>	Catholic Relief Services <sup>16</sup>
<b>DAG</b>	Development Assistance Group
<b>DCM</b>	Drought Cycle Management
<b>DFID</b>	Department for International Development
<b>DoFLM</b>	Department of Fisheries and Livestock Marketing
<b>DPPA</b>	Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Agency
<b>DPPB</b>	Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Bureau
<b>DPPC</b>	Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Commission
<b>DRR</b>	Disaster Risk Reduction
<b>EB</b>	Ethiopian Birr
<b>EWS</b>	Early Warning System
<b>EFSR</b>	Emergency Food Security Reserve
<b>EPDaGoN</b>	Ethiopia Pastoral Development and Governance Network
<b>EWD</b>	Early Warning Department
<b>EWWG</b>	Early Warning Working Group
<b>FAO</b>	Food and Agriculture Organisation (UN)
<b>FIC</b>	Feinstein International Center (Tufts University)
<b>FSCB</b>	Food Security Coordination Bureau
<b>GHD</b>	Good Humanitarian Donorship
<b>GOE</b>	Government of Ethiopia
<b>HEA</b>	Household Economy Approach
<b>HRF</b>	Humanitarian Response Fund
<b>ICRC</b>	International Committee of the Red Cross
<b>IFAD</b>	International Fund for Agricultural Development
<b>IIED</b>	International Institute for Environment and Development
<b>IIR</b>	International Institute of Rural Reconstruction
<b>ILRI</b>	International Livestock Research Institute
<b>INGO</b>	International Non-Governmental Organisations
<b>JHA</b>	Joint Humanitarian Appeal
<b>KFSSG</b>	Kenya Food Security Steering Group
<b>LCPI</b>	Livelihood Protection Cost Index
<b>LEGS</b>	Livestock Emergency Guidelines and Standards
<b>LEWS</b>	Livestock Early Warning System
<b>LIU</b>	Livelihoods Integration Unit
<b>LPF</b>	Livestock Policy Forum
<b>LRRD</b>	Linking Relief, Rehabilitation and Development
<b>MDG</b>	Millennium Development Goal
<b>MoARD</b>	Ministry of Agriculture & Rural Development
<b>NDPPC</b>	National Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Committee
<b>NDPPF</b>	National Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Fund
<b>NFI</b>	Non-food Items

<b>NPDPM</b>	National Policy on Disaster Prevention and Management
<b>OCHA</b>	Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance
<b>OFDA</b>	Office for Foreign Disaster Assistance
<b>OPADC</b>	Oromia Pastoral Area Development Commission
<b>PARIMA</b>	Pastoralist Risk Management Programme
<b>PASDEP</b>	Plan for Accelerated and Sustained Development to End Poverty
<b>PCDP</b>	Pastoralist Community Development Project (World Bank)
<b>PCI</b>	Pastoralist Communication Initiative
<b>PLI</b>	Pastoralist Livelihoods Initiative
<b>PSNP</b>	Productive Safety Net Programme
<b>RED/FS</b>	Rural Economic Development and Food Security
<b>RTE</b>	Real Time Evaluation
<b>SC-US</b>	Save the Children – United States
<b>SC-UK</b>	Save the Children – United Kingdom
<b>SNNPR</b>	Southern Nations, Nationalities and People’s Region
<b>SDPRP</b>	Sustainable Development and Poverty Reduction Programme
<b>TWG</b>	Thematic Working Group
<b>UNCT</b>	United Nations Country Team
<b>UNICEF</b>	UN Fund for Children
<b>WFP</b>	World Food Programme

### ***Glossary of Local Terms***

<i>Belg</i>	short rainy season, eastern highlands (March to April)
<i>Meher</i>	main cropping season following the <i>kremt</i> long rainy season, central highlands (Jun to Oct)
<i>Guu</i>	light rainy season in Somali Region (April to June)
<i>Deyr</i>	heavy rainy season in Somali Region (October to December)
<i>Ganna</i>	long rainy season in Borena zone of Oromiya Region (February to April)
<i>Hagaya</i>	short rainy season in Borena zone of Oromiya Region (August to October)

## Introduction and methodology

This study was commissioned by CARE International, the Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO), Save the Children UK, Save the Children US and, hereafter referred to as the Core Group. The overall purpose of the study was to provide an overview of the timing, appropriateness and efficacy of interventions in the drought that affected the pastoral lowlands of Ethiopia in 2005/2006. The study also sought to identify mechanisms to initiate more timely and appropriate interventions to protect and support pastoral livelihoods. The study has identified mechanisms, systems, capacities and institutions which need to be strengthened in order to trigger more timely and appropriate livelihood-based responses to drought. The study also explored donor interest in resourcing these changes.

The study worked with communities, NGOs, UN agencies, the government, donors, the private sector and specialised projects such as the Pastoral Community Development Project (PCDP) and the Pastoralist Communication Initiative (PCI). The consultancy team held several meetings with the Core Group. Fieldwork was conducted in selected drought-affected areas of Afar, Oromiya and Somali regions: Yabello, Arero and Mega (Borena zone, Oromiya Region), Moyale (Oromiya Region), Moyale and Hudet (Somali Region) and Chiffra *woreda* (Afar Region). The study combined participatory approaches with conventional sampling methods. Statistical exercises were not the focus of the study; instead, participatory results from different tools were used to cross-check secondary data. Due to time constraints, secondary data on the drought in

the SNNPRS region was used. Semi-structured interviews were carried out to cross-check and probe responses.

A comprehensive literature review was also undertaken on drought management in Ethiopia and in the region, including the impact assessments carried out following the 2005/2006 drought. Considerable work is ongoing in terms of integrating livelihoods knowledge into drought management. The study reviews this work with a view to collating available information on drought cycle management. It is hoped that this report will not only contribute to the institutional memory of the 2005/2006 drought response in Ethiopia's pastoral areas, but will also be used by key stakeholders interested in supporting pastoral livelihoods in the Greater Horn of Africa region.

The report is organised into six chapters. The first chapter provides an overview of the study and the purpose of the report, and summarises the different livelihood systems in the pastoral areas of Ethiopia. Chapter 2 looks at the interventions implemented during the drought, examining their timeliness, appropriateness and efficacy in protecting livelihoods. Chapter 3 looks at the current drought response system in Ethiopia's pastoralist areas, including early warning mechanisms and contingency planning. Chapter 4 discusses the key issues that need to be addressed in strengthening the response system currently in place. Chapter 5 examines the policy environment, while chapter 6 presents the study's conclusions and recommendations.

# 1. Pastoralism, vulnerability and drought

## 1.1 Livelihood systems in pastoral areas

Pastoralists in Ethiopia are mainly found in four lowland regions, Afar, Oromiya, Somali and the Southern Nations, Nationalities and People's (SNNP) regional states. Pastoral groups are also found in Gambella and Benishangul areas. The main livelihoods systems include pastoralism, farming and ex-pastoralism – those who have dropped out of pastoralism and now survive on petty income-earning activities (Behnke *et al.*, 2007). Pastoralists constitute a minority in Ethiopia, with an estimated 12–15 million of Ethiopia's 77 million people (PFE, 2006). Livestock in pastoral regions accounts for an estimated 40% or so of the country's total livestock population. Table 1 gives the location and probable size of pastoral populations in 1994, the date of the last census.

**Table 1: Regional breakdown of pastoral populations**

Region	Number of pastoralists ('000s of persons)	Proportion of total
Afar	992	29%
Beni Shangul	19	less than 1%
Gambella	37	1%
Oromiya	339	10%
Somali	1,814	53%
SNNPR	223	7%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3,424</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Sandford and Habtu, 2000.

The pastoral population occupies a disproportionately large area of Ethiopia and produces much more than its share of national livestock output. According to the FAO, pasture constitutes 63% of Ethiopia's agricultural land area. The Ministry of Agriculture estimates that pastoralists use 60% of the country's land area (MoARD, 2005), and own 73% of its goats, 25% of its sheep, 20% of its cattle and all of its camels. Precise livestock population figures are unknown since there has been no stock census for three decades. However, estimates put livestock figures in pastoral areas as follows (Aklilu, 2002):

**Table 2: Estimated numbers of livestock in pastoral areas of Ethiopia (1999)<sup>1</sup>**

Livestock	Number
Sheep	12,424,204
Goats	8,061,072
Cattle	9,291,181
Horses	1,580,000
Camels	2,400,000
Asses	3,890,000

Livestock and livestock products provide about 10% of Ethiopia's foreign exchange earnings, with hides and skins constituting about 90% of this. Markets are becoming increasingly pivotal for pastoral household food security. In the severe and widespread drought of 2000, outside observers concluded that, except in extreme pockets of isolation or insecurity, there was no significant problem of food availability, and 'if satisfactory ways could be found of increasing pastoralists' cash income, there would be no separate food crisis' (Sandford and Habtu, 2000).

### 1.1.1 Livelihoods in Oromiya Region

Oromiya Regional State, with a population of over 25 million, is one of Ethiopia's nine regional states. It has 14 zones, 200 *woredas* and 375 urban centres. Agriculture is the basis of livelihood for the majority of the population in the region, and accounts for two-thirds of the total regional GDP; industrial activities contribute less than 10%.

The region is also well-endowed with livestock resources, although quality and productivity is very low. Traditional range management practices have deteriorated, and indiscriminate water development has led to the degradation of some wet season grazing areas. Bush encroachment is also a serious problem. Grazing land has been taken away from pastoralists for other purposes, such as farming and settlement along pastoralist migratory routes.

<sup>1</sup> FAO estimates a 1.1% growth rate for cattle and 0.2% growth for small ruminants. Off-take for cattle is estimated at 8%, while that for sheep and goats is put at an average 37% per annum.





### 1.1.2 Livelihoods in Somali Region

Somali Region is the largest of Ethiopia's pastoral regions, with a population of about four million people (Devereux, 2006). Most are pastoralists, though there are some agro-pastoralists and pure farmers, and about 14% are urbanised. Livelihoods are complex. Save the Children UK (SC-UK, 2005) and the Regional Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Bureau (DPPB) divide the region into 17 'food economy zones'. Of these, eight are categorised as 'pastoralist', six are 'agro-pastoralist' and three are 'agricultural' food economy zones.

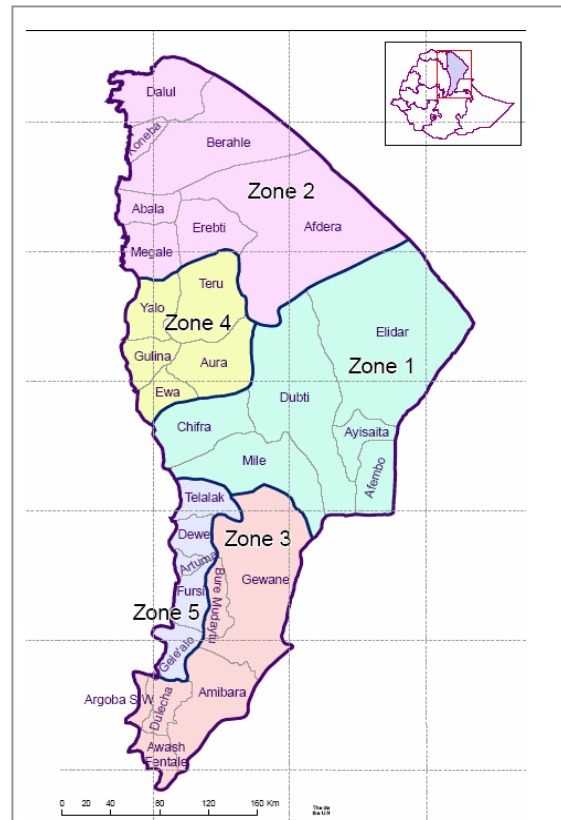
Household income surveys have shown that Somali Region is the wealthiest of all Ethiopia's rural regions, with the lowest poverty headcount – 38% in 1999/2000, lower than the national rate of 44% (Devereux, *ibid.*). This relative wealth derives from the region's high levels of livestock product exports and imports of consumer goods for resale. The economy is more closely integrated with the Gulf states than other parts of Ethiopia, including Addis Ababa. However, the updated livelihoods profile undertaken by DPPB and SC-UK shows that about 5% of 'middle wealth groups' have shifted to 'poor wealth groups'.

Livestock-dominated livelihoods and dependence on cross-border trade are sources of wealth, but also of vulnerability. Over the last decade, Somali traders and pastoralists have faced a succession of livelihoods shocks, including three severe droughts, two bans on Somali livestock imports by Saudi Arabia (following outbreaks of Rift Valley fever in the Horn of Africa), a ban on 'contraband trade' imposed by the government of Ethiopia and bans on the use of Somali currencies inside Ethiopia (Devereux, *ibid.*).

### 1.1.3 Livelihoods in Afar Region

Afar Region, with a population of about 1.3 million, is a lowland area in north-eastern Ethiopia. It has international boundaries with Eritrea to the north and Djibouti to the east. Within Ethiopia, it has boundaries with Tigray and Amhara regions to the west and with Oromiya and Somali regions to the south-east. Of the total population, 80% are classified as pastoralists. Livestock holdings declined markedly (by up to 50% in some *woredas*, according to some observers) during the recent drought. There are indications that long-term livestock population trends may be declining, while the human population is rising.

Map 3: Map of Afar Region



Most land is used for pastoral purposes, although much of the land in the Awash valley in the riverine zone has been turned over to large irrigated farms. Land alienation continues, with 150,000 hectares reserved for irrigation schemes. The damage these losses have caused to pastoral livelihoods has been compounded by the spread of *Prosopis* spp., commonly known as mesquite, from the farms into the surrounding rangelands. This plant, originally introduced to stabilise the banks of irrigation channels, now infests about 700,000 hectares (Behnke *et al.*, 2007).

### 1.2 Pastoralists' risk

Pastoralism is uniquely well adapted to dryland environments. As an economic and social system, it operates effectively in low and highly variable rainfall conditions. However, in Ethiopia pastoralist livelihoods systems are becoming increasingly vulnerable. Human populations are rising, the climate is changing and international markets are setting ever-higher barriers for access. Infrastructure is poorly developed, education and literacy levels remain very low and competition for scarce resources is increasing.

According to discussions the study team held with pastoralists during field visits to Oromiya, Afar and parts of Somali Region in April and June 2007, it is apparent that the risks populations in pastoral areas face are characterised by one or more of the following:

1. Loss of productive assets (livestock/farming/irrigated land) due to drought, floods, disease and livestock theft.
2. Declining sustainability as livestock holdings decrease and the human population grows.
3. Declining livestock and agricultural productivity due to poor husbandry practices and technologies.
4. Environmental degradation and deterioration of natural resources to the point that production may decline below recovery levels.
5. Breakdown of traditional institutions and social relations.
6. Inability to access markets and achieve maximum prices for livestock products.
7. Low socio-economic empowerment of women and youth.
8. Geographical isolation in terms of infrastructure, communications and basic services.
9. Increasing impoverishment of communities and households.

These findings are supported by the pilot pastoral PSNP reports prepared in early 2007 (Behnke *et al.*, March 2007). From these field visits, it was apparent that the vast majority of respondents felt that their production system was under increasing strain. Work by the Pastoralist Risk Management Programme (PARIMA, 2004) in southern Ethiopia showed that 91% of 600 households studied indicated that traditional pastoralism could no longer support their communities.

### 1.3 Risk management strategies

It is important to understand how pastoralist communities manage the risks they face. The strategies presented below are not exhaustive, and have been generalised across the regions studied.

#### *Diversification of livelihood strategies*

The field visits showed that there is a strong desire among lowland populations to diversify into non-pastoral economic activities, although there are differences according to economic status. The poor felt that they had insufficient livestock assets to

diversify, while the middle class and the wealthy felt that their main constraint was lack of information on available options. Research conducted by PARIMA<sup>2</sup> (2004) shows that few households have business interests in towns. Markets were only important for selling livestock or purchasing food and other essential items. Most of the major forms of diversification focused on cultivation and petty trade.

#### *Use of informal transfers*

Complex social networks reinforce clan solidarity and provide a social safety net that offers some protection against risks. Informal transfers include the redistribution of food and cash, mainly through remittances or 'soft' loans and the redistribution of productive resources such as livestock and sorghum seeds. Systems are developed in a participatory manner involving all community or clan members and are highly respected and adhered to by all. The enforcement of these distribution mechanisms is generally strict and impartial.

#### *Children's education*

In all the communities visited, families sought to put at least one child through school in an effort to spread risk. Supporting children's education is seen as an investment which presupposes that an educated son or daughter will in the future be able to find paid employment and support the family with resources not dependent on rainfall and other unpredictable factors.

#### *Improving the availability of basic services and resources*

Most communities have a strong desire for knowledge and skills to improve production and productivity, such as training community animal health workers and acquiring new technologies for irrigated agriculture or new methods to control bush encroachment.

#### *Employing coping strategies*

Mobility is a primary way of managing livestock-related risks. Communities also adjust the composition of their herds to the external environment. For example, communities in Oromiya have always been predominantly cattle owners. But there is evidence that camels, which are more drought-tolerant, are increasing in number. Herd

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<sup>2</sup> PARIMA's research focused on Borena zone.

diversification also enables pastoralists to minimise losses from disease. Other coping strategies include reducing the amount of food consumed during drought periods, borrowing, eating wild foods, making market purchases and seeking support from relatives. Remittances from the diaspora play an important role during times of stress in Somali Region.

#### *Managing gendered risks*

Issues of gender and age can influence risk exposure. Women and youth are often unduly exposed to risks and can be among the first casualties of shocks. Female-headed households are usually amongst the first to be forced to diversify their income-generating activities to survive. Under customary law, in many lowland populations it is the responsibility of the clan and the elders to ensure that vulnerable women and children are taken care of.

#### *Managing risks related to land tenure (use, access and property rights)*

A body of customary rules determines access to and use of natural resources in pastoral areas. Currently, much of Ethiopia's rangelands are governed by common property regimes, but growing competition in land use is forcing traditional natural resource management institutions to rethink land ownership patterns in an effort to minimise risks.

### **1.4 Underlying causes of vulnerability in pastoral areas**

The loss of productive assets and increasing household food insecurity due to drought have become defining features of lowland poverty in Ethiopia. While chronic and acute vulnerability to food insecurity may be caused by factors such as land degradation, recurrent drought, population pressure and low agricultural productivity, there is growing evidence that the impacts of these problems on food security are underpinned by

economic, social and political factors of vulnerability (CARE, 2003).

The ability of pastoralists to market their livestock products in a timely fashion and at a fair price is essential to improve risk management at the household level; it fosters monetisation, savings and investment, and lessens the threat of environmental degradation through overgrazing. One key element of marketing is price risk. If prices are relatively stable, lucrative and predictable over space and time, planning horizons for producers and traders are improved and marketing efficiency can be enhanced. If, however, prices are relatively volatile, low and unpredictable, this provides disincentives for producers and traders and market dysfunction can occur. There is compelling evidence that pastoralists are becoming increasingly dependent on markets for livestock and cereal/grain products, especially during droughts. Overwhelmingly, populations in pastoral areas want to improve their access to markets through construction of access roads, provision of water along stock routes and improved security along market routes. Pastoralists are keen to see more markets open, a reduction in price fluctuations and the removal of barriers to access.

Social factors, including the way households and communities deal with poverty and food insecurity, are closely related to vulnerability, but may not be as well understood as environmental and economic factors. Vulnerability can also be politically determined, as populations are marginalised and have no access to basic services, knowledge and infrastructure to enable them to exercise command over basic necessities and rights. The failure to protect land rights is a case in point.

Unless underlying causes of vulnerability are understood and addressed, the resilience of pastoralist communities to drought in Ethiopia will continue to decline, and crises such as the one in 2005/2006 will become more common.

## 2. The response to the 2005/2006 drought

### 2.1 Introduction

Drought response in Ethiopia is regulated by the government's 1993 National Policy for Disaster Prevention, Preparedness and Management (Government of Ethiopia, 1993). According to this policy, each *woreda* is tasked with preparing drought contingency plans. In 'normal' times, the focus is on investing in structural development and building local resilience (Hogg, 1997). This entails investment in fodder production, pasture development, water supplies, veterinary care, markets and mobile abattoirs. In theory, the

policy provides a strong basis for effective drought management. In practice, however, progress has been slow in many pastoral *woredas*. NGOs such as Save the Children UK and CARE in Somali and Afar regions, and Save the Children US and CARE in Somali and Oromiya regions, have supported the development of early warning systems and some drought contingency planning, but this has not been coordinated. Development and disaster response mechanisms in many *woredas* are still weak, and investment in development and disaster management is minimal.

**Table 3: External interventions in response to the 2005/2006 drought**

Type of intervention	Agency/institution	Location	Drought phase <sup>3</sup>	Comments
Food aid	WFP/GoE/ SC-US	Borena Zone (Oromiya), Liban Zone (Somali), South Omo (SNNP)	Emergency	Food aid distributed after the government declared an emergency
Drilling of boreholes Rehabilitation of water sources	CRS, CARE, LVIA, SC-US and others	Fentale (Oromiya) and Shinille Zone (Somali) In operational areas	Emergency	
Water trucking	CARE, SCUK	Borena Zone (Oromiya), Fik and Shinille Zones (Somali)	Alarm/ Emergency	Started in August 2005 in some locations
Livestock vaccinations and treatment	CARE, FAO, FARM AFRICA, SC-UK, SC-US	Southern Ethiopia (Oromiya, SNNP, Somali)	Emergency	FAO experienced delays in accessing funds to purchase drugs
Distribution of seeds and tools	FAO	Southern Ethiopia (Oromiya, Somali, SNNP)	Emergency/ Recovery	Poorly timed intervention
Commercial de-stocking	SC-US and MoARD	Liban Zone (Somali) and Borena Zone (Oromiya)	Emergency	Private traders were supported to purchase livestock from pastoralists
Slaughter de-stocking	CARE	Borena Zone (Oromiya)	Emergency	
Supplementary feeding of vulnerable groups	AFD, CARE, SC-US, UNICEF	As above	Emergency	Limited geographical coverage
Supplementary feeding of livestock in feeding camps	CARE, Mercy Corps, SC-US, VOCA,	Liban Zone (Somali) and Borena Zone (Oromiya)	Emergency	Hay was costly because it had to be transported from as far as the Ethiopian highlands
Supplementary feeding of livestock with concentrate feeds	APDA; FARM AFRICA	Zones 2, 3 and 4 (Afar)	Alarm/ Emergency	Concentrate feeds were transported from Addis Ababa

<sup>3</sup> These phases refer to the Drought Cycle Management model, which is presented in section 3.1.

## 2.2 Overview of the drought response

In 2005-2006 drought affected an estimated 1.7 million pastoralists and agro-pastoralists in southeastern Ethiopia (OCHA, 2006). The worst-affected areas in pastoral regions were Afder and Liben zones and parts of Gode zone in Somali Region and southeastern parts of Oromiya Region (OCHA, 2006). Emergency levels were reached in many *woredas* in these areas. During the study it became apparent that many felt that the scope of the crisis had been in some cases exaggerated, particularly in Somali Region where the government sought to make capital by spreading the response throughout the entire region. Findings from the fieldwork for this study suggest that the drought response in most pastoral areas was largely late and less effective than it might have been. The default emergency intervention was food relief, and livelihoods protection and emergency livelihoods interventions were limited. A summary of the main interventions implemented in Oromiya, parts of Somali and Afar regions is presented in Table 3.

As the table shows, the interventions implemented were both life-saving and livelihoods-support based, but life-saving interventions were significantly larger in scale and budget. Data from the Joint Humanitarian Appeal 2006 show that in response to the drought the Ethiopian Government, United Nations and humanitarian partners appealed for US\$166 million in emergency assistance. Because of a significant carry over of food pledges and stock from 2005 (amounting to 240,000 metric tons) and the implementation of the PSNP, the majority of funds (72% or \$111 million) were requested for lifesaving non-food interventions in health and nutrition, water and sanitation, and agriculture. However, overall allocations for food aid largely exceeded those of any other sector (Grunewald *et al*, 2006).

### 2.2.1 Timeliness

Overall, the drought response, particularly interventions aimed at saving livelihoods, arrived late. The first signs of a drought emergency appeared as early as July 2005 in parts of Borena zone, yet substantial interventions did not start until February 2006. Table 4 sets out the timing of interventions and action by CARE in Borena zone.

Analysis by the Overseas Development Institute shows that early warning signals were not in

**Table 4: Timeline of action in response to the drought in Borena and Leban zones (CARE)**

Timeframe	Activity
Week 1	CARE monthly drought monitoring report triggers the convening of the Emergency Coordination Meeting
Week 2	A rapid assessment is undertaken, led by government zonal authorities
Week 3	Assessment report discussed at the Emergency Coordination Meeting
Week 4	Report forwarded to Oromiya Regional Government for discussion
Week 5	Oromiya regional government discusses report and forwards to the federal government
Weeks 1–5	CARE and others undertake a nutritional survey in affected areas
Week 6	CARE presents the nutritional survey report to the Emergency Coordination Meeting. Federal and the regional authorities hold consultations with the zonal team
Week 7	The federal and regional governments assemble an assessment team to visit the field. This assessment team is joined by the zonal team
Week 8	The Federal and Regional Assessment teams provides feedback to the Zonal Coordination Meeting
Week 9	Assessment report submitted to the federal government and discussed
Week 10	The federal government issues an appeal and allows response by zonal, regional and federal agencies. CARE had begun water trucking for domestic use before the government appeal and declaration of emergency. <i>Woreda</i> officials were also undertaking water trucking. Under normal circumstances, NGOs must wait for a federal declaration and appeal before they can intervene.

question in most countries in the Horn of Africa during the 2005/2006 crisis (ODI, 2006). Why then was the response in Ethiopia so tardy? Institutional inertia and rigidity were seen as a major constraint to prompt action. Procurement procedures in most agencies were not responsive and flexible enough,

and coordination was poor, particularly amongst NGOs (with the possible exception of coordination meetings in Borena zone). Agencies in Borena stated that too many NGOs were trying to do the same things in the same locations (see section 4.4).

### **2.2.2 Appropriateness**

It is widely accepted that inadequate attention was given during the 2005/2006 drought to protecting and strengthening livelihoods. The main problem appears to be the lack of systematic application of best practice and the absence of effective policy, institutional and legislative mechanisms to support timely livelihood support interventions.

A number of organisations, mainly NGOs, did however undertake livelihoods interventions in response to the crisis. These included commercial de-stocking, slaughter de-stocking, supplementary feeding of livestock, livestock treatment and vaccination, supplementary feeding of vulnerable groups, food aid distribution, human health interventions, water supply, market-support and after the drought livestock re-distribution through restocking.

The activities introduced by PLI partners including ACDI-VOCA, CARE, Save the Children UK and Save the Children US, Tufts University, such as commercial and slaughter destocking, were perceived by the pastoralists interviewed during the study as amongst the most innovative and beneficial interventions. The PLI is a two year programme with a focus on pastoralist areas of Ethiopia. It combined field level implementation and learning with the development of national guidelines for livelihoods-based livestock relief interventions with the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development. The initiative, the design phase for which took place prior to the drought, was funded in October 2005 by USAID as a drought mitigation and preparedness programme. These funds, together with FAO monies from the Government of Belgium, provided an opportunity to test livelihoods-based relief interventions in pastoralist areas, including: emergency animal health (both vaccination and treatment); commercial and slaughter de-stocking; supplementary feeding (of breeding stock); and, with the return of the rains, restocking as a means to accelerate the drought

### **Box 1 Afar Pastoral Development Association's supplementary feeding of livestock in 2005-06**

During the 2005-6 drought the Afar Pastoral Development Association (APDA) undertook a supplementary feeding programme for livestock. Cattle were the preferred species and two breeding animals were selected from each vulnerable household and were fed on concentrate feeds acquired from factories in Addis Ababa. A total of 800 households benefited from this intervention which took two months before the rains came. Each animal was given 1.5 kg of concentrates every day for two months. De-worming and other veterinary treatment were carried out alongside feeding and water trucking implemented to provide adequate water for livestock. The total cost of this intervention came to about Ethiopian Birr (EB) 800,000 (USD 89,500). To restock 800 households with two cows each, it would cost nearly EB 4.2 million (USD 470,083). It is much more economical to protect the current assets of pastoralists.

In 2006, APDA again provided concentrate feeding to 2,300 households from vulnerable families. Each family identified 10 breeding goats. The families who benefited came from kebeles that were hard hit by the drought. Four such kebeles were selected. The severity of the drought was determined by the Afar people's 'Daagu' system of sharing information. The system is one of passing information from one person to another. If complemented by the EWS, this would form a very good drought monitoring system. Each goat was de-wormed and covered with antibiotics to prevent opportunistic infections. Water was provided and each goat given 80 grams of concentrates. The breeding animals remained in the homestead where children were. After five days of feeding, the milk from the goats rose from 0.25 liters to 0.5 liters per day and this provided great nutrition for young children and the elderly from those families. There was no need for supplementary feeding of the children from UNICEF or any other agency. The concentrates were not free. APDA started an 'Animal Feeds for Work' programme. Households constructed four water pans with tools and implements provided by APDA. Pasture and browse sprouted in some of the water harvesting structures constructed. Whenever milk was in excess in a particular home, they made butter, which sold at EB 70 (USD 7.8) per kg in Semera. Butter making started after two months of supplementary feeding. The total cost of this intervention was approximately EB 500,000 (USD 55,962). The communities have not forgotten these interventions and they really value this form of assistance. The cattle feeding intervention was in zone 4 while the goat intervention was in zone 1 near the Eritrean border, where goats are dominant. APDA works in 17 woredas in the region.

## Box 2 Lessons from the commercial destocking programme in Moyale Woreda

During the 2005-6 drought in Moyale Woreda of Oromiya Region, Save the Children/US supported a commercial de-stocking programme within the Pastoralist Livelihood Initiative (PLI). This was aimed at removing animals from communities during the drought before they died or body deterioration made them worthless. The underlying assumption was that this initiative would remove droughted animals and help ensure that pastoralists got some money for their animals instead of another dead carcass best safety net for pastoralists lies in protecting those resources such as livestock which support their livelihoods. Private traders were introduced with the support of the Department of Fisheries and Livestock Marketing, MoARD, and SC/US to communities wanting to sell their livestock. The traders mainly used their own money. Some key lessons were drawn from the experience (Abebe et al., forthcoming):

- A total of 54% of household income came from sale of livestock. Although the purchase of food accounted for the highest single proportion of expenditure (28%), pastoralists also heavily invested in safeguarding their remaining livestock (37%), feed (19%) trucking of livestock to other sites (12%) and veterinary care (12%).
- A total of 79% of cash from sale of livestock was used in purchases for household use and for livestock. People were also able to pay school fees, pay off-debts, support relatives and save. This means the intervention strengthened the purchasing power of households.
- Commercial de-stocking was the third most preferred intervention in terms of overall performance in protecting and building up pastoral assets (particularly livestock).
- There was varied participation of the different stakeholders in the planning and implementation of the intervention; sometimes traders did not appear in designated areas, often because they could not access those areas due to poor roads infrastructure. Transport subsidies for traders were not tried because fuel was not easily available. In some cases destocking centres were too far from the livestock keepers while in others destocking started late. However, in view of the context, stakeholders are agreed that this intervention was appropriate.

recovery phase. PLI-interventions and response mechanisms were not only praised by pastoralists, but were seen as providing guidance and leadership by a number of agencies involved in planning and responding to the drought. The interventions, though delayed, form a major basis for scaling up future livelihood-based support in the pastoralist areas of Ethiopia.

In Borena zone, the de-stocking implemented by PLI was appropriate and resulted in 20,000 cattle being de-stocked. Oxfam also tried to support a local partner in de-stocking in Borena.

### 2.3 Pastoralist perceptions of the response

Although food aid was the dominant mode of response, the study found that food was never the top priority among pastoralist populations, albeit in the course of the drought the importance of food increased as prices began to rise. Participatory exercises with pastoralist communities in all the regions visited revealed that food aid was the least preferred intervention. In Mega *woreda*, for instance, pastoralists in a Focus Group Discussion observed:

*Food relief is the opium of pastoralists, given by the government and donor agencies to ensure that pastoralists do not think of alternative livelihoods and become dependent on food aid so that they can be easily controlled by the international community and the regional government. It is expensive and it does not help make pastoralists stronger in the long term.*

The group argued that cereal price stabilisation through cereal banks, even on a commercial basis, would have been a more cost-efficient intervention, and would have helped households protect their assets. Cereal banks were not in place during the 2005/2006 drought, apart from limited support by AFD to banks in Borena.

Pastoralist communities in Moyale, Mega and Arero *woredas* expressed appreciation for a number of livelihoods-based interventions, namely commercial destocking and supplementary feeding. Supplementary feeding of breeding small stock was ranked second after cereal banks for its potential to save livestock. Pastoralists in Walensit (Arero) expressed willingness to purchase concentrate



feeds at full cost if these were available. They also suggested that support could be provided to entrepreneurs to manufacture feed closer to pastoral areas, to reduce transaction costs. Pastoralists in Arero and Mega ranked commercial destocking as their third preferred intervention at the onset of a drought, though they stressed that it would only be valuable as long as remote areas were also reached, local traders participated and the intervention was correctly timed, with early and clear information and communication provided to pastoralist households. They also stressed the need for investment in access feeder roads.

Pastoralists also attached great importance to interventions aimed at enabling access to key pasture and water resources. In all the pastoral regions of Ethiopia, critical natural resources are located along or across international borders. Insecurity due to competition over these resources or raiding and counter-raiding is a severe problem among the tribes and clans living in these areas. Conflict in Oromiya Region has resulted in thousands of hectares remaining unutilised during drought. In field visits, pastoralists suggested that local NGOs working with traditional institutions could help free up access.

Interventions such as slaughter destocking, water trucking and the excavation of contingency boreholes in dry season grazing areas were also favourably received, though pastoralists were aware of the high costs associated with the latter two. Cash transfers were seen as less costly, but questions were raised about the sustainability, security and usefulness of cash in remote areas, where goods and services may not be readily available. There was little enthusiasm for livestock vaccination as most pastoralists believed that vaccinating animals during drought undermined their resilience.

In terms of what pastoralists themselves did during the drought, the study team was told that the main response strategy remained mobility, with pastoralists moving livestock to areas where the grazing was better and surface water was more widely available. In addition, Save the Children staff observed new drought responses, including pastoralists hiring trucks to transport their breeding animals out of drought-affected areas and the early cutting of irrigated maize to supplement livestock feed.<sup>4</sup>

## 2.4 Saving lives through livelihoods: quantifying the benefits of livelihood-support interventions

Much has been written about the need for urgent action early in a crisis to protect livelihoods (Aklilu and Wekesa, 2001; Lautze, 2003). Early interventions can mitigate the effects of drought on pastoralists, reducing the need for major life-saving emergency response. By helping to protect pastoralists' assets, it may also prevent further vulnerability in the livelihoods system. Lautze has argued that the 'saving of livelihoods needs to be recognised as being as important as saving human lives in emergencies' (*ibid.*: 31). As noted, whilst there is increasing recognition in government circles and within aid agencies and donors of the importance of early livelihoods interventions, particularly in pastoral areas, the system is still overwhelmingly geared towards post-disaster responses largely centred on food aid.

The costs associated with delayed interventions in pastoral areas have been quantified by the Pastoral Risk Management Project (PARIMA) of the Global Livestock Collaborative Research Support Programme, led by the University of California in collaboration with the International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI). Based on extensive research in the Borena plateau, PARIMA investigated the extent to which drought and high stocking rates have contributed to cattle mortality and estimated economic losses from cattle deaths. PARIMA observed longer periods of gradual herd growth interposed by sharp 'crashes' in 1983–85, 1991–92 and 1998–89, when between 37% and 62% of the cattle population perished (Desta, 2001). PARIMA argued that cattle losses were due to starvation, rather than to sales or slaughter. The monetary value of the losses during the 17 years under investigation was estimated at \$6,523 per household and \$893 per person. When extrapolated to the entire Borena plateau, PARIMA estimated that total losses may have exceeded \$300 million (Desta, *ibid.*). Such loss of capital could have been mitigated with interventions aimed at facilitating accelerated offtake at the onset of crash periods.

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<sup>4</sup> An SC/US survey of 60 households in Liban zone of Somali Region found that the average household spent \$460 on fodder during the 2005/2006 drought. The fodder was fed to lactating cattle and the milk consumed by family members and sold to finance the purchase of more fodder.

The value of early livelihoods interventions has also been documented by Tufts University in a study of livelihood-based drought interventions in Moyale and Dire *woredas* (Catley, 2006; Abebe *et al.*, forthcoming). In Moyale, for example, Save the Children US estimated that the commercial destocking intervention it had facilitated (see Box 2 above) had led to the purchase of an estimated 20,000 cattle by two private traders, valued at \$1.01 million. This translated into an average benefit of \$186 to the 5,400 or so households involved. In Dire, CARE estimated a benefit of \$23 per (slaughter) destocked household, with 1,121 households selling livestock during the programme. Dried meat produced from emaciated animals was distributed to 1,301 households. As discussed above, the positive impact of the destocking programmes, both commercial and slaughter, and other early livelihood interventions was underscored by pastoralist groups met during the fieldwork in Afar and Borena regions.

Catley, Aklilu and Admassu have carried out a preliminary cost–benefit analysis of the emergency destocking interventions undertaken in southern Ethiopia in March 2006 by PLI agencies (Catley, 2007). They note that, given the involvement of the private sector, commercial destocking was, at \$24,483, comparatively inexpensive for the main implementing agencies, Save the Children US and the Department of Fisheries and Livestock Marketing (DoFLM). This translated into a ratio of private versus agency investment of 15:1. In terms of aid

investment, Catley *et al.* (*ibid.*) estimated the benefit–cost ratio at 41:1 for this intervention, and observed that donors will often support development projects when the predicted benefit–cost ratio exceeds only 1:1. Aklilu (2006) estimates that, had the destocking been conducted in January 2006, when the terms of trade for cattle were still favourable, pastoralists could have received twice the amount for their cattle.

No specific comparison of the cost and socio-economic benefit of early livelihoods-based responses versus food interventions in Ethiopia’s pastoral areas has been carried out so far, although at the time of the fieldwork the Core Group had developed the ToRs for such a study. This type of comparison is complex and presents serious methodological challenges. The lack of so-called ‘hard evidence’ about the potential life-saving (as well as livelihoods-saving) impact of early livelihoods initiatives was mentioned by some donor representatives during the study as an obstacle to increased support. A carefully planned and rigorous cost–benefit analysis could therefore be a pivotal advocacy tool, hardening the evidence about the impact of these activities on pastoral lives and livelihoods and backing up pastoralists’ own views of their added value and impact. The analysis should include a detailed comparison between different interventions, such as hay transportation, commercial and slaughter destocking, vaccination and water tankering.

### 3. The current response system

#### 3.1 Drought Cycle Management

The concept of Drought Cycle Management (DCM) was developed in Kenya by Jeremy Swift in the mid-1980s under the EU-funded Turkana Rehabilitation Project. It was adapted by IIRR, Cordaid and Acacia Consultants in 2004, and is becoming increasingly accepted as the dominant drought management model in East Africa and the Horn. The concept was developed following the realisation that conventional responses to drought in the region dealt with development and disaster responses in the same pastoral areas as separate issues. Drought was seen in most cases as a major disaster event in need of ad hoc responses which would inevitably affect development activities and be implemented with costly delays (IIR *et al*, 2004). DCM was designed to identify appropriate activities for each of the four phases of the drought cycle: normal, alert, emergency and recovery.

Given the difficulty in strictly differentiating between the four phases, recent discussions of the DCM models emphasise the importance of flexibility in the selection of activities.

In Ethiopia, SC/US and other PLI partners have made the DCM model central to their work. Donors including ECHO and USAID recognise its value, and senior government officials are familiar with the concept. Behnke *et al.* (2007) recommend that DCM be made a complementary component of the pilot phase of the extension of the Productive Safety Nets Programme (PSNP) to pastoral areas, even though drought cycle management is not in the direct remit of the PSNP. In order to implement the model successfully, agencies need to better integrate development and emergency responses. Currently, however, there remains a rigid separation between the different elements of the system.



Effective drought cycle management calls for appropriate actions to prepare for drought, manage its impacts and assist affected households to recover. Ideally, the system should include the following (adapted from Behnke *et al.*, *ibid.*):

- strong institutional, management and coordination structures at all levels;
- effective early warning and information systems;
- drought contingency planning at all levels;
- easily accessible drought contingency funds at central, zonal and/or *woreda* level; and
- the capacity to implement timely drought response measures and to provide support to drought recovery interventions.

This chapter examines in detail the effectiveness of the current preparedness and response system in Ethiopia against the parameters listed above.

### 3.2 The institutional framework for drought management in Ethiopia

Ethiopia has invested heavily in improving its system of disaster preparedness. Lautze (2003) observes that there is an ‘impressive array’ of government institutions, policies and processes designed to identify, respond to and mitigate disasters. The Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Agency (DPPA) is responsible for overseeing disaster prevention and preparedness, including early warning, as well as managing disaster response. Since the creation of the Food Security Coordination Bureau (FSCB) in 2004, however, DPPA has been restricted to responding only to emergencies and to the acute needs of ‘the unpredictable food insecure’ (Grunewald *et al.*, 2006). The FSCB is charged with improving long-term food and livelihood insecurity of chronically insecure beneficiaries through the productive safety nets and other food security programmes. Accordingly, the DPPA has focused on needs assessments to determine both food and non-food responses to emergencies, reducing its focus on prevention and preparedness.

DPPA and FSCB offices are merged at regional level and in most *woredas*, but they are not integrated at the central level. Although they both report to the Deputy Prime Minister (who is also the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development), the two institutions do not work in close partnership. This makes coordination more difficult for NGOs and UN

agencies, and creates an artificial separation between *chronic* problems and *emergencies*. Some of the needs presented in the annual humanitarian appeal prepared by DPPA are actually chronic problems which might be better addressed through multi-year, multi-sectoral strategies based on development approaches and principles. Many of these chronic vulnerabilities are the result of inadequate attention to specific post-crisis recovery needs, including asset replenishment and the promotion of alternative livelihoods (Devereux, 2006).

Senior government officials who were interviewed by the authors articulated the difficulties between DPPA and FSCB, and some hoped that these problems would be addressed through the Business Reengineering Process (BRP) in which the government is currently engaged. The BRP is intended to restructure the current system of disaster prevention, preparedness and response and streamline responsibilities and mandates between specific agencies, bureaus and line ministries. The BRP Design Team explained that it planned to model the new system on the Disaster Management Cycle, shifting the emphasis from crisis management to Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), including strengthening the capacity to implement early livelihoods interventions. Although it is not clear whether this process will entail a merging of DPPA and FSCB, most senior officials recognise that Ethiopia needs a more integrated disaster management capacity. The BRP Design Team emphasised that an important part of the process is redesigning the Early Warning and Preparedness system to strengthen its capacity to trigger early livelihoods responses in droughts, particularly in pastoral areas.

### 3.3 The Drought Early Warning System

The Early Warning Department (EWD) in DPPA is responsible at the national level for early warning activities. It is supported by the Early Warning Working Group (EWWG), with members from line ministries, UN agencies and NGOs. Sandford (2002) records 33 different early warning and food security surveillance systems in Ethiopia, and the picture is little different today, with a proliferation of systems using different assessment mechanisms and methodologies. Box 3 lists the main types of trigger mechanisms identified during the study. Lautze (2003) observes that most EW systems are failing to

### Box 3: Different drought response trigger mechanisms

Biannual multi-agency assessments: The government carries out two multi-agency, multi-sectoral assessments each year to guide it in declaring an emergency and making an international appeal.

The rainfall/stocking ratio mechanism: This trigger mechanism is specific to the Borena plateau, where PARIMA and ILRI have found a strong correlation between rainfall and stocking rates of cattle.

The EWS trigger mechanism: Run by the DPPA, with SC-UK support.

EWS run by NGOs: CARE and other NGOs run localised drought early warning systems.

Community's own traditional early warning system: Based on experience and observation of seasonal rainfall levels, bird behaviour and the condition of pasture, water and livestock, pastoralists are able to detect risk.

Nutritional assessments: Nutritional assessments measure the nutritional status of vulnerable groups, particularly under-fives. Malnutrition rates determine whether further action is necessary.

Agency staff on the ground: Agency staff usually monitor the situation and carry out situational analysis of drought status, enabling agencies to start discussing a changing situation and take action. CRS staff working in Borena undertook water provision interventions on the basis of staff observation, making this a form of trigger mechanism for response.

Declaration of emergency by the federal government: An emergency and appeal for international support is issued; usually this is done after extensive consultations and field-based assessments, and may at times be politicised. It typically takes between eight and 12 weeks after the onset of an emergency for a declaration to be issued.

generate a 'meta-analysis' out of the copious volume of data being generated. The BRP aims to harmonise and streamline the different methodologies and align them to the system currently being piloted by the EWD, with the support of a number of external actors.

The DPPA early warning and surveillance system is based on regular monthly monitoring of key

indicators at *woreda* level. These feed into bi-annual joint assessments with relevant line ministries and humanitarian agencies following the *meher* and *belg* rains (*deyr* and *guu* rains in Somali Region and *ganna* and *hagaya* rains in Borena zone). There are also ad hoc assessments following the onset of a crisis. The monthly monitoring is conducted by local government officials against a set of indicators, including food production, prices, human and animal health and the onset and distribution of rains. There is however a lack of trust in this information at the federal level, as it is felt that *woreda* officials tend to exaggerate needs in order to receive more relief resources, very largely food. The seasonal assessments are said to involve protracted negotiations between assessment teams and *woreda* officials to agree beneficiary numbers, despite a centrally agreed methodology to conduct the assessments (Sandford, quoted in Haan *et al.*, 2006; interviews at DPPA, June 2007). The lack of confidence in grassroots data collection results in additional seasonal assessment exercises for verification purposes (Grunewald *et al.*, 2006). In the presence of an impending emergency, the need to repeat the assessments prevents timely responses. This was the case in the 2005/2006 drought. The timeline presented in Figure 1 outlines the delays in the response to the crisis.

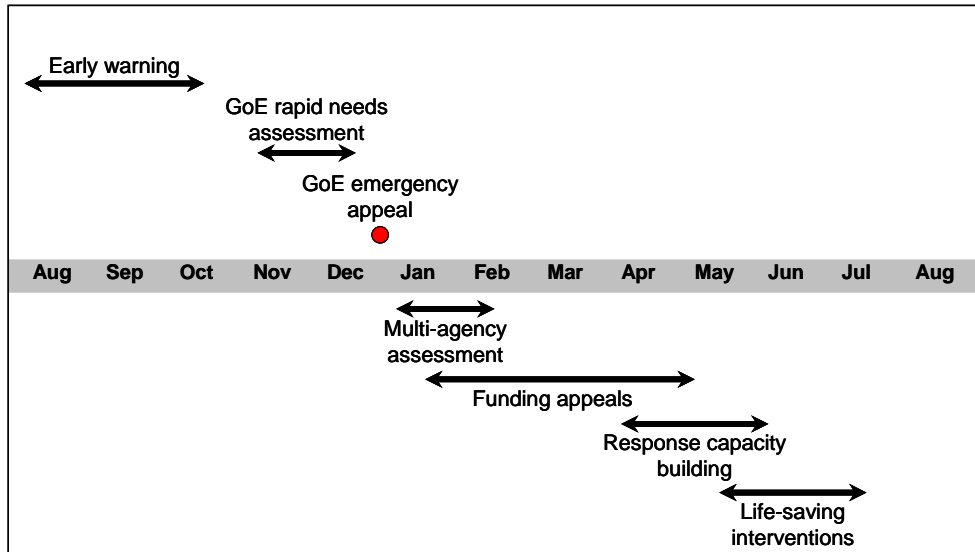
The limitations of the official early warning and assessment system include:

- sampling bias and geographic coverage;
- inadequate baseline information;
- overemphasis on cereal production;
- imbalance between quantitative and qualitative information;
- delays in the conversion of data into beneficiary numbers and food aid needs; and
- lack of distinction between chronic and transitory food insecurity (Haan *et al.*, 2006).

Modelled as it is on highland agricultural areas, the system is ill-suited to pastoral areas.

Various organisations, including Save the Children UK, are involved in strengthening the early warning system and response components at the federal, regional and zonal levels. Meanwhile, DPPA is reviewing the system with a view to developing livelihoods baseline information disaggregated at zonal level. The new system is based on the

Figure 1: Timeline of the response to the 2005-06 drought in Ethiopia



Adapted from ODI, 2006.

Household Economy Approach (HEA) developed by SC-UK, which is set to become the official food security assessment methodology. HEA is currently used in the SNNPR Region, where baselines have been completed for all 40 livelihoods zones and 100 *woredas*. This work is supported by USAID, which has funded the establishment of the Livelihoods Integration Unit (LIU) within DPPA and the PLI-EW project, implemented by SC-UK in pastoral areas. The LIU has conducted training for DPPA and local *woreda* officials in the use of HEA and livelihood zoning, and is planning to extend the development of baselines to Tigray, Amhara, Oromiya, Harar, Benishangul and Gambella. In 2007, the methodology was applied during a seasonal needs assessment (June) to identify expected emergency requirements in SNNPR and Somali Region, using the livelihood baselines available. In December 2007 the methodology was also to be applied in Afar, Tigray and Amhara Regions, supported by LIU and SC-UK. However, some in the EWWG feel that the HEA methodology is too complicated and too time- and labour-intensive (Haan *et al.*, 2006). DPPA shares some of these concerns. There is also disagreement over the appropriate response when groups reach the ‘Livelihood Protection Threshold’, as opposed to the ‘Survival Threshold’ identified by the HEA.

WFP has been working on an index for triggering contingency planning when an emergency is detected. This is the Livelihood Protection Cost

#### Box 4: The Household Economy Approach

The HEA approach investigates how different groups of households adapt to economic stress. Households are used as the unit of analysis, and their economic activities at different periods in the year are examined to model the sum of ways they make ends meet from year to year, and how they survive (or fail to) through various economic shocks. HEA is implemented in two stages:

- (1) **Baseline analysis** is used to understand how households categorised according to different levels of wealth have survived during a 12-month period or ‘reference year’ in the recent past. This analysis, based on key informant interviews, secondary data and community interviews, includes how households obtain food, generate income and organise expenditure. The baseline is the starting point for investigating how access to food changes as a result of hazards (e.g. drought, conflict or market dislocation).
- (2) **Scenario analysis** uses information on hazards and households’ documented coping strategies to forecast likely future access to food and other items at household level. This helps identify which areas and what types of households are likely to cope should a hazard strike, and which will need assistance; what types of interventions will be most appropriate; and when and for how long they should be implemented.

Source: Livelihoods Integration Unit, DPPA.

Index (LPCI), a weather-based index aimed at providing an objective, independently verifiable and replicable indicator of livelihood loss. The index is

### **Box 5: The Livestock Early Warning System (LEWS)**

The Livestock Early Warning System subproject in the USAID Global Livestock CRSP aims to provide information in a timely manner to allow pastoralists and national and international agencies to respond to emerging drought conditions. The LEWS technology suite utilises weather satellite sites to acquire temperature and precipitation data. This is linked to a forage production model to create a detailed map showing plant species, soil conditions, livestock levels and movement. The system can generate data for a 30-year period (see <http://cnrit.tamu.edu/lews>).

*Source: Hess, 2007.*

developed by evaluating historical weather data and determining its correlation to crop yields and revenues (Hess, 2007). One possible application of the LPCI to pastoral areas is being discussed, whereby weather data could be correlated to grass cover and forage conditions using the Livestock Early Warning System (LEWS) methodology. However, to date the LEWS has not been able to develop an effective link between the information generated and pre-planned response (Lautze, 2003).

The LPCI is being developed within the context of contingency planning for the Productive Safety Nets.

Efforts are ongoing to link the WFP LPCI with the HEA database. Links are also being developed with other early warning systems and food security classification systems, such as the Integrated Food Security and Humanitarian Phase Classification (IPC). Efforts to refine early warning and strengthen disaster management capacity are being accompanied by a process of policy revision, supported by USAID. Particular attention is being paid to policies focused on improving early livelihoods responses to drought in pastoral areas. Draft policies are due to be completed by June 2008; a process of consultation with relevant stakeholders is envisaged.

### **3.4 Contingency planning and financing**

To be effective, EWS need to be combined with strategies that enable governments, donors and aid agencies to respond in a timely fashion to the onset of a drought. A good drought preparedness plan includes appropriate programming options and

### **Box 6: The Integrated Food Security and Humanitarian Phase Classification (IPC)**

The IPC was developed by the Somalia Food Security Analysis Unit (FSAU) run by FAO. It combines food security, nutrition and livelihoods information to assess the relative severity of a food crisis and the implications for humanitarian response. Crises are classified into five 'phases', from generally food secure to famine/humanitarian crisis. The IPC is not in itself a methodology, but uses existing data and information drawn from various studies and assessments to classify food security according to reference indicators (e.g. on nutrition, livelihoods, coping strategies). From this a risk map is created showing actual and predicted 'hot spots'. FAO is working with donors and partners to refine and roll out the IPC in a number of pilot countries. Critics contend that the IPC is too dependent on available indicators fitting the key reference table; is too subjective; its single classification for chronic food insecurity is too limited; and thresholds from one phase to another can potentially be difficult to apply. The IPC has nonetheless generally been seen in the Horn of Africa as a useful instrument to attract attention to impending crisis using existing information and analysis.

triggers for action, as well as predetermined roles and responsibilities amongst different actors (ODI, 2006). In order to act upon these plans, adequate and easily accessible contingency funds must be available. The lack of effective contingency planning and funding mechanisms during the drought of 2005–2006 was one of the critical elements behind the delay in the response. Unlike in Kenya, Ethiopia has no national preparedness plan. However, a plethora of different contingency planning processes and funds exist both at the local and federal level. They are not coordinated and there is no common approach to developing and resourcing these plans.

#### ***3.4.1 The National Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Fund***

The National Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Fund (NDPPF) was established in 2000 as a non-food emergency intervention mechanism for rapid response, to complement the Emergency Food Security Reserve (EFSR). The Fund is managed by the National Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Committee (NDPPC) within the Prime Minister's Office. The NDPPC has a budget in excess of \$13 million, much of which is contributed by the government (Anderson and Mowjee, 2006). These

funds constitute a cash reserve for loans to humanitarian actors.

Since its creation the NDPPF has been accessed only twice (Grunewald, 2006), and very few NGO and UN officials appeared to be aware that funds could be borrowed from it in the event of a crisis. By contrast, borrowing food aid from the EFSR was reportedly common (Grunewald, *ibid.*). The EFSR was accessed during the 2006 drought response. Officials in DPPA admitted that they had been reluctant to activate the NDPPF for fear that any loans would not be replenished. It was also felt that the cumbersome guidelines regulating the fund may have discouraged its use. There was an interest within DPPA in working with NGOs to remove potential obstacles to access. Government officials felt that the creation of the Humanitarian Response Fund (HRF, see below) had also undermined the NDPPF. In addition, the fact that the fund is based in Addis limits its effectiveness. Members of the Pastoral Bureau in Afar suggested that it should be decentralised and held at the regional or zonal levels, and released by the regional authorities, without having to wait for a national declaration of emergency.

### **3.4.2 The Pastoral Community Development Project**

The Pastoral Community Development Project (PCDP) is a 15-year initiative jointly funded by IFAD and the World Bank aimed at improving the livelihoods of pastoralists living in 32 *woredas* in the Afar, Oromiya, Somali and SNNPR regions. The objectives are to ‘provide capacity building and establish effective models of public service delivery, investment and disaster risk management in pastoral areas that address priority needs of communities and their vulnerability to disasters’ (PCDP, 2003). The project is housed in the Ministry of Federal Affairs, under the responsibility of the Pastoral Development Department.

The project has the following components: 1) sustainable livelihoods; 2) Pastoral Risk Management (PRM); and 3) gap analysis. The PRM component was only activated at the beginning of 2007, apparently because of problems in allocating responsibilities across government departments. At the regional level, the PRM has been working in partnership with SC-UK. The project is planning to support the DPPA/FSB regional offices in implementing early warning systems in the 32 target

*woredas*, before expanding to other areas. The EWS will be linked to *woreda* Disaster Preparedness and Contingency Plans. It is envisaged that contingency funds will be established at *woreda* level once officials approve the plans.

### **3.4.3 The Pastoral Livelihoods Initiative**

CARE has developed contingency plans in several *woredas* using a common model developed in partnership with Oxfam. Although CARE’s plans are clearly focused on early livelihoods interventions, CARE officials are aware that they are not linked to an adequate financing mechanism. The project has a reserve of EB 20,000–50,000 per *woreda* to be used in the event of drought, but this would be insufficient to cover the plans in case of an emergency. CARE and other PLI partners hope that, in the event of a drought, other actors will help fund the plans. CARE is working to ensure that regional governments can take control of the management of the plans (including regular updating) and link them to adequate financing. However, especially in light of the imminent closure of the PLI, there are doubts over the feasibility of this process. In this regard, establishing links with the PCDP/PRM appears to be all the more urgent.

### **3.4.4 The Pastoral Productive Safety Nets**

The establishment of a drought risk financing component is envisaged for the second phase of the Productive Safety Nets project (2008–2010). The idea is to finance an ‘Early Livelihood Protection Facility’ based on a sequential combination of 1) a contingency fund of about \$50 million; 2) a contingency debt/credit; and 3) insurance.<sup>5</sup> Payments from the contingency fund would be triggered by the Early Livelihood Protection Index (see 3.3 above) or other triggers agreed ex-ante. The fund would be donor-financed and could be either Ethiopia-specific or part of an existing global fund such as the Central Emergency Response Fund or the EC’s FLEX, but with monies specifically set aside for Ethiopia. The contingency fund could be complemented by a ‘contingency grant’ or ‘debt’ and by insurance, which would be triggered should the fund be insufficient to cover needs (Hess et al., *ibid.*).

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<sup>5</sup> In 2006 WFP piloted weather-based insurance, with encouraging results. The intention was to prove that the risk of drought could be transferred to international markets. For more details see WFP, 2007.



In January 2007, the World Bank approved a \$175 million grant to finance the second phase of the Productive Safety Net Programme, \$25 million of which was to cover the Livelihood Protection Cost Index (Hess, 2006). At the time of the study discussions were ongoing about the modalities for this risk financing strategy, with a view to finalising the mechanism by 2008. This will not be immediately applicable to pastoral areas, since the Productive Safety Nets project is only just being piloted there. However, people involved in the design of the facility are thinking of basing the trigger index on the LEWS, which has shown limited effectiveness in triggering early livelihood responses. It is also unclear what activities the Early Livelihood Protection Facility would finance, and whether it would be limited to cash responses for existing PNSP beneficiaries. The LPCI planning document talks of 'localised budgeted contingency plans', but it is not clear what kind of contingency planning process will be developed, or how this will link with processes initiated by the PCDP, the PLI and others.

#### **3.4.6 Other contingency funds**

Other NGOs have also been active in this area. Farm Africa, for example, has established a community emergency programme. Under the plan, early warning committees are to have access to contingency funds for early livestock interventions, including animal health and destocking. The intention is that funds will be managed by the early warning and food security desks at *woreda* level, though Farm Africa is aware of the limited capacity and lack of resources of these bureaux. Farm Africa is also planning to link these funds to community development initiatives.

#### **3.4.7 The Humanitarian Response Fund**

The Humanitarian Response Fund (HRF) was established in March 2006 to provide quick and flexible funding for emergency needs in Ethiopia. It is a pooled funding mechanism managed by the UN Humanitarian Coordinator (HC), to which five donors have been contributing so far (the Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Switzerland and the UK). So far the fund has disbursed \$16.3 million. There is a Review Board comprising representatives from DPPA, UNDP, UNICEF, WFP, FAO, WHO, IOM, UNHCR and NGOs, though ultimate authority for the use of the fund rests with the HC. OCHA acts as the secretariat and

#### **Box 7: The Pastoral Productive Safety Nets Programme**

The overall objective of the pilot Pastoral PSNP is to contribute to reducing household food insecurity in Oromiya, Somali, SNPPRS and Afar. The purpose of the programme is to provide alternative approaches to improve food security through resource transfers (cash or food), using public works and direct support (for those unable to do physical work) as transfer instruments. Funded by the government and eight development partners, the Pastoral PSNP will go through a 18-month pilot in 21 pastoral woredas. Based on the results, the full PPSNP will be rolled out in more woredas. Expected features of the PSNP are:

1. The creation of public works schemes such as road construction, water harvesting and school construction, with participating households or individuals earning income or food.
2. Provision of direct support using cash or food for households or individuals with low labour capacities.
3. Implementation of complementary interventions, such as drought cycle management.
4. Creation of a framework through which food-insecure pastoral households can rebuild their assets and eventually graduate out of food insecurity and effectively participate in development.

The pilot PSNP is due to start in January 2008 (Behnke et al., 2007).

interventions. The Guidelines also state that the manages the funding process. The HRF Guidelines state that the HRF is not limited to humanitarian assistance, but should also fund early livelihoods response should build links with longer-term mechanisms and programmes (OCHA, 2006). Funds can be disbursed before an appeal is launched by the Ethiopian government. The emphasis on early livelihoods interventions makes the HRF a promising instrument to help protect assets in future drought, provided that effective trigger mechanisms are put in place. Some organisations point out that there is a conflict of interest in the handling of the HRF, since the fund is managed by the UN HC with the support of OCHA. However, many NGOs were happy with the fund's performance, and it appears to have adopted a more inclusive approach than is evident in similar mechanisms in neighbouring countries.



## 4. Towards an improved response: key issues for consideration

### 4.1 Contingency planning, politics and institutions

The proliferation of contingency planning and financing mechanisms needs to be addressed. At present there are no commonly agreed criteria for the disbursement of funds across the different contingency mechanisms, many of which are yet to become operational. Responsibility for linking up the various instruments lies with DPPA, but there is limited capacity to effect such coordination, and some mechanisms (such as the PCDP) have been set up at *woreda* level, often without central oversight. There is much discussion about where to establish funds; some feel that the zones would provide a much better institutional home, although issues of capacity, accountability and representation are equally significant at this level (see 4.2).

Many in Ethiopia see the contingency planning and financing mechanism adopted in Kenya under the aegis of the Arid Lands Project, where drought preparedness plans are in place at district level, as a model. There is need for caution here. The Kenyan contingency planning mechanism did not work very effectively during the response to the drought in 2006. The funds deposited at the local level were insufficient to cover the type of early livelihoods responses required by the crisis. Some useful and timely interventions were carried out on a limited scale, such as destocking and water tankering (ODI, 2006). The system worked well in its early stages because it was on a small scale and enjoyed the support of a committed donor, which provided the resources necessary for early action (Stephen Sandford, personal communication, 2006). However, when the scheme expanded its geographic scope to cover most of Kenya's arid lands, there was no special provision for emergency funds to respond to the information generated by early warning systems, and good warnings at the district level went unheeded. In order to make the rapid response mechanism at district level work, contingency funds should be deposited with the districts, and not held centrally (Jeremy Swift, personal communication, 2006). Changes to this effect are being implemented now with the support of ECHO (see 5.2).

It is important to bear in mind that, whilst the search for efficient contingency financing mechanisms

linked to early warning is important, it is not *per se* a panacea for appropriate drought responses. There are also important structural impediments. The lack of a functioning banking system in most pastoral *woredas* means that funds will have to be kept elsewhere, most probably in a regional capital, and the application of any contingency plan will be dependent on political decisions made at the central level. *Woredas* or zones will probably be unable to initiate responses without central endorsement, but pastoralists are not well represented in decision-making processes and their ability to push for swift and effective responses is limited. These difficulties are particularly acute in areas like Afar and Somali regions. Funds could be channelled and put to use by NGOs in the short to medium term, but it is crucial that pastoralists take part and possibly control decisions which have such a direct impact on their livelihoods.

There was a feeling during the study that pastoralist communities in Borena have made greater progress than elsewhere in calling for more appropriate interventions from their administration, probably as a result of greater external presence, capacity-building initiatives and the fact that Borena is smaller than Somali Region or Afar. The zonal administration is also said to be sympathetic. This suggests that a decentralised, coordinated contingency planning and financing system could be tested in Borena. In Afar and Somalia, however, institutional processes are not yet mature enough: external support would be better focused on institution-building within pastoralist communities, and building government capacity to intervene in a timely and appropriate fashion in the event of a drought.

### 4.2 Capacity issues

Drought response in Ethiopia faces a number of capacity constraints. First, many government officials, both at central and regional levels and in the *woredas*, are still unfamiliar with the concept of protecting livelihoods assets. Food aid is still seen as the natural response to drought. There appears to be a greater understanding of the centrality of livelihood action at *woreda* level, where representatives of local pastoralist communities are present in the local bureaux. However, these

officials often lack the technical skills to conduct proper livelihoods assessments. Many offices lack staff, with poor communication facilities and high staff turnover. In some *woredas* staff are said to be recruited on the basis of clan quotas and sometimes include illiterate people. The remainder are often non-pastoralists. The overall level of skills is generally poor, especially in remote areas. Local NGOs are also weak.

Such limitations are also a problem for the Pastoral PSNP. This is still being largely implemented through federal mechanisms, although the decentralisation process envisages that regions should oversee and implement programmes without reporting to federal ministries. PSNP donors are looking into developing more direct contacts with the regions and focusing more closely on building the capacity of *woredas*.

There are differing views as to whether regions, zones or *woredas* are the best planning unit for drought cycle management. Some feel that regions would be better equipped than *woredas* to drive emergency responses, but that there is more elasticity in policy making at *woreda* levels (for instance, the privatisation of vet drugs and Community Animal Health Workers in Somali Region). Administrators' awareness of drought cycle management and livelihoods responses varies depending on the region, with Oromiya/Borena being ahead of Afar and Somali. A number of NGO staff feel the zones could play a more useful role as an appropriate planning unit. Zones play an important bridging role between regions and *woredas* (Behnke *et al.*, 2006). They are particularly useful in that they compile information coming from a given number of *woredas* within their jurisdiction and pass it to the regions. Zones appear to be a critical linking element of coordination between the meso and the local level. However, the role of the zones in pastoral areas is much weaker than in the highlands. In Afar, for example, they exist in name only. More attention should be given to strengthening zones so that they can play a monitoring and follow-up role and provide the necessary backstopping for *woredas* and *kebeles* (Behnke *et al.*, 2006).

Capacity constraints are not limited to government offices. Many international organisations also have limited capacity to implement early livelihoods interventions, largely because emergency sections

in NGOs and UN agencies are unfamiliar with livelihoods programming (ODI, 2006). The lack of integration and cross-fertilisation between emergency and development sections in many organisations appears to be a key limitation to the implementation of livelihoods-based emergency responses. These difficulties exist even in organisations that have emergency personnel with good livelihoods background, as is the case with the PLI NGOs. The PLI faced significant difficulties in implementing livelihoods interventions swiftly in 2006 because of internal bureaucratic impediments. In particular, procurement systems were not adequate to facilitate the speedy purchase of inputs such as hay or to smooth the progress of sub-contracting (for example of the traders involved in the destocking intervention) with faster tendering procedures. Donor restrictions, for instance sourcing drugs and vaccines only from companies with certain specifications (e.g. nationality), also delayed interventions. Oxfam GB, with its 'one programme approach' and greater flexibility in terms of funding, appears to have overcome many of these difficulties. Drought often strikes in the middle of a development intervention. Oxfam found that having an integrated programme allowed flexibility in the approach and minimised management constraints as the operation would not change hands at the onset of drought. This experience offers useful lessons to other organisations working in drought-affected environments.

The PLI implementing agencies, currently funded for a one-year cost extension, have started working on the lessons learned from the 2005/2006 experience, and CARE is preparing guidelines to streamline operational procedures for livelihoods interventions in drought response, including lists of vetted providers. The food aid system is tried and tested, whereas livelihoods programming in emergencies is a relatively new and unoperationalised approach. It is therefore important that experiences are recorded and lessons distilled and embedded within organisations in order to raise awareness about practice and build common approaches that can be refined through further experimentation. Standardised approaches could also facilitate more effective cross-border work, which is of particular importance in many parts of the Horn of Africa and many other dryland areas.

### 4.3 Coordination

The effectiveness of drought responses in pastoral areas could be greatly enhanced by more strategic coordination amongst the various actors. A number of coordinating bodies exist, but none provides overall leadership.

#### 4.3.1 Initiatives for pastoralists: PLI, PCDP and PCI

There would be enormous benefits in closer collaboration between the PLI and the PCDP, especially to allow PCDP to learn more from the PLI experience with drought risk management and livelihoods interventions. The PLI could also strengthen its policy work through closer collaboration with OCHA's Pastoralist Communication Initiative (PCI). At present there is limited collaboration and coordination between these three major initiatives. The links created by this study between PCDP and SC/US and CARE must be built upon, and SC-UK can play a useful bridging role through its involvement in the PLI and its partnership with PCDP as part of the CAMELIS project.

The PCI focuses on developing better relations between pastoralists and the state through helping pastoralist customary institutions find the knowledge they require to interact with the state, and supporting dialogue and negotiations between pastoralist and government leaders (UNOCHA-PCI, 2006). The PCI played an important role in the design of the PCDP and has strong links with civil society organisations and pastoral representatives in the region where it operates. However, the initiative is seen as detached from the work of other national and international organisations, particularly in Addis. These concerns were echoed by the Minister of Federal Affairs in a coordination meeting organised by PCDP which was attended by a member of the study team. Greater coordination between the PCI with other actors, especially national organisations, could strengthen policy work and harness complementarity in pastoral regions.

#### 4.3.2 Government coordination

The Pastoralist Development Department in the Ministry of Federal Affairs is mandated to coordinate and oversee interventions in pastoral areas, starting with the PCDP, for which it has a specific management role. There are pastoralist Departments/Commissions at regional level, but not

in the *woredas*. Coordination efforts to date have been ineffective. Coordination roles are not well defined and there is confusion between DPPA, the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MoARD), including the Food Security Bureau, and the Ministry of Federal Affairs over responsibilities for interventions in pastoral areas. In theory DPPA should coordinate the emergency response, but as discussed earlier its role often stops at issuing early warning and launching appeals. There is little effort by DPPA to coordinate with MoARD livestock development policies and programmes. The Agriculture and Livestock Task Force chaired by MoARD was widely praised for its coordination and leadership during the 2005/2006 emergency. According to the head of the Task Force, coordination was good during the crisis, but did not continue once it ended (apart from meetings of the Somali Task Force).

The government is keen to see a greater role in coordination and leadership by MoFA in the pastoral regions. Through the PCDP, MoFA has created the Ethiopia Pastoral Development and Governance Network (EPDaGoN), to bring together all actors working on pastoralism. MoFA is thinking of creating a technical committee within EPDaGoN focused on risk management. Efforts to improve coordination are however hampered by competition among the various departments involved. There are tensions between DPPA and MoARD, which also has a difficult relation with MoFA. Another critical problem is the poor coordination between federal, regional, zonal and *woreda* levels. The lack of clarity on institutional responsibilities at the federal level makes vertical coordination all the more difficult.

The MoARD has established a Livestock Policy Forum (LPF) with technical support from the Feinstein International Center (FIC) at Tufts University. The forum's initial objective was to produce national guidelines on emergency livestock interventions in pastoralist areas using livelihoods approaches. It comprises five working groups: 1) destocking and market support; 2) livestock supplementary feeding; 3) veterinary care; 4) emergency water supply and 5) restocking. Given the quality of the debate it promotes, the forum should become a permanent resource for policy dialogue. FIC also provides support to PLI partners to harmonise approaches and maximize the impact of their interventions through training on impact assessment. FIC is working with the International

Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) and others to develop a Pastoralism and Policy course for key decision-makers. The course will be run for the first time in March 2008.

#### **4.3.3 UN coordination and the cluster approach**

Within the UN system, FAO provides secretarial support to the Agriculture and Livestock Task Force in MoARD. FAO is however mainly concerned with livestock issues, rather than pastoralist livelihoods more broadly, and its ability to coordinate amongst international agencies is hampered by its limited capacity to mobilise rapidly in an emergency. FAO has a positive relationship with the government and could provide leadership on policy change if its capacity is strengthened. FAO's role as coordinator of the ECHO-funded Drought Preparedness Programme provides a good opportunity. In addition to FAO, the Drought Preparedness Programme comprises ACF, Cordaid, COOPI, the Danish Red Cross, DCA, Oxfam, SC-UK and SC-US.

OCHA plays a key role in the coordination of drought response, and also has an early warning system and field monitors in all pastoral areas. Meetings between OCHA and other organisations working in pastoral areas are reportedly not regular, though coordination increases during emergencies. OCHA also manages the HRF and disburses monies from the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF). During the drought, it played a strategic role in Borena and Somali Region, facilitating interaction between government, NGO and UN agencies (Grunewald, 2006).

In recent months the UN has been rolling out the cluster approach in Ethiopia, one of the pillars of the Humanitarian Reform Agenda. The approach identifies nine critical areas of humanitarian response: water and sanitation, nutrition, logistics, protection, camp coordination and management, shelter, health, early recovery and telecommunications. Cluster leads are responsible for ensuring that activities are carried out in collaboration with partners, and are supposed to act as 'providers of last resort'. The 2006 Real-Time Evaluation (Grunewald, 2006) suggested that a 'cluster-like approach' should be adopted in Ethiopia only where there were clear gaps, such as in logistics and telecommunications. The implementation of the clusters has however gone ahead in all sectors, though OCHA has been working with government counterparts and UN cluster leads

to integrate the clusters with existing Task Forces and other government-led coordination mechanisms. The clusters are complemented by Working Groups in early warning, early recovery, logistics and emergency telecommunications.

The greatest problem with the cluster system is that it builds on and reinforces a sectoralised approach to emergencies. This is counterproductive in pastoral areas, where responses to drought need to be premised on an integrated approach across a number of sectors. Most stakeholders expected the agriculture and livestock cluster (jointly led by MoARD and FAO) to lead in the event of drought, in coordination with the Early Warning Working Group. The early recovery cluster (led by DPPA and UNDP) is also planning to focus on disaster risk reduction, including developing contingency plans and strengthening government infrastructure for response in the *woredas*. The risk of further duplication in this area is apparent.

#### **4.3.4 Donor coordination**

The main coordination mechanism for donor organisations in Ethiopia is the Development Assistance Group (DAG). The DAG comprises an Executive Committee (ExCom), which includes the DAG co-chairs, UNDP and the World Bank, and three DAG members selected on a rolling one-year basis; a secretariat, housed in UNDP, which follows up on DAG activities and is in charge of the day-to-day management of the DAG pooled fund, which supports the Sustainable Development and Poverty Reduction Programme (SDPRP) and the Plan for Accelerated and Sustainable Development to End Poverty (PASDEP) (Ethiopia's first and second PRSPs); and 12 Thematic Working Groups (TWGs), which provide technical expertise. The TWG chairs and the ExCom meet every six months. A TWG on Rural Economic Development and Food Security (RED/FS) was established in 2004. Despite the primary developmental focus in the TWG, a number of individuals spoken to during the study felt that RED/FS could play an important role in promoting dialogue around policy change in favour of livelihoods-focused drought preparedness and response, particularly in pastoral areas. However, there has been no effort by NGOs to advocate for such a role so far. Pastoralist development is included in the RED/FS ToRs.

## 5. The policy environment

### 5.1 Government policies

The increasing vulnerability of pastoralist communities to climatic shocks is the result of population growth and increasing intensity of drought coupled many years of inappropriate policies and a lack of investment in pastoral areas. Appropriate and timely livelihoods-based drought responses will not prevent further structural weakening of the pastoralist livelihoods system. Drought responses take place in a context where access to animal health care is limited or non-existent, water services are scarce, markets do not fully function, access to land is often restricted and conflict is common. Drought resilience can only be enhanced through long-term development interventions. This means that drought preparedness can only be effective if it is underpinned by policies to strengthen the overall resilience of pastoralists' livelihoods systems.

Prejudice against mobile livestock keeping is reflected in official government policy. The PASDEP calls for 'necessary measures to be put in place to encourage pastoralists to settle voluntarily' and many in government think that it would be in the interest of pastoralists to settle and become engaged in rainfed farming (PCDP, 2006). The 'settlement discourse' is dominant in MoFA documents despite a lack of evidence that settlement would help strengthen livelihoods or reduce vulnerability (Catley, 2005). There is a danger that the PSNP's heavy focus on infrastructural development in pastoral areas may serve to advance the settlement policy.

Settlement and a progressive involvement in agriculture can however be an option for pastoralists who have lost their livestock and need to look for alternative livelihoods, including in urban areas, but it should not be considered for successful pastoralists. The many unsuccessful attempts to settle pastoralists in East Africa and the Horn do not need repeating.

Land tenure and land use policies are charged issues in Ethiopia, as in other contexts. Traditional titles to communal grazing land are not officially recognised, and the best land is being progressively taken over for agricultural production. The shrinkage

of the resource base for pastoralists has undermined their coping strategies, starting from mobility, and has fuelled ethnic conflict in Afar and Somali regions. There is a need for policies which safeguard pastoralists' entitlement to land, as well as recognising pastoralism as a legitimate way of life that needs support to become more productive and resilient to external shocks. Other policy constraints which need attention are taxation on livestock exports (which is not lifted at times of drought) and disincentives for the private sector to operate in areas where international organisations distribute livestock drugs free of charge through emergency interventions. Restrictive livestock marketing policies also affect the viability of pastoral economies. Such restrictions include the lack of government support of the well-established informal cross-border trade between southern Ethiopia and Kenya, as well as between Somali Region and Somaliland, Puntland and Somalia, which prevents pastoralists from making full use of existing, vibrant markets (Devereux, 2006). Much of the formal trade is channelled through 'official' exporters, who typically source cattle for export from highland areas rather than pastoral regions.

Many in Government, particularly in MoARD, have been watching with interest the work of the PLI and feel that it should be supported and replicated, and accompanied by fundamental work at the policy level. For this dialogue to be effective, it must be underpinned and supported by donors.

### 5.2 Donor policies

Different donors respond to disasters in very different ways. The 2005/06 drought was no exception (Grunewald *et al.*, 2006). Some responded quickly, on the basis of early warning signals issued in late 2005, while others decided to wait for the national appeal. Many prioritised emergency food aid, while a few provided support to livelihoods. The preference for food aid appeared to be determined by pre-existing earmarking and a preference for the 'safe option', with its well-understood mechanisms and expected results. A number of donors admitted having difficulties with the technical assessment of livelihoods-based proposals. This was partly due to limitations in the in-house experience of donor staff, but also to the

fact that livestock interventions and other early livelihood activities have no standard point of reference. In this regard, ongoing efforts by the Livestock Emergency Guidelines and Standards (LEGS) initiative will help fill a critical gap and offer donors guidance when assessing proposals to respond to emergencies in pastoral areas. Like the Sphere Project, the LEGS process is based on multi-agency contributions, broad-based reviews and the collation of practitioners' experience (see <http://www.livestock-emergency.net>).

Another major constraint stems from the inadequacies of donor policies and frameworks in dealing with drought. Most donors continue to see droughts as 'exogenous events'; once dealt with, the business of development can resume (Duffield, 2001). There is limited recognition of the fact that drought in pastoral areas is a largely predictable occurrence, and that responses to drought need to be incorporated within an assistance framework which combines relief and development policies. The effectiveness of donor funding for drought response is also reduced by rigid procedures and inflexibility in an environment where the situation on the ground is often rapidly evolving.

There is a need for clear and agreed triggers between NGOs, UN agencies and donors to activate contingency funds pre-allocated for emergency livelihoods interventions. More generally, it is important that adequate, predictable and flexible funding is made available to respond to drought in a timely manner. This is in line with the principles of Good Humanitarian Donorship (GHD), particularly Principle 8, which affirms that humanitarian assistance should be provided in ways that 'are supportive of recovery and long-term development, striving to ensure support, where appropriate, to the maintenance and return of sustainable livelihoods and transitions from humanitarian relief to recovery and development activities' (GHD, 2003). There are ongoing discussions amongst donors involved in GHD on how to better mainstream Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), of which Drought Cycle Management is an expression, within assistance frameworks. Key issues include:

- securing greater political commitment to disaster preparedness and risk reduction at all levels and across the relief–development divide;
- making links between DRR and development effectiveness more explicit, notably in relation to

the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs);

- building local resilience through a rights-based, participatory approach; and
- the need for more documentation of the potential savings (humanitarian, social, economic) from investments in DRR (MFA Norway, 2007).

In pastoral areas of Ethiopia donors should seek to fund long-term development interventions aimed at building the resilience of pastoral livelihoods and strengthening pastoralist institutions. Programme and financial agreements with agencies must be flexible and must facilitate rapid responses and allow for the adaptation of programmes in fluctuating environments (Grunewald, 2006). Funding cycles also need to be more heedful of the complexities of operating in pastoral environments. In this respect, a two-year cycle for the PLI is woefully inadequate.

Donors met during the study readily recognised the limitations of current assistance frameworks in pastoral areas, especially with regard to disaster risk reduction and disaster management. There was an overall openness towards supporting early livelihoods interventions, though some donors admitted a lack of familiarity with the concept. Many pointed out the useful lessons shown by the PLI, and the need to replicate the model on a larger scale in coordination with existing interventions such as the Productive Safety Nets and PCDP. It was felt that NGOs could help incorporate the learning from the PLI and other initiatives into these larger projects. Linkages with these programmes should be aimed at harmonising practice around response, including triggers for action and contingency mechanisms.

USAID's support for the PLI signals an important recognition of the need for flexible programming grounded in 'developmental relief' thinking and practice amongst donors. This experience is not isolated. In July 2006, ECHO started an 18-month Drought Preparedness programme called 'Improving Drought Management in the Greater Horn of Africa (GHA) through support to drought preparedness, risk reduction and early warning'. The programme covers Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia (where it includes the CAMELIS project), Kenya, Somalia, Sudan and Uganda. It has adopted the Drought Cycle Management model as the guiding concept to



address what it describes as the ‘chronic emergency’ in the GHA. It aims to support all four elements of DCM, including interventions to strengthen early warning systems and make them more sensitive to pastoralist livelihoods; support to communities and local authorities to plan contingency measures ahead of drought; and long-term activities aimed at facilitating access to grazing land, strengthening community resilience and increasing the productivity of the pastoral economy.

The programme seeks to translate into practice the principles of the Linking Relief, Rehabilitation and Development (LRRD) concept defined by the EU Commission in 1996. A recent mid-term evaluation of the programme defined its strategy as ‘unique and encouraging’, albeit in need of improvement in

its practical application, and many NGOs in Ethiopia see it as ‘a major shift in donor thinking to be monitored, strengthened in its implementation and replicated’.<sup>6</sup> The evaluation recommended extending the programme to ten years, and called for stronger collaboration with research in arid and semi-arid lands supported by the EU. Development actors working in pastoral areas of Ethiopia see these recommendations as a refreshing change from tight ECHO timeframes and a focus on food aid, and an initiative that other donors should build upon. It is important to note that the shifts in approach by USAID (through the PLI) and ECHO appear to be the result of the thinking and efforts of selected individuals within donor agencies, rather than a change in institutional policy.

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<sup>6</sup> Interview with NGO official, Addis Ababa, June 2007.



## 6. Conclusions

### 6.1 An agenda for policy change

Pastoralist livelihoods have come under increasing strain as a result of external shocks, both natural and man-made. In order for their livelihoods systems to become more resilient to crises, pastoralists need to be able to move location to access critical natural resources, and need access to markets and stable terms of trade. Pastoralists who have lost their livestock and have dropped out of pastoralism need viable options to make a sustainable transition to alternative livelihoods. The problems pastoralists face are structural ones. Protecting, building and rebuilding the livelihood assets of pastoralists requires an integrated approach to risk management that goes beyond cash or food transfers to address the underlying causes of pastoral livelihood vulnerability (Behnke *et al.*, 2007). However effective a disaster management system, it must be implemented within the broader structural development framework.

Drought needs to be seen as a normal and often predictable event, and efforts must be focused on strengthening response capacity while at the same time continuing long-term development efforts. There is an urgent need to promote 'joined up' humanitarian and development interventions based on a sound understanding of local livelihoods systems. This entails livelihoods-based interventions along the full cycle of the Drought Cycle Management system, with a long-term commitment. A key contribution of the PLI has been to demonstrate that this is both possible and valuable. The PLI experience could be expanded and replicated. At the same time, efforts should be made to develop a concerted, agreed platform with other national and international actors to advocate for policy changes aimed at strengthening pastoralist livelihoods. Key foci for action include:

- 1) Investment in services in pastoral areas (including education as a key to future diversification).
- 2) Strengthening pastoralists' access to markets and livestock trade through better linkages between pastoralists and traders, road construction, improved veterinary services (including issuing vaccination certificates, which are essential for

international livestock trade); lobbying to ease taxation on livestock marketing during droughts; and changing policies which make it difficult for the private sector to operate in pastoralist areas.

- 3) Facilitating pastoralists' access to land and other key resources, including through advocacy on pastoralists' rights to mobility and communal tenure and institutional support to pastoralist organisations genuinely representing pastoralists' interests.
- 4) Addressing conflict in pastoral areas through facilitation of local-level dialogue.
- 5) Ensuring that systems are in place to facilitate early livelihoods interventions in the event of drought.

Addressing the political marginalisation of pastoralists is critical to ensuring that external responses produce lasting change. People need to be better organised and genuinely represented; assets to be saved should not be limited to livestock, but should also include the social and political capability to sustain appropriate responses (both to drought and to political problems). The emergence of pastoralist institutions such as the Oromia Pastoral Area Development Commission (OPADC) and the existence of a parliamentary Pastoralist Standing Committee, provide a good foundation to further promote pastoralist representation and address persistent negative attitudes about pastoralism among policy-makers. Networks such as the PFE and EPDaGoN could also be used as platforms for concerted policy work, and can be helped to become more representative, both of their member organisations and of pastoralist interests at large. Links between different initiatives focusing on pastoralism, including NGO interventions, PCDP and PCI, must be better explored and harnessed to help underpin policy advocacy with evidence. Bodies such as the Livestock Policy Forum can provide an important avenue to discuss policy change. In this context, it is worth noting that the African Union is working with pastoralist organisations across Africa as well as with OCHA-PCI on the development of a pastoralist

policy framework to be discussed at an AU summit scheduled for 2008.

Policy dialogue to strengthen pastoral development and drought response should be promoted both with the government of Ethiopia and with donors. Such dialogue needs to be underpinned by further evidence about the cost-effectiveness of livelihoods interventions in crisis. This study has documented pastoralists' appreciation for emergency livelihoods interventions and perceptions about their usefulness. Further evidence is needed to prove the benefit of these responses. The development of best practice guidelines currently under way through the LEGS initiative will also provide a useful instrument to improve coordination, coherence of approach and exchange of information on good practice amongst operational agencies, and promote awareness of such interventions among government and donors.

Coordination and collaboration with government structures needs to improve in order to ensure government support for livelihoods-based interventions and the reengineering of the drought response system along the Drought Cycle Management model. Government officials at the central level have been watching the activities of the PLI with interest, but from afar. An investment in gaining the trust and support of the government for livelihoods approaches and developing closer partnerships for implementation is now crucial. The work that Tufts University is promoting both through the LPF and its joint initiative with the IIED are two important mechanisms to help build a better shared platform for action in pastoral areas between operational agencies and the government.

## 6.2 Recommendations for action

### 6.2.1 Policy engagement

1. *Strengthen partnerships for policy engagement.* The Core Group could engage with policy makers to influence government policy and practice based on lessons learned in PLI. The Core Group should identify key partners to enhance the effectiveness of advocacy, and should consider broadening the group if stronger synergies can be developed. A strong partnership should be sought with PCDP and PCI, but strategic alliances should also be forged with like-minded actors in government and amongst donors and the UN/NGOs.

2. *Support pastoral institutions.* In collaboration with other partners: the Core Group should support pastoralist institutions and representatives to strengthen their engagement in policy formulation and enhance their role at national and sub-national levels.
3. *Promote policy advocacy for a more pro-pastoralist orientation in the PASDEP.* The Core Group should work with its partners to influence donor representatives in the Rural Economy Development and Food Security (RED/FS) forum, particularly its Pastoral Working Group, to take up policy dialogue with the government on areas of the PASDEP which demonstrate a bias against pastoralism. Senior representatives in relevant UN agencies such as FAO should also be encouraged to initiate such dialogue. The emphasis on pastoralists' settlement in the PASDEP is an area which requires special attention.
4. *Inform the implementation of the PSNP in pastoral areas.* Dialogue should be promoted with the government and donors to influence the implementation of the PSNP in pastoral areas and to strengthen the link with ongoing interventions, especially in relation to pastoral risk management. The PSNP should be encouraged to focus on people who have already dropped out of pastoralism, to help them identify and build alternative livelihoods. PLI-type interventions should continue for pastoralists with livestock, both through NGO interventions and through the PCDP, which should build on the PLI's experimental work. The PSNP should seek complementarity with ongoing projects in pastoral areas and focus on infrastructure interventions that pastoralists rank highly, such as water supplies for fodder plantations.
5. *Strengthen the role of the Livestock Policy Forum (LPF).* The policy coordination promoted by the PLI through the LPF should continue, with a view to the Government institutionalising best practice, policy recommendations and harmonised approaches within the government's drought response system at all levels.

## 6.2.2 Strengthening national capacity to effect appropriate and timely drought response

1. *Harmonise drought response mechanisms in pastoral areas.* The government could perhaps usefully restructure its various response mechanisms in pastoral areas to achieve greater complementarity and less duplication. This would include greater clarity of roles and stronger complementarity between DPPA, the Food Security Bureau and the Ministry of Federal Affairs.
2. *Maintain and strengthen the livelihoods focus in emerging drought response mechanisms.* Key policy processes focused on livelihoods should be preserved and stepped up during the re-engineering process. This includes the work undertaken by the Livelihoods Integration Unit in DPPA on the early warning system and the review of policies currently being undertaken by DPPA with the support of USAID.
3. *Create a less fragmented early warning system.* The Core Group and its partners should advocate for the establishment of a coordinated system to provide EWS and drought/food security information along the lines of the Kenya Food Security Steering Group (KFSSG) model. Under the Kenyan model, all EWS information providers sit together at the national level to share and harmonise information. Particular attention should be paid to enhancing government capacity for timely meta-analysis and to consolidate trigger mechanisms in order to create a credible alert system. The roll-out of the IPC in Ethiopia provides an important opportunity to develop harmonised early warning messaging.
4. *Develop contingency plan frameworks for pastoral zones.* Frameworks for contingency planning should be developed by organisations in the Core Group in close collaboration with zonal and *woreda* authorities and representatives from pastoral communities. Existing plans should be revised and harmonised with those developed by other actors, such as the PCDP. It is important that the contingency planning process is not seen as a blueprint for response, but more as a set of guidelines to be used when drought strikes.
5. *Create adequate and appropriate contingency funds.* Government, UN agencies, NGOs and donor representatives must work to harmonise the different drought response funding mechanisms, starting with strengthening and operationalising DPPA's National Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Fund (NDPPF). If appropriate mechanisms are put in place, the fund could remove the need for specific contingency funds created by NGOs, UN agencies or the PCDP. The Humanitarian Response Fund (HRF) could be used to fill gaps while the NDPPF is strengthened, provided that efforts are made to make the HRF more livelihoods-oriented. It is recommended that the HRF be phased out once strategies have been put in place to operationalise the NDPPF at national and sub-national levels. Clarity should be enhanced on the use of the risk-financing mechanism for the PSNP in pastoral areas, *vis-à-vis* other existing financing mechanisms.
6. *Strengthen the capacity of zonal-level administrations.* Zonal administrations offer considerable potential for leading government responses in pastoralist areas in particular, as demonstrated by the Borena Zonal Task Force. The representational weakness of pastoralists suggests that organisation of leadership at this intermediate level of administration would be more effective than at the *woreda* level.
7. *Promotion of regional drought response mechanisms.* The situation of pastoralists in many areas of Ethiopia demonstrates the need for a regional drought management strategy that coordinates policy and practice across national borders. Efforts should be made to encourage the development of regional work, perhaps under the auspices of UN OCHA.

## 6.2.3 Improving practice

1. *Share best practice.* The Core Group should ensure that the PLI work on DCM best practice is finalised and guidelines are made available to all partners and stakeholders involved in drought cycle management in pastoralist areas. Lessons from drought response should also be integrated into the Tufts/IIED training.

2. *Document evidence.* The Core Group should continue to gather evidence in support of livelihoods-based interventions and disseminate evidence-based messages to influence drought response in pastoral areas. This includes building on work by Tufts University, which has carried out impact assessments with NGOs and government departments, documenting experience and lessons and sharing these with a wider audience. The planned cost-benefit analysis of interventions carried out during the 2005/2006 drought should be used to support advocacy with government agencies and donors.
3. *Improve coordination and communication during response.* Information flow and communication between implementing agencies and pastoral communities during drought emergencies is critical, especially for interventions such as commercial destocking, slaughter destocking and disease control. During the 2005/2006 drought, there was a great deal of misunderstanding and lack of knowledge and awareness among pastoralists about what implementing agencies were trying to do. Greater information-sharing would enhance community participation in responses.
4. *Align internal procedures to the implementation of livelihoods responses.* Even organisations that responded effectively to the 2005/2006 drought experienced considerable delay in the response because of bureaucratic and institutional/structural constraints. Operational agencies need to have an institutional drought preparedness strategy in place. This requires clear guidelines for the fast-track procurement of goods and services for livelihoods interventions during an emergency, and administrative and procurement units able to facilitate timely, efficient and flexible responses.
5. *Spanning the development-emergency divide.* All actors are still challenged by institutional and financial barriers to linking relief and development. The positive and negative experiences of a crisis such as the 2005/2006 drought, which demonstrated that responses that do not span the divide fail communities, need to be embedded in the policies, plans and budgets of donors and their implementing partners.
6. *Good donorship in drought contexts.* USAID's support for PLI is an example of good donor practice in terms of flexible use of budgets. Other donors such as ECHO, through its Drought Preparedness Programme, are experimenting with mechanisms that institutionalise flexible funding patterns. Such efforts need to become more mainstream, with responsibility lying with the donor to champion these good practice models with peers and with NGOs to lobby in support of what are pioneering efforts by groups within donor agencies.
7. *Promoting appropriate funding in pastoral contexts.* USAID and other donors working in support of pastoralists should commit to long-term support. PLI has in many respects been an important addition to the national effort to work with pastoralists. The short timeframe of this initiative is not a cost-effective way of achieving the sorts of changes in approach which this programme exemplified, and longer-term support, albeit in somewhat revised form, would have been appropriate.

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