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INTERNATIONAL NGO CONSULTATION ON HUMANITARIAN AND FOOD ASSISTANCE IN THE GREATER HORN OF AFRICA

PROCEEDINGS

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Edited by

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ADDIS ABEBA, ETHIOPIA
OCTOBER 23-27, 1995

Convened by Save the Children Federation (USA) and InterAfrica Group

Funded by
U.S. Agency for International Development
Bureau for Humanitarian Response
Office of Food for Peace

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The countries of the Greater Horn are characterized by a diversity in national contexts and trends, but what they have in common is the extraordinary challenges they present to NGOs working to promote food security responsibly and efficaciously. On the one hand, a series of initiatives have arisen with the common point that African countries are taking on a more proactive leadership role in dealing with both internal and regional issues. The new regional approach is exemplified by the changes in IGADD and in donor government efforts such as the U.S. government's Greater Horn of Africa Initiative. The NGOs have had to acknowledge the changing role of the regional governments and donors, leading towards greater empowerment of the regional governments.

Concurrently, in other countries in which the nation state has collapsed, NGOs are confronted by warring parties motivated not by ideology, but by crass self-interest. In this new environment, banditry and warring factions prevail and often civilians are deliberate targets of military and paramilitary attacks. Western military interventions and the use of local mercenaries by NGOs have led to a blurring of the humanitarian/ military roles, and a loss of the integrity of humanitarian symbols.

As a result, there is a need for more sophisticated approaches to the structuring of humanitarian support and to the mechanics of the delivery of relief assistance, using as a starting point the principle of "first, do no harm." Greater attention needs to be paid to community dynamics and to "negative externalities" that can color even the most straightforward relief assistance. There may in many cases be reasons for a radical rethinking of approach and in some situations for forgoing outside intervention altogether.

It is also clear that new, more coordinated approaches are needed in the assessment of vulnerability and for projecting likely emergency needs at the regional and community levels. A number of approaches currently in use were presented to the consultation. These need to be developed in ways that build on and strengthen governmental initiatives where these exist (e.g., Ethiopia and Eritrea), rather than in ways that are parallel and redundant.

While the workshop did not formally endorse a series of recommendations, the following are key points around which there was strong consensus. (These points are also described in Appendix II, a working document which was distributed during the consultation):

* Many international NGOs have developed survey field methodologies to identify food scarcities and to target resources (see Appendix I). New vulnerability assessment and food assistance policies and structures for implementing them have been developed by some governments. NGOs need to do better at cooperating with each other and with new policy environments to ensure comparability and complementarity among NGO efforts as well as with local efforts by governments and others. Where significant resources are being devoted to these efforts, greater heed must be paid to their sustainability and to

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whether they are indeed serving overall to enhance long-term analytical and planning capacity among local partners.

* There needs to be a greater contextualization of relief strategies by NGOs, taking local social, political, military and economic dynamics into account. For this to happen, NGOs must improve their internal capacities (a) in the analysis and understanding of the context of emergency situations; and (b) in their "tradecraft" -- in the practical skills related to delivering resources in ways the minimize leakages, maximize appropriate targeting, and involve communities in ways that promote equity and fairness.

* Events in the Greater Horn of Africa in the past decade have led to justified concerns about whether international NGOs have in every case had the necessary accountability, professionalism and ethical standards to handle major resource transfers in complex and volatile situations, especially where there is maximum international media and political attention. International NGOs need to analyze their past performance in these situations, both individually and as a community, and draw operational conclusions from their analyses.

It was felt that there may be a role for international NGO consortia, at the national, regional, and international levels, to develop performance standards and training protocols to promote professionalization of field staff and to develop more effective field-level consultation and cooperation mechanisms.

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PROCEEDINGS SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION:

The International NGO Consultation on Humanitarian and Food Assistance in the Greater Horn of Africa, convened jointly by Save the Children Federation (USA) and the InterAfrica Group, took place in Addis Abeba from October 23 to 27, 1995. Designed to bring together senior managers from major international NGOs operating humanitarian programs in the region, the Consultation provided an opportunity for an exchange of views among such organizations on several interrelated topics of common concern. As defined at the Consultation, the topics were the following:

1. A need to reassess our community's collective impact on humanitarian crises in various countries of the Greater Horn over the past decade and to achieve greater perspective on how humanitarian interventions in "complex" emergencies can both have positive, life-saving outcomes and negative effects on the ability of nations and communities to rebuild.

2. A perception that international NGOs in the Greater Horn face a changing environment, in which governments in the region as well as donors are looking more critically at such organization's humanitarian activities and raising questions as to their commitment to accountability and to enhancing local crisis-response capacity.

3. A need to examine in greater depth the issue of vulnerability assessment, especially to food security emergencies, and to exchange information on the early warning and vulnerability assessment tools being used in various situations throughout the region.

The Consultation was intended to be an informal gathering, providing a forum at which international NGO managers, joined by a small number of resource people (consultants, representatives of donor agencies and UN organizations), could freely debate such topics. It was not intended that there be any formal outcomes in the form of resolutions or joint decisions-- rather, individual participants were encouraged to take their sense of the results of the proceedings back to their respective organizations, share the information gained, and thus increase awareness within the community of a number of common concerns. In keeping with the informal nature of the gathering, no formal record was kept and no joint declarations were developed. The present account of the proceedings is presented by the organizers as a general overview of the themes covered and of some of the views expressed, especially where these seemed to be broad support or agreement among participants. The statements included here should not be considered as having received formal endorsement from the group. Individual participants' views are specifically cited only in those cases where they were expressed in connection with a formal presentation to the group.

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TAKING STOCK: IMPACT OF INTERNATIONAL NGOS ON LOCAL COMMUNITIES:

Overall, it was clear from the presentations and discussions that there is a need among international NGOs operating in the Greater Horn of Africa to look critically at their activities over the past decade and from these to infer certain broad principles that will inform their activities in the future. Many of the issues that need to be further debated relate to issues of *coordination of interventions* (both within a community of NGOs which is so large and diverse, and with partners, especially with governments and international agencies) and of *impact of programs on local capacity*. While agencies can take justifiable pride in the lives that have been saved and in the effectiveness of many individual interventions, there is also a general feeling that there needs to be a better understanding of the ways in which their programs have had negative impacts and thus worsened the plight of those who were to have been helped.

Mary Anderson, of the Collaborative for Development Action, and John Prendergast, of the Center of Concern, both dealt in their respective presentations with a growing sense within our community that given that the Hippocratic injunction "First, do no harm" must apply to emergency assistance to communities as well as to medical professionals, there needs to be a greater understanding of the ways in which such interventions can indeed do harm. At various stages of the crises in Ethiopia in 1984-85, in Somalia in 1978-80 and again in 1991-94, in Rwanda and elsewhere, it is clear that international assistance, particularly food assistance, has played a role in exacerbating conflicts and in inhibiting a quick return to self-reliance at the local and national level.

Several speakers felt it was important to acknowledge and salute the humanitarian impulse that underpins all humanitarian action: the sense that suffering, whether caused by natural or man-made disaster, is intolerable and that resources must be found to alleviate it wherever this can be done. However, we have learned over the past two decades of international humanitarian intervention in the Horn of Africa, that the international community and the agencies that serve as its humanitarian vehicles, often mobilize huge resources that when used incorrectly have seriously negative impacts on the communities that are to be served. These impacts can come in many forms, and examples were cited of humanitarian resources, especially food aid, becoming a cause of conflict, of NGO and UN agency payrolls and procurement resources subsidizing parties to conflicts, of NGOs and others acting in ways that decapacitated local structures and authorities. Examples were raised and discussed both in plenary sessions and in working groups, drawing, in particular, on experiences in Ethiopia and Eritrea (in recent, more hopeful times as well as during the massive emergencies of 1973-74 and of 1984-91), in Somalia, in southern Sudan over the past decade, and in Rwanda and among Rwandan refugees in 1994-95.

Among possible negative impacts of international humanitarian efforts, it emerged that there might be two categories: (1) those that reflect lapses in agencies' "tradecraft" -- cases where a sound knowledge of "best practices" in the operational skills of delivering humanitarian resources has proven inadequate or where previous "lessons learned" have

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not been transferred (e.g., food not reaching those who needed it most, or arriving at inappropriate times and undermining local production); and (2) those where the interrelationship between humanitarian interventions and the underlying political issues has proven more complex than had been originally foreseen (e.g., where such assistance has inadvertently directly benefited one party to a conflict, or served to prevent resolution.)

There was a general feeling among participants that such negative effects do not in themselves build a case against an international response to suffering, but they do require that the ways in which such interventions are conducted must be far more carefully designed and coordinated. Specific lessons from experience such as in early warning and planning, in logistics and the organization of relief assistance, and in the promotion of rehabilitation activities to support a quick return to self-reliance alongside or instead of pure emergency relief, need to be better documented within the international NGO community and among governments and local NGOs in the region. Ways need to be found to ensure that the best practices are more rapidly incorporated into response mechanisms and that these best practices are transferred to newcomers in an industry that is known for high turnover, in order to lessen the present high probability that past mistakes will be repeated.

With respect to the broader interrelationship between the dynamics of conflict situations, which have been central to so many of the humanitarian emergencies in the Horn of Africa in the past decade, and international NGO humanitarian activities, it was agreed that we generally do not regularly demonstrate the "tradecraft" necessary to ensure that our interventions will indeed " do no harm." This is an argument against rushing in impulsively without paying adequate attention to the underlying dynamics of the situation. For example, a number of speakers suggested that the massive international intervention aimed at assisting the enormous refugee population arriving in Goma following the change of government in Rwanda, especially as it followed a long period of what many parties felt had been a woefully inadequate international response to developments in Rwanda itself, may have served to seriously exacerbate long-term tensions in the region and to make a final settlement of the Rwandan crisis more problematic--though others felt that the suffering in Goma had been so acute that the humanitarian community had no real alternatives. The theme of how to "institutionalize" such lessons within our community (especially in cases where there may not even be consensus on what the lessons are) returned often and acutely, but was not completely resolved.

One set of relevant examples and of suggestions for dealing with these issues came from John Prendergast, of the Center of Concern, who developed the theme of "negative externalities" in humanitarian interventions. Drawing on research done by human rights groups in recent years, Prendergast emphasized the importance of developing new forms of interaction with local authorities to minimize the dangers posed by the often predatory nature of the latter's relations with their own communities and with outside humanitarian intervenors. NGOs must focus on supporting local resilience and operational capacity, both among local officials and among local civil society. A number of observers have noted that in acute crisis situations there may be a tendency to overlook established human

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rights norms. The defense of such norms might be the basis on which to undertake dialogue with those in control of areas requiring emergency assistance. Prendergast also emphasized a number of elements of crucial importance to the ultimate success of a humanitarian intervention that are often overlooked or inadequately taken into account in NGO and UN-agency emergency interventions. These include the interrelationship between humanitarian resources (e.g. food aid) and the modern sectors of local economies, as well as the latters' subsistence dynamics. Much can be done more effectively by indirect means, rather than through direct intervention, by making greater use of the private sector, of the "hidden" economy that exists even in periods of severe stress, and of community-level non-formal structures. Prendergast highlighted the need for international NGOs to place far greater emphasis on planning for such interventions. He recommends taking careful account of any intervention's likely "winners" and "losers" and the consequent need for these agencies to put greater emphasis on having teams of "sophisticated operators" experienced in the dynamics of complex emergencies as well as just in the logistics of emergency operations.

THE CHANGING ENVIRONMENT

Clearly the end of the cold war has brought fundamental changes to the ways in which local conflicts evolve and in which the international community responds to them. In the worst cases, as Charles Petrie, of the United Nations Department of Humanitarian Affairs pointed out, vulnerable populations have now become targets of conflict rather than simply suffering as "collateral" victims. Parties to long-standing conflicts have frequently developed vested interests in prolonging these conflicts, which have in effect become a lucrative way of life for them. Instead of drawing on the rhetoric of the political ideologies of the cold-war era, such groups use fear and exploit perceived threats to ethnic survival as a pretext for mobilization for conflict and for perpetuating it. Many such groups have no interest in governing their nations; they often use conflict as a pretext for asset stripping. In such cases, the work of humanitarian agencies becomes highly politicized, and NGO interventions can often be seen by one or the other side as a political act, while arrangements for achieving access can serve to legitimize those in control of a given area.

Experiences in Somalia and Rwanda, among others, have shown that the political will among the western governments to pursue and support humanitarian goals can be fickle. Recent experiences of close identification between western military contingents and humanitarian agencies has, in Petrie's view, led to a devaluation of humanitarian symbols. The integrity of humanitarian symbols is lost when there is a blurring of political, military, and humanitarian roles. The result is a need to clearly define and enunciate the values of international NGOs involved in humanitarian work.

Among the governments of those countries that have recently emerged from prolonged complex crises there have been tremendous changes as well. Some of the governments of the Greater Horn have made a major commitment in recent years to assuming greater

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responsibility for promoting timely and effective interventions to ensure that natural calamities no longer lead to huge catastrophes requiring massive international humanitarian aid. Donors have responded positively to these initiatives and are seeking ways to support them. Given that the international donor community has in the past seen international NGOs as an effective conduit for channeling emergency humanitarian assistance in ways that bypass governments, it is clear that adjustments in expectations are going to be required on all sides, and that international NGOs are going to have to find new ways of engaging their key partners, both among the regional governments and among donors.

To assist the group in considering these dynamics, Jim Borton, of the United Nations Emergency Unit for Ethiopia, and Jalal Abdel Latif, of the InterAfrica Group, gave presentations. Both presentations were made informally; neither speaker wished to give the impression that he was in any way giving an officially sanctioned overview. The following summary therefore makes no direct attribution to either statement, but merely reflects on these and other discussions of how the governments and peoples of the Greater Horn, in particular among the member states of the Inter-Governmental Authority on Drought and Development (IGADD), are coming to terms with recognized structural vulnerability to emergencies, of how these governments are taking direct responsibility for managing this vulnerability, and of how the terms of their dialogue with the international community have changed as a result.

The changes within the IGADD structures derive from the Addis Abeba Declaration of 1992, when the governments of Djibouti, Kenya, Ethiopia, Eritrea, the Sudan, and Uganda (Somalia's IGADD membership is suspended) committed themselves to reducing the vulnerability of their peoples to food emergencies. Ongoing discussions led to a commitment in 1994 to revitalizing IGADD as an institution, expanding its mandate and making it more relevant and proactive. Since then, a proposal for a very broad mission has been restated as a commitment to work in three key areas: food security, conflict resolution, and infrastructure. A new charter for IGADD is presently being formulated for signature by the heads of state. This has taken longer than planned in an effort to "get it right" and to achieve lasting consensus on the remaining outstanding issues.

This commitment by the IGADD governments and other governments in the region has given impetus to a new dialogue with the key outside parties, namely, the donor governments, the United Nations system, and the international NGOs. Early in the IGADD revitalization process, at the time of the Addis Abeba Declaration, the donors had established a "Friends of IGADD" working group. Meanwhile, a greater focus on dealing with issues at a regional level among all partners, exemplified by initiatives such as the U.S. government's on behalf of the Greater Horn of Africa, have also had direct impact on the environment in which international NGOs work throughout the region.

International NGOs are now coming to terms with a new reality: while their role in helping save lives and alleviate suffering has been much appreciated by the governments of the region, perceptions of them are not unequivocally favorable. New leaders have come

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to power with far greater experience of working with NGOs. They see international NGOs as having the capacity to mobilize large resources, and thus as being very powerful. At the same time, these NGOs have sometimes been manipulated by local interests. They also have agendas of their own that they are active and sophisticated in defending, often, regional governments feel, to the detriment of stated humanitarian agendas, and often in direct competition with governments and local NGOs for donor resources. NGOs have developed skills in proposal writing and lobbying that often leave local players behind. To the extent that there is now strong political will to develop long-term regional strategies to reduce vulnerability and enhance food security, such activism on the part of international NGOs is sometimes perceived to be disruptive or even harmful.

As a result, the governments of the region, to varying extents and in different ways, are seeking to redefine their relationships with international NGOs and to place limits on their activities. For example, the new government of Eritrea has a policy of national execution of programs and international NGOs are prevented from playing any direct implementational role but rather are welcome to transfer skills by working through local institutions. While other states have not gone this far, the tendency throughout the region is to limit and control NGO activities.

There was broad agreement within the group that there is a need to find ways of engaging in this process more constructively than has been the case in the past. While NGOs are very skillful at mobilizing resources and support in their home countries, they have not shown themselves particularly adept, as a community (and with many individual exceptions) at engaging regional governments at this level of debate. There is an urgent need for NGOs to work out at a policy level what their response to initiatives such as that of IGADD will be: can they and will they show a commitment to capacity-building and to playing constructive *regional* roles. While there was no formal discussion of mechanisms for dialogue, it was felt that there may be key opportunities (at upcoming summits, for example) for broader dialogue. *Participants generally agreed to urge the importance of inter-NGO consultation in pursuit of such dialogue within their respective organizations.*

Concurrent with the changes that are taking place in the governments of the countries of the Greater Horn, changes are also taking place in the donor governments. Many of these changes are prompted by ever diminishing resources.

One initiative currently under way in the region is the Greater Horn of Africa Initiative (GHAI), introduced by the U.S. government. Linda Howey of USAID explained the initiative at the Consultation. She highlighted the fact that the approach of this initiative in many ways endorses the new priorities and approaches of the regional governments. For example, GHAI places greater emphasis on "strategic coordination" and regional relationships. The initiative's objectives are food security, conflict resolution, reduction of population growth and increased sustainable economic growth. The unique aspect of this approach is its emphasis on collaboration with the regional governments -- both the individual governments of the Horn and with the governments as a regional entity.

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To support and develop collaborative thinking and new approaches for this initiative, the GHAI Taskforce in Washington has developed the following five teams: Donor Coordination Team, Conflict Prevention Reporting, Analysis and Response (RADARS) Team; Rapid Transition from Relief to Development Team; Food Security (DELTA) Team; and PVO/NGO Partnership Team. A sixth team, Regional Mechanisms, has been created in USAID's regional office in Nairobi (REDSO/ESA). NGOs are being included in a number of these teams. Linda Howey indicated that she believes the participation of the NGOs on several of the teams will help USAID to come to grips with how to design and implement programs that will meet the initiative's objectives. The changing nature of the relationship between donor governments, regional governments and NGOs places new expectations on all involved. In particular, NGOs will need to be more coherent and responsive in their partnerships with donors, governments and local communities. To do this, NGOs must improve both their ability to assess the strengths and vulnerabilities of the communities they serve as well as to measure the long-term positive impact on the community. This requires a broader body of common knowledge of the dynamics of complex emergencies than is currently shared by most NGOs.

DEFINING THE NEED: APPROACHES AND METHODOLOGIES:

Having grappled with the new environment in which NGOs find themselves, and having reviewed the lessons learned of the last decade, the group then examined the approaches and methodologies currently used by international NGOs to formulate their responses to complex emergencies. Selected participants were asked to present methodologies and approaches used by their organization in the Horn of Africa. In light of the previous Consultation discussions, the participants were interested in issues such as tools to gain knowledge of the dynamics of a complex emergency and to ensure that harm is not done; understanding how to use that knowledge to develop a response that is accountable to all of the groups that are served; and ways to ensure that the response will enable the government and the community to benefit from the program as well as achieve sustainable results. The challenge is whether NGOs can think beyond their own organizational mandates and develop a consensus on criteria for humanitarian assistance; and at a minimum, if NGOs can develop compatible and comparable methodologies for assessing vulnerabilities or food security.

The presentations included the Food Economy Model used in Operation Lifeline Sudan (OLS), Vulnerability Mapping in Ethiopia being developed by SCF/UK, the community based approach used by ACTIONAID, and the Ethiopia Food Information System (CEFIS) used by CARE. World Vision also presented its approach to assessing food security. ♦

A side-by-side comparison drew some very interesting conclusions. Differences between the methodologies arose around which questions were being asked, the intended use of the

♦ A summary of each of the presentations is provided in Appendix I and additional documentation on each approach is available from the presenting NGO.

information, the intended user, the context, and the secondary aims of the user. For example, methodologies that were designed to identify or justify food aid requirements used crop and market information as their primary indicators. If the secondary aim of the user was community empowerment or gender targeting, priority was given to these indicators. A summary of the differences identified is summarized below:

- Data collection: staff based or community based
- The balance of quantitative vs. qualitative data
- Arena of data collection: program specific (operational area) vs. region
- Intended use of information
- Elaboration and prioritization of indicators
- The process of interpretation of data

Nonetheless there were numerous common elements of the various approaches. Most importantly all of the approaches emphasized the relational issues that exist in terms of sharing among households, among markets and geographical zones. Additionally, all gave attention to the need to look at a situation over time, taking into account seasons, the historical context and current events.

There was also a clear understanding that developing a good data base requires a methodology that can merge the information gathered from "insiders" such as local elders or mothers with the information of "outsiders" such as food monitors. All of the methodologies were significantly complex to take into account the importance of disaggregation. In order to get a clear picture, all methodologies break information down in various ways, i.e. by household type (e.g. female headed etc.), by livelihood, income level or geographic zone. One participant pointed out the approach to disaggregation is a critical factor determining findings. For example, if data is broken down by clan and then by gender, the outcome of the analysis can be quite different.

In relating the use of these methodologies back to the issues discussed at the beginning of the session, the use of any of these methodologies would assist an organization to understand the dynamics of a complex emergency or a particular situation. However, it appears that all of these methodologies are costly to implement. Unfortunately, there is no clear basis to define which methodology is more efficient, cost effective or accurate.

In addition to the questions of results, there also remain questions of the relationship between *how* and *how much*. In other words, if it is more important to provide a small amount of assistance to the entire population early on so as to prevent significant asset depletion which would result in a much greater need later. Alternatively, there is a question of determining if innovative market approaches achieve a significant impact by minimizing the total need over the entire crisis period.

By far the most important question posed by the group was *how far apart are we?* The issue was raised if there is any hope for the development of a common methodology or at least, a common terminology that would allow for a comparison of data of different NGOs

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working in different regions of the same country. Fundamentally it becomes a question of coordination and collaboration. Among the participants of the Consultation, there was general agreement that the methodologies were structurally not that different. The primary barriers were corporate culture, lack of the habit of coordination and the nascent state of most of these methodologies. NGOs felt that they were still developing and fine tuning all of the steps involved and were reluctant to encourage others to adopt their methods at this stage. Participants expressed an interest in having the groups that have developed these methodologies to sit down together and see if additional commonalties could be identified, particularly before the methodologies are further fine tuned and before additional methodologies are developed by other NGOs.

It was also pointed out by Abdi Abdellahi Hussein of Save the Children Federation (USA) that it is important to take into consideration the special issues of the pastoralist groups when assessing vulnerabilities or food security. The pastoralist areas, which have been the focus of many of the local conflicts throughout the region, are undergoing a severe crisis reflecting climatic changes and pressures on the fragile and limited ecosystems on which the pastoralist way of life in the Horn of Africa is based. The pastoralists are facing an economic challenge since their mono-economy is solely dependent on livestock production which is threatened due to the limited capacity of grazing land to support large livestock production for an ever increasing human population. Pastoralist groups are making adjustments to these changes, but require sophisticated, targeted support from their governments and from the international community if they are to return to a more viable level of stability and self-reliance following the present period of turmoil.

Finally, the critical question of national (government sponsored) methodology structures was raised. It is an accepted fact that many NGO methodologies are used to compensate for weak data collection structures in many of the governments or due to the erosion of a government structure due to a crisis. Several participants noted that, given the "winds of change" in the Horn of Africa, attention and energy have to be focused on assisting local, regional and national governments to develop their own methodologies and data collection systems. NGO systems cannot be used only as a "double-check" of government data. In short, the long-term solution to structural food deficits and other emergency situations, requires that governments also have the information to implement an appropriate response.

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APPENDIX I

Methodology Used by Operation Lifeline Sudan (OLS): The Food Economy Approach

The food economy approach provides an analytical framework by which to understand how people are surviving. This understanding in turn affords a contextual basis by which to weigh the relative impact that changes in security, crop production, livestock reduction, market failure, or a number of other factors may have on a household's food security. It does not, however, provide in and of itself an early warning system but can provide a context by which early warning indicators can be understood. Without the critical context provided by understanding food economies, standard emergency indicators and needs assessments lack any concrete analytical or predictive powers.

Successful investigation of the local food economy is a continual process of piecing together the picture of a family's food income. Clear and persistent questions aimed at establishing a consistent big picture form the basis of this methodology. This approach, therefore, seeks to answer the following two major questions: the relative proportions of a family's total food income that comes from different sources in a normal year; and the pattern of exchange networks that link communities.

In the food economy approach all the sources of food consumed by the studied population are taken into account since the data gatherers include information on how the population ordinarily compensates in time of crisis without outside aid. The data gathering is done through a variety of ways including interviewing people from different groups of society and asking for a report on the food activities of their family and of other families they know. The data from these interviews is verified by data taken from other sources such as village elders and government officials. There is an emphasis on cross checking with numerous sources.

At the core of this approach is the recognition that in some years, for some families, access to available food sources will not be sufficient to cover food needs. This is particularly apparent in the case of southern Sudan, where fear and insecurity affect mobility, which limits trading, fishing or grazing opportunities; army recruitment and death, which reduce labor resources normally devoted to planting, harvesting, fishing and herding; and war-related looting and raiding, which deplete a family's stocks and subsequent ability to plan and save throughout the year.

The food economy approach aims to provide the means with which to determine more accurately situations in which a family may face a deficit and how big this deficit may be. Perhaps most important, it helps us understand **why** this deficit has occurred, and what we may or may not be able to do about it. By deepening our analysis of the food situation in an area, it allows us to see not only when intervention is necessary, but more clearly points to what kind of intervention, outside of rapid emergency assistance, may be appropriate.

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This approach has been helpful since it used by WFP for geographic targeting of food aid and it has encouraged transparency and a common vocabulary which promotes communication on food security issues between field staff and counterparts. Also, this approach has helped in timing of inputs. One of the challenges of this approach is that information gathering and sharing requires constant attention.

Methodology Used by Save the Children Fund-UK: The Nutritional Surveillance Programme (NSP)

Developed in the Darfur region of Sudan, Save the Children Fund- UK's Nutritional Surveillance Programme (NSP) is used to assist with needs assessment, geographical targeting, and impact monitoring. The indicators that are used are primarily rains, crops, livestock, market prices for cereals, livestock, labor, etc., migration, relief, and nutritional status. The methodologies involved include random sample survey, nutritional status survey, and structured questionnaire with a focus on validity, staff capacity, and speed of processing. The NSP features wide geographical coverage of all the major drought prone areas which includes about 10-12 million people and comparability over time and between areas. The components of this program that can be considered new and different are the use of village key informants, indirect questioning, ranking exercises, the mapping of data, and the use of statistical analysis of qualitative data. An important feature is the integration with "risk mapping" that involves a computer-based tool which is used for the analysis of food aid needs and seeks to quantify coping strategies. The household food economy approach is utilized.

Methodology Used by ACTIONAID: Community Based Approach

ACTIONAID has a community based approach which enables communities to monitor their own food security. ACTIONAID developed and began using the Community Based Food Security Monitoring Systems (CBMS) in 1992. These systems, established in and with vulnerable communities, have the capacity to help ACTIONAID field staff make timely predictions about impending food shortages. The aim of a CBMS is to be able to respond appropriately and in good time. The best responses will not only offset the negative effects of food insecurity but will contribute to longer term food security and livelihood security.

Each CBMS is unique because it is designed for a specific, unique set of circumstances. Each CBMS should exhibit the following three characteristics: be people-centered; have appropriate flexibility; and generate data that has multiple uses. By being people-centered it means that the community is actively involved with the process of designing the model of data collection, interpreting that data, deciding how best to respond and playing an active role in the implementation of projects. This acknowledges that the community members are "experts" on their own situation and their knowledge is therefore of central importance. The data collection and interpretation are done by the community and the indicators that are used are particular to that community. In using these types of

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indicators the system must have the appropriate flexibility so the model can adapt as the implementors "learn as they go".

There has been some debate on the way to interpret this data that is collected in the community. The CBMS tries to collect and use empirical data to give an initial snapshot of a situation but then uses traditional structures and indigenous knowledge to deepen the interpretation. There can be some issues of accuracy and precision. The CBMS takes into account that interpretation should be part of an ongoing process of dialogue with the community, with checking and cross-checking assumptions and views. A people-based approach is particularly important for understanding "invisible" variables which are hidden from outsiders in the texture of the social structure (i.e., entitlements such as credits, gift exchanges, or other transfers). Another issue is understanding how resilient a community is to stress on both livelihood security and food security. A distinction must be made if a relatively secure community adopts coping mechanisms or if a community in a very vulnerable environment uses a far reaching structural adaptive strategy.

ACTIONAID has found that the degree of community involvement will depend upon the particular variables of each situation and community empowerment will vary greatly. Findings were mixed about how and when the community can effectively manage its own relief with some situations calling for full participation and other situations where community channels were found to be unadventageous. Some advantages of using the community include the following: relief distributions can be quicker and less administratively cumbersome to implement; the need for complex needs assessment and targeting may be avoided; in conflict situations involvement of the community can be crucial where there is reduced access and potential dangers to agency staff. A problem of community participation can be that marginalized and voiceless individuals and groups within the community may be ignored by community leaders. Corruption and nepotism can also become problems. Another issue is that it can be more difficult to stop food aid programs if too much control lies with the community. This relates to the whole question of dependency. Lastly, it is important to note that successful participation and community management must involve a climate of trust and confidence between all the actors in any given relief situation.

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Methodology Used by CARE: The CARE-Ethiopia Food Information System (CEFIS)

CARE Ethiopia's Food Information System (CEFIS) was first established in 1992 to fill the early warning need of the mission. The establishment was agreed to by the Ethiopian Relief and Rehabilitation Commission (RRC). As the CARE-Ethiopia mission covers a large area with diverse agro-ecology and different peasant economies it was found necessary to establish an information system that provides both emergency and food security information and also monitor changes in the peasant economy. There are three major areas of CEFIS's focus: process and outcome data collection; baseline studies; and emergency programs.

With its household surveys, CARE takes into account the diversity of geography and different household economies. It looks at the "clients" and also the market institutions. Providing a good baseline on the population proves to be expensive and labor intensive. Market institutions are studied in terms of their capacities, supply and demand, and market prices. It is important to consider the terms of trade with key consumer items and to take long term averages. Crop assessments are done three times in the cropping season. Training of the staff includes understanding the local food economy and a collaboration with different institutions including FEWS and national institutions.

Methodology Used by World Vision International-Asmara:

World Vision International has found that vulnerability identifications should be used in analyzing the types of food security interventions needed. To that end, a partial list of food security vulnerabilities and potential responses has been created. Vulnerabilities can be categorized as availability vulnerabilities (such as drought/inconsistent rainfall, pests, declining soil fertility, disease to livestock); access vulnerabilities (such as lack of markets, lack of trading capacity, sudden food price shifts); use vulnerabilities (such as poor sanitation, unclean or limited water supply, unbalanced diet); and asset creation vulnerabilities (such as all wealth is in livestock, shrinking or lack of land area). The interventions do not always involve food aid since there is a recognition that the intervention depends on the cause of the emergency. The vulnerabilities need to be minimized not just the needs. Sometimes it is more cost effective to use cash work interventions so that both the need and vulnerability can be addressed. It is helpful to recognize that the emergency is just a context and that a multitude of approaches can be taken in this context. In Eritrea, the government is open to cash work interventions since it recognizes the need to address demand and stimulate markets and food security is a key priority of the government.

Vulnerability identification is useful with an impact indicator system since the effect of the intervention can then be measured. The intervention can be adjusted accordingly when information on the impact is focused and accurate.

This approach is new, having been developed just this year, and it has evolved from work done in capacity building. It is crucial to understand that the potential response activities are interrelated and need to be integrated. In the past, World Vision had used a sectoral approach which resulted in much duplication in data collection.

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APPENDIX II

Evolving socio-political context of Greater Horn of Africa

In Ethiopia, the government is asserting itself as a partner rather than a beneficiary of aid and sees less the need of NGO role in relief and more in capacity building and long term development.
In Sudan, there is an unresolved regional conflict in which NGOs are forced to take a side in order to fulfill their humanitarian mandate.
In Eritrea, the regime is dedicated to state led nation building with a policy of national execution of programs and international NGOs are not implementing agencies.
In Somalia, few agencies hve been able to function without security problems or restrictions.
These situations illustrate the demanding context for NGOs in the region.

The IGADD and GHAI processes

A series of initiatives have arisen with the common point that African countries are taking on a more proactive leadership role in dealing with both internal and regional issues. The IGADD regional process has a particular focus on food security, conflict resolution and infrastructure. The NGOs have had to acknowledge the changing role of the regional governments and donors, leading towards greater empowerment of the regional governments. GHAI is a donor initiated attempt to do more strategic and regional planning and to work in a more integrated fashion with both governments and NGOs.

New Environment

1. Absence of ideology: asset stripping and crass self-interest.
2. Deliberate targeting of civilians and resulting politicization of humanitarian intervention.
3. Blurring of humanitarian/military roles.
4. Loss of integrity of humanitarian symbols--trivialization of principles

Learning from the past: NGO experience in Greater Horn

Issues:

- Recognition that initial emergency response can/will either support or undermine sustainable recovery and long term development.
- NGOs involved in humanitarian assistance, even when effective in own mandated terms, nonetheless, can reinforce and exacerbate conflict in two ways: resource transfers and ethical messages.
- NGOs need to think beyond their own organizational mandates and develop consensus on criteria for humanitarian assistance and share methodologies for assessments.

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Humanitarian action has often been pushed without the accompanying political will that is necessary for success.
How to rethink humanitarian assistance: follow the principle of first, do no harm.
Improve on issues of accountability to the people being helped, to donors, to the governments of the region and to the principles of humanitarianism.
Resources from donors are limited; NGOs must do more with less. Global food stocks are at an all-time low.

General Lessons Learned on NGO Work in Complex Emergencies

1) **Importance of TRADECRAFT**, i.e. focusing not on the what we do (choice of intervention) but on the how we implement.

In emergency response the how relates to different levels of skill and analysis:

- the best practice and most efficient means to achieve program goals, i.e. oral rehydration in preference to intravenous; targeting techniques etc.
- analyzing the impact of any intervention vis-a-vis issues of power and conflict, so as to minimize exacerbation of the negative externalities.
- understanding the relationship of the intervention to the sustainable recovery process. so as to ensure consistency of methodologies and support long-term development.

This first principle leads us to the importance of institutionalizing the transmission of skills, experience and learning within the NGO community and to capacitate partners including local and national government bodies.

Next steps to operationalize:

1. Each NGO representative should promote at his/her headquarters level the concept of making an institutional commitment to investing in internal systems (staff orientation, training) and capacity building and to the importance of participating in the development of clear operational protocols and field guidelines within respective NGO consortia and networks, and the endorsement as a basis of agency policy and action, of one or more of the statements of principle now extant (such as Mohonk, Providence, ICRC Code).
2. In the United States, support the recently initiated work of InterAction to develop community-wide professional standards and guidelines for operational performance.
3. In Europe, Africa, and elsewhere, support and promote the involvement of NGO consortia and networks in the distillation and dissemination of lessons learned, and the development of community wide professional standards and guidelines for operational performance.

2) **The importance of expanding our operational frame of reference THINKING OUTSIDE OUR MANDATES-**, i.e. recognizing that there are very real conflicts among the different mandates that drive our responses to emergencies and that choices need to be made both within each agency and among agencies when mandates are incongruent or

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conflicting, for example neutrality vs. impartiality; justice vs. refugee asylum; protection vs. empowerment; food delivery vs. conflict resolution.

This second principle argues for the active promotion of system wide communication, cooperation, and coordination among NGOs, between NGOs and UN partners, and with donors and host governments. The objective is to promote the integration of different mandates in a manner responsive to situational analysis, rather than having dogmatic adherence by individual agencies to traditional or institutional mandates or operational modes.

Next steps to operationalize:

1. Better avail the existing UN-NGO mechanism for consultation provided by the UN DHA led InterAgency Standing Committee (IASC) and IASC Working Group to influence UN and system wide policy deliberations.
2. Support the development within the IA membership and promote the development in other consortia/networks, of a protocol on NGO field coordination, to systemize information sharing, consultation, and cooperation in the field.
3. Ensure the dissemination of coordination protocols and how to guides to field practitioners prior to development into emergency settings and the integration of the coordination mandate into agency field guides and orientation/training.
4. Develop a conceptual framework for shared decision making and integrated strategic analysis among NGOs and through field based NGO coordination mechanisms.

3) **Importance of POLITICAL CONTEXTUALIZATION**, the critical need for NGOs to factor into their humanitarian response planning the reality or the interaction between aid and the political context and the understanding that any resources introduced into the political context will affect the balance of power and assets among conflicting parties. In other words, understand the need for an NGO analysis of the interface between humanitarian response strategies and political analyses and goals.

This leads to the need for clarity on NGO principles, for the protection/ preservation of the integrity of humanitarian symbols and for NGO analysis of the relationship of human rights, peace promotion, and conflict resolution to the humanitarian mandate to provide assistance to vulnerable groups.

Next steps to operationalize:

1. NGOs need to conduct internal discussions around the concept of humanitarian principles and attempt to understand and clarify their own positions on such concepts as human rights, conflict resolution, and the interface between principles and its typical intervention modes.
2. NGOs individually need to take an institutional position on such statements of principle as Mohonk and Providence and make the issues they raise a part of ongoing interagency debate and discussion.

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3. NGOs must engage UN agencies, which often have specific and sometimes conflicting mandates, in the debate over political contextualization of humanitarian response.

Developing a common working model on emergency needs assessment

Recognizing the diversity of NGOs initiatives, there is still a need to be able to describe and quantify emergency needs using common terminology and resulting in a shared NGO perspective.

NGOs cannot afford not to have a common perspective on assessment of food security problems and issues. NGOs must be able to participate coherently, as a community in the rational allocation of scarce resources, if they expect to interface with national (IGADD) and donor initiated (GHAI) regional planning.

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ANNEX

FINAL AGENDA

October 23 (Monday): Overview

8:00 Registration for Participants

9:00 Opening remarks and welcome:
Rudy von Bernuth, Save the Children-USA

10:00 Introduction to consultation; discussion of topics and working groups:
Willet Weeks, Save the Children-USA
Lauren Landis-Guzman, Save the Children-USA

10:30 Introduction to InterAfrica Group and to discussion on NGO relations with regional governments:
Vanessa Sayers, InterAfrica Group

11:00 Current views of humanitarian assistance in emergency situations:
Presentation by Mary Anderson, Collaborative for Development Action

12:00 Lunch

1:30 Overview of evolving humanitarian picture in the Horn:
Presentation by Charles Petrie, UN Department of Humanitarian Affairs

3:30 Introduction to case studies and approach for Tuesday (Mary Anderson)

5:00 Reception -- For Participants, Speakers and Invited Guests
Location: Ghion Hotel, Unity House

October 24 (Tuesday): Emergency Assistance in Conflict or Cross-border Situations

9:00 Presentation of Case Studies (Mary Anderson);

10:00 Working group discussions

October 24 (Tuesday): Emergency Assistance in Conflict or Cross-border Situations

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11:15 Return to plenary

12:00 Lunch

1:30 Case Study: Presentation by John Prendergast, Center of Concern;

2:30 Working group discussions

3:30 Return to plenary

October 25 (Wednesday): International NGOs in the Greater Horn

9:00 The changing role of international NGOs in the IGADD countries:
Jim Borton, Director, United Nations Emergency Unit
Jalal Abdel-Latif, Executive Director, InterAfrica Group

11:00 Working group discussions

12:00 Lunch

Afternoon free

October 26 (Thursday): Emergency Needs Assessment Methodology

9:00 Panel Discussion: Ethiopian Case Study
Moderator: Michael Harvey, USAID
Getachew Diriba, CARE
Mark Lawrence, Save the Children Fund-UK
Calum McLean, ACTIONAID

12:00 Lunch

1:30 Working Models: Case Study--Southern Sudan
Presentation by Tanya Boudreau, Save the Children Fund-UK

3:00 Plenary discussion

October 27 (Friday): Working Models and Future Approaches

9: 00 Vulnerability Assessments:
Presentation by Joe Siegle, World Vision International-Asmara

Work with Pastoralists:

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Presentation by Abdi Abdellahi Hussein, Save the Children-USA

12:00 Lunch

2:00 Plenary discussion of future roles for international NGOs in the Greater Horn in food security and emergency assistance

4:00 Closing remarks and summary: Lauren Landis-Guzman, Save the Children-USA

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International NGO Consultation on Humanitarian and Food Assistance in the Greater Horn of Africa

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29/11/96 Food Security CV TW FSG 011

CHRISTIAN RELIEF AND DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION
(CRDA)

POSITION PAPER OF MEMBER AGENCIES ON FOOD SECURITY IN ETHIOPIA

CCRDA

August 1996

POSITION PAPER OF CRDA MEMBER AGENCIES ON FOOD SECURITY IN ETHIOPIA

1 INTRODUCTION

Food Security, as defined by the World Bank, is "access by all people at all times to enough food for an active healthy life". It includes the dimensions of an adequate supply of food, access to it and proper use at the household level. The issue of food security in Ethiopia at the household, local and national levels has been the focal point of both government and NGOs who are interested in sustainable development.

Despite major efforts to mitigate the root causes of food insecurity, Ethiopia has been unable to meet the growing food demand of its population since the 1980s.

In view of the shortcomings of development interventions which were geared towards ensuring household food security, and in an attempt to convey the concerns and views of NGOs to the Ethiopian National Committee for the Preparation of the World Food Summit, as well as to provide input to the World Food Summit itself, being organized by FAO, CRDA initiated a forum to bring together member agencies to share experiences and views on the subject and to come up with feasible strategies and actions on the issue of food security.

From the outset, CRDA encouraged its member NGOs to voluntarily participate and share their views on Food Security and its associated components. Initially the mandate was given to the Agriculture Working Group within CRDA to come up with a position paper that embraces the causes of and problems related to food security and suggests alternative options to mitigate the problems. However, others who run programmes focusing on food security were also involved. Subsequently, a copy of the draft position paper was sent to the 120 CRDA member NGOs for their comments. A workshop was organized to discuss the draft position paper in light of the comments received.

Maximum effort was made to involve, professional NGO staff with a wide array of experience in rural development. The adoption of a multi-sectoral team approach has enabled us to look into the issue of food security in a much broader way. Open debate, dialogue among working group members, and a study of the literature were made to refine and re-refine the position paper.

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It is worth noting that the position paper in no way could be taken as an exhaustive attempt to deal with all aspects of Food Security. This is because, in the first place, the time span was too limited to allow flexibility and in-depth work. Secondly, due to other pressing commitments, it was not possible to get a wide representation of NGOs in the actual drafting process, especially in the initial stage.

The position paper will serve as reference material for CRDA member NGOs and others concerned with the issue of food security in Ethiopia. It is also hoped that the position paper will benefit and enable the National Committee on Food Security (Ethiopia) in particular and World Food Summit organizers in general to surface some of the outstanding issues pertinent to Food Security.

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 The Current Food Security Situation in Ethiopia

Ethiopia has suffered from droughts and famines at different times in its history. In this century, the worst recorded widespread famines were experienced in 1973/4, and more recently in 1984/5. In 1994, the Relief and Rehabilitation Commission appealed for emergency food assistance for 6.7 million people; by 1996 this figure had dropped to 2.3 million.

World Bank estimates in 1992 put the number of chronically and seasonally food insecure people in Ethiopia at 21 million. This represents about 40% of the estimated total population. The Central Statistical Authority in 1992 reported that 64% of all children in Ethiopia between the ages of 6 and 59 months were chronically malnourished. Compared to the daily calorie intake of 2,100 kcal recommended for an individual by the Ethiopian Medical Association, it is estimated that per capita calorie intake for Ethiopians is only 1,518 kcal on average.

Domestic food production has fallen seriously behind the food needs of the country's growing population. Total domestic food production between 1979/80 and 1993/94 grew by only 0.5% per year, whereas the population has been growing by about 3.0% in the last decade. Nearly 90% of the population who live in rural areas rely on rain-fed agriculture for their subsistence. Any disruption to normal rainfall patterns can leave the population vulnerable and can inevitably result in reduced household food production. The shortfall in food needs has largely been met through imported food aid which, in most cases, was not made available in time. The poor growth in domestic food production can partly be explained by lack of incentives to produce, poor extension services, decreasing soil fertility, and environmental degradation.

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It is generally agreed that political and social factors underlay Ethiopia's chronic food insecurity, rather than purely climatic conditions. Civil war and political instability during the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s disrupted economic and social development. There was little build up of a national roads, communications, banking, education and health infrastructure, and very little economic diversification.

Ethiopia therefore remains one of the poorest countries in the world, whichever indicators are used. The annual Gross Domestic Product per capita, for example, is currently around 120USD. In times of food scarcity, food prices in the market are often beyond the means of a large proportion of the rural population. Poor households are forced into a downward spiral of poverty as they sell off assets and fall into debt during periods of food shortage. The most vulnerable people to food insecurity in Ethiopia are the rural/urban poor, people returning from resettlement areas, people displaced due to civil war and unrest, refugees, and pastoralists. Women and children are particularly vulnerable within all of these groups.

2.2 The Policy Environment in Ethiopia

Over the last 20 years massive relief resources have been mobilized to respond to the regular food emergencies around the country, with large quantities of food aid being distributed every year. Despite this, the food security situation in the country has not improved. In recognition of this, the Transitional Government of Ethiopia in 1993 issued its policy on National Disaster Prevention, Preparedness and Management (NDPPM). This policy is designed to link relief with development, so that relief inputs will not only save lives but will also contribute to development in the longer term, and reduce the population's vulnerability to disaster. The policy discourages distribution of free food, except for those unable to work, such as the elderly, disabled, children, etc. The policy promotes the payment of food to emergency-affected households in return for labour on public works programmes such as roads, schools, clinic construction, soil and water conservation activities, etc, which will, in turn, contribute to an improved infrastructure and natural environment.

The policy envisages that government authorities and community structures at the local level will be responsible for monitoring the food security situation in their area, preparing relief plans, and designing appropriate public works employment programmes, to employ food-insecure households in times of emergency. This will require an enormous investment in training, technical support and equipment, but as yet there is still limited capacity at regional and local level to implement the policy.

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In addition to the NDPPM, the Government of Ethiopia has declared that its major development strategy will focus on agricultural development-led industrialization, and is investing heavily in the rural areas. It has adopted the Global 2000 approach to boost agricultural production, by concentrating on the provision of improved agricultural inputs (seeds, fertilizer, pesticide, etc). The Government has abandoned the previous centralized, socialist system and is encouraging a free market economy, although the shift from the old system to the new is not yet complete.

2.3 The Contribution of NGOs in Addressing Food Insecurity

There are now over 250 NGOs operating in Ethiopia, and their combined resources are substantial. In terms of distribution, NGOs are found in almost all regions of the country, although there is a heavy concentration in the Oromia and Southern Ethiopia People's Administration Regions. Many of the NGOs who came to Ethiopia in response to the famines in the 1970s and 1980s focused primarily on the provision of emergency relief, and handled large quantities of food aid. In the late 1980s there was a gradual shift of focus away from relief towards development, which is in keeping with the new policy direction of the Government. In 1994 alone, it was estimated that NGOs handled 60% of all food aid coming to Ethiopia (Jim Borton, 1994). Total food aid deliveries to the country have averaged about 750,000MT between 1987 and 1993. (WFP Food Aid Information Unit, 1993). NGOs in the past have generally used food aid either for emergency free distribution, or for Food For Work programmes intended to improve local infrastructure or to rehabilitate the natural resource base of the country.

NGOs are also involved in rehabilitation programmes, where the aim is to assist an emergency-affected population to return to leading normal productive lives through the provision of inputs such as seeds, tools, and veterinary drugs, or the reconstruction of clinics, schools, etc.

In the realm of development, NGOs are also involved in a wide range of activities. Some NGOs specialize in one particular sector, while others adopt a more integrated-development approach, being involved in a number of sectors: eg. natural resources (agriculture, water, forestry etc.), livestock development, human health, savings and credit, training, social services, infrastructure, etc. In theory, NGOs try to supplement or complement the services being provided by the Government, and often try to focus primarily on assisting "the poorest of the poor". But in practice, where there is little government capacity, local populations can come to rely heavily on the services of NGOs. Currently there is much debate in Ethiopia about the potential role of NGOs, particularly international NGOs, in enhancing the capacity of Government institutions.

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NGOs have a number of strengths which they can bring to bear on the problem of food insecurity. By staying within an area for a number of years, they are often able to get close to the local community and help identify locally-appropriate solutions to problems. In most circumstances, NGOs are carrying out their programme in marginalized areas prone to food insecurity. Working at the micro-level, NGOs can be innovative and experimental, and can adapt or test national policies at the local level. NGOs have also become skilled at different 'participatory' techniques which aim to help local people be firmly in control of their own development, rather than merely being recipients of externally-imposed assistance.

3. CAUSES OF FOOD INSECURITY AND SHORTCOMINGS OF INTERVENTIONS

3.1 Factors contributing to current food insecurity*

The causes of food insecurity in Ethiopia are many and are both man-made and natural. The following could be cited as the major causes that resulted in Ethiopia becoming one of the most food insecure countries in the world:-

3.1.1 Rapid population growth and a high fertility rate which is greater than the increase in the level of productivity.

3.1.2 Lack of defined land-use policy and insecurity of land tenure which discourages farmers to invest in their land.

3.1.3 Degradation of the natural resource base, caused by high population growth, demand for arable land (eg cultivation of marginal land on excessively steep slopes which leads to rapid soil erosion), misappropriation of common property resources by the poor to secure income (such as felling of trees for fuel wood), absence of regulatory policy guidelines on the conservation and utilization of natural resources, and a limited supply of energy and lack of promotion of alternative energy sources.

3.1.4 Dominance of crop farming which is exclusively dependent on rainfed cultivation, together with erratic and unreliable rainfall, which often results in poor agricultural production.

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* *Not in their order of importance*

3.1.5 Limited access to, and the prohibitive cost of, modern agricultural technologies and inputs, such as improved seeds, fertilizers, pesticides, farm tools, etc.

3.1.6 High level of unemployment, brought about by the absence of sustainable local level employment opportunities outside the agricultural sector.

3.1.7 Women have not been provided with equal access to resources, such as credit, land, ownership of enterprises, etc.

3.1.8 Relatively high percentage of pre- and post- harvest losses and inadequate knowledge of food processing and preservation techniques, as well as limited emphasis given to training programmes that are aimed at reducing these losses.

3.1.9 Lack of access to formal credit and banking services and the often prohibitive lending rates of private money lenders.

3.1.10 The negative impact of inappropriate use and untargeted free distribution of food aid, which acts as a disincentive for farmers to produce.

3.1.11 Weak private sector investment in agriculture, agricultural input/output marketing, and related services such as transport, storage, etc.

3.1.12 Displacement of people caused by civil war, ethnic conflicts, and insecurity in neighboring countries has placed an additional burden on the country's resources and services.

3.1.13 Poor transportation network and distribution facilities which impair the adequate and timely delivery of agricultural inputs, promotion of basic social services, and the free flow of food to the market.

3.2. Shortcomings in Addressing Food Insecurity

Design and implementation shortcomings of interventions that are aimed at addressing food insecurity being promoted both by NGOs and the Government alike include the following:-

3.2.1 Inefficient extension system in terms of operational modalities, and structural set-up, and the involvement of extension agents in activities which conflict with their role (eg. tax collection, conscription, etc).

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3.2.2 Weak institutional capacity of government departments, both at national and regional levels.

3.2.3 Limited involvement of traditional institutions in programmes focused at alleviating food insecurity, and replacement of local knowledge with borrowed models of development without creating awareness and giving proper training.

3.2.4 Low level of representation and involvement of vulnerable community groups (women, the landless, the urban poor, the disabled, etc.) in the planning as well as management and evaluation of food security interventions.

3.2.5 Poor access to health services and facilities, as well as other basic social services, such as potable water, schools, milling services, etc.

3.2.6 Limited attempts made on the part of concerned government/NGO institutions towards promotion and utilization of fishery and other aquatic and terrestrial food resources.

3.2.7 Lack of baseline information and research data against which impacts are monitored and evaluated to shape future food security interventions. Moreover, a lack of systematic and coordinated data collection, compilation, acquisition procedure. There is also a very weak linkage between research and extension.

3.2.8 Lack of systematic rules and regulations regarding modalities of operation of NGOs in the country,

3.2.9 Lack of coordination and cooperation between NGOs working in the same area/sector in general and among NGOs engaged in the implementation of programmes aimed at addressing food insecurity in particular.

3.2.10 Lack of a conducive working relationship between concerned government departments and NGOs.

3.2.11 Planning of NGO programmes and activities tends to be more directed to immediate problem solving as opposed to potential focused planning. Moreover, they also lack linkages among goals, objectives and activities.

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3.2.12 Programmes and projects aimed to ensure food security are not multi-sectorally designed.

3.2.13 Limited meteorological data available to the agricultural sector at the national level and absence of it at regional and local levels.

3.2.14 Limited capacity on water balance data analysis at the national level.

4 RECOMMENDATIONS AND PROPOSED ACTION

4.1 Policy Issues

4.1.1 Policy options and new policy reforms should be debated and assessed by the different stakeholders for their impact at the national, regional and local level before consideration for implementation.

4.1.2 Policy guidelines and programmes related to food security should be tailored to suit regional and local circumstances. They should also identify the vulnerable groups that are food insecure at different levels.

4.1.3 The ability of individual farmers to mortgage land use rights should be secured. Moreover, the government should adopt land tenure policies that limit government involvement in land issues and reflect and support proper land tenure arrangements.

4.1.4 There is a need to assess the appropriateness and impact of the current land tenure policy on the agricultural sector, including its impact on conservation of the natural resource base of the country.

4.1.5 Misappropriation of common pool resources should be limited by enforcement of penalties and by seeking alternative means of survival for those relying on them.

4.1.6 Women's right in terms of access to credit, and productive resources (eg. land) as well as decision making should be guaranteed/enhanced.

4.1.7 The private sector should also be encouraged to be involved in the provision of extension services (including provision of modern technologies and inputs), transport and storage of agricultural products and even in the production process itself.

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4.1.8 The government should exert maximum effort towards the promotion and establishment of employment opportunities other than agriculture. The role of the private sector in this should be acknowledged and the environment should be attractive enough to encourage the same.

4.1.9 Priority should be given to promote small scale irrigation and harness the irrigation potential of the country

4.1.10 Programmes aimed at promotion of alternative energy sources should be subsidized and encouraged to reduce the heavy reliance of the population in urban centers on fuel wood.

4.1.11 Programmes aimed at awareness creation (alleviate socio-cultural barriers) and promotion of the use of other potential food resources, such as under-utilized forest (tree) products, aquatic fauna and flora, non-domesticated animals, etc. should be promoted. In addition, research towards identification of alternative food supplies from these untapped resources and how they can best be used to meet local food requirements needs to be carried out.

4.1.12 There is a need for the expansion of the road network as well as increased storage facilities in the country to enhance easy movement of food from surplus producing areas of the country to food deficit areas so as to improve the access of vulnerable population groups to food commodities at times of disaster and, more importantly, to promote linkages of markets and movement of food through normal market mechanisms.

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4.2. Issues related to cooperation and coordination

4.2.1 The Government of Ethiopia needs to encourage the full participation and contribution of individuals, community-based organizations (CBOs), NGOs and donors, in the drafting process of the country's Food Security Strategy. It also needs to circulate the draft as widely as possible and promote open debate. Finalization of the strategy should help to dispel current confusion over directions, and catalyze a concerted effort towards achieving food security by all actors. The Government needs to consider NGOs and other civil society organizations as partners in development and should involve them in the formulation of food security policy guidelines in general and in the planning, implementations and evaluation of programmes focused at alleviating food insecurity in particular.

4.2.2 The Government of Ethiopia needs to encourage NGOs and community based organizations (CBOs) to debate and clarify the contribution they can make towards achieving food security, in line with the National Food Security Strategy. The Government of Ethiopia needs to continue recognizing the value of NGOs and CBOs for innovation and experimentation, and should institutionalize ways of learning from these practical experiences.

4.2.3 Re-establishing and strengthening Household Food System information collection and analysis capability through better integration of activities and involvement of the Central Statistics Authority, research institutions, as well as government and NGOs from the national level down the line to regional, zonal and village level, with specific focus at the village level.

4.2.4 There should be integration of interventions and coordination among the different actors in the field of development. Food security interventions should therefore pay attention, in addition to interventions aimed at increasing agricultural production, to nutritional aspects, transportation and storage of food production and coordination of efforts, in order to avoid unnecessary duplication and wastage of resources. The Government should design a mechanism to ensure inter-sectoral integration between the various actors in the field of development (i.e. between the different line ministries and government departments, NGOs, etc.)

4.3 Issues related to project design and implementation

4.3.1 Focused planning as opposed to problem solving planning should be adopted. More over, plans should take into consideration the proper linkages among goals, objectives and inputs available to effect the programme.

4.3.2 Programmes must be designed with the full participation of the target community from the out set. The design process must be initiated and driven by the demand of beneficiaries not the dictates of government and non-government organizations committed to helping these communities.

4.3.3 Food security programmes should incorporate phase-out strategies from the initial design to minimize the dangers of dependency.

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4.3.4 Food security interventions should pay attention to the existing coping mechanisms/strategies of the food insecure.

4.3.5 In order to improve the food purchasing capacity of vulnerable community groups (women, disadvantaged children, the unemployed), promotion of income generating schemes should be given more attention.

4.3.6 Packages of improved agricultural technologies (fertilizer, improved seed etc.) need to be based on existing technologies and should make use of proven agricultural research and extension findings that are consistent with local resource endowments.

4.3.7 Emergency assistance should be targeted to the most vulnerable groups through the establishment of proper local early warning systems and the use of vulnerability indicators at community and household levels.

4.3.8 Rapid population growth should be addressed through sensitization and awareness programmes based on the National Population Policy and the implementation of culturally acceptable family planning programmes at the local level.

4.3.9 Disaster preparedness plans/strategies should give provision to the influx of refugees from neighboring countries.

4.3.10 There is a need for conducting multi-sectoral base line surveys with periodic follow-up surveys every two to three years to monitor performance and progress against anticipated results, identify major constraints, and propose adjustments in programme structure.

4.3.11 Donors need to adopt a flexible approach to cash and food aid to allow the use of each form of aid when and where it is most appropriate.

4.3.12 The need for technical backing while undertaking various Food For Work programmes (e.g. soil conservation, forest development etc.) needs to be emphasized in order to attain positive results.

4.4. Issues related to infrastructure and basic services

4.4.1 The Government should enhance the establishment of strong linkages between input and output markets to support improved agricultural productivity.

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4.4.2 The Government and NGOs in cooperation with the community, should facilitate the development of a rural banking system (as well as seed/cereal banks) and accelerate the development of micro-enterprises to support increased agricultural productivity.

4.4.3 The Government and NGOs in co-operation with the community, should promote the expansion of community based health services and facilities with emphasis on health promotion and disease prevention as well as promoting enhanced access to safe water sources, sanitation facilities, etc. in order to improve the health status and productivity of the farming community.

4.4.4 The Government needs to promote the expansion of meteorological stations and information dissemination facilities throughout the nation and train the staff required for this. Donors, multilateral organizations and NGOs should support the efforts of the government at the national, regional and local levels towards improving this service.

4.4.5 Hydrological data collection and analysis should be promoted at all levels and required resources should be looked at in the medium and long term periods. NGOs should work together at national, regional and local levels in improving and expanding the existing system.

4.4.6 The Government and NGOs should promote traditional irrigation systems through rehabilitation of the existing irrigation network and assisting in the implementation of small and medium scale irrigation schemes.

4.47 The Government and NGOs should endeavor to construct feeder roads to facilitate easy access to existing rural roads.

4.4.8 The Government, in cooperation with NGOs, should facilitate the production and promotion of appropriate rural technology centers.

4.5. Issues related to institutional development/capacity building

4.5.1 There is a need for building the capacity of grass root organizations with the support of donors and multi-lateral organizations, in order to address the specific training needs of CBOs.

4.5.2 Donors, multilateral organizations and other concerned parties should be involved in programmes aimed at building the institutional capacity of Government line ministries/departments at national, regional and

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local level through provision of training and technical advice as well as logistical support.

4.5.3 There is a need to strengthen the current extension support through better linkages between research and extension, the development of better extension packages, and the revision of the duties and responsibilities of extension agents, as well as other pertinent staff. There is a need to upgrade and enhance the skills of extension agents in all aspects of development and to develop agricultural extension packages in the areas of post-harvest agricultural activities, designing transparent training modules and credit management, etc.

4.5.4 There is a need to establish grassroots community organizations that are free from any coercive intervention of groups. In addition, existing community based organizations need to be strengthened and reorganized.

4.5.5 Training opportunities need to be made available to rural women to increase their knowledge of improved agricultural practices and strengthen their leadership skills.

4.5.6 Social and economic gender awareness and sensitization training needs to be given to policy makers, planners, village heads and male farmers to rectify current gender bias in development programmes.

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