A case study of Social Accountability and Safety Nets in Ethiopia

The Expanded Productive Safety Net Program (PSNP) Social Accountability Pilot within the Ethiopia Social Accountability Program Phase 2 (ESAP2) Bridging Phase, June 2016 – September 2018

Ethiopia
Social
Accountability
Program
Phase 2

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Abbreviations

BP   Bridging Phase (of ESAP2 towards ESAP3)

CSC   Community Score Card

CSO   Civil Society Organisation

CRC   Community Report Card

DA   Development Agent (frontline provider of PSNP services)

ESAP2   Ethiopia Social Accountability Program Phase 2

FG   Focus Group

FSTF   Food Security Task Force

FTA   Financial Transparency and Accountability

GRM   Grievance Redress Mechanism

HEW   Health Extension Worker

JAP   Joint Action Plan

K-SAC   Kebele Social Accountability Committee

MA   Management Agency (of ESAP2)

PIM   Program Implementation Manual (PSNP)

PLWHA   People Living with HIV/AIDS

PSNP   Productive Safety Nets Program

SA   Social Accountability

SAC   Social Accountability Committee

WoFED   Woreda Office of Finance and Economic Development

W-SAC   Woreda Social Accountability Committee

Executive Summary

This is a case study on the expanded social accountability pilot in the Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP) of Ethiopia. It is one of three case studies, which taken together form one of the outputs of the Ethiopia Social Accountability Program 2 extension in 2018. These three case studies will inform the next phase of the social accountability program of the government of Ethiopia: ESAP3. These case studies are: 1) Social Accountability and Safety Nets in Ethiopia; 2) Social Accountability and the Woreda Councils in Ethiopia; 3) Social Accountability and the Sector Ministries – the Case of the Ethiopia Roads Authority

The overall purpose of the 2018 case studies is to illustrate how 1) Social Accountability facilitation by CSOs has impacted citizen and service providers perceptions of each other, use of government resources, and local governance planning, and 2) what citizens and local authorities from regional levels down perceive as the threats and benefits that SA presents.

This case study answers the following questions, using qualitative methods:

- What can we learn from the practice of SA experts in the PSNP sector?
- How have CSO grantees and the Management Agency worked with the institutional PSNP environment?
- What have been typical issues raised by citizens, and what responses has been forthcoming – how were issues solved?
- How have stakeholders experienced their participation in the pilot?
- How have gender perspectives been integrated in the pilot?

The key findings of the PSNP case study are as follows. We conclude that in the 19 woreda where it operated, the expanded pilot has demonstrated that **SA is beneficial to the PSNP in five areas** that are widely recognized in the literature:

- **Mobilisation of the most vulnerable households**. These households had increased opportunity to claim their right to be signed on to the program and to express their views as PSNP clients without fear of losing benefits.

- **State action at kebele level** where the program is implemented. Providers and councils have deepened their understanding of the program and learned to implement transparent and accountable processes as per the Program Implementation Manual. This helped them to respond to issues raised by clients in the social accountability process. Service provider responsiveness and accountability at kebele level has enhanced, leading to improvements in the PSNP in terms of quality, efficiency and effectiveness. The pilot was less effective in extracting accountability from the regional level (nor was it designed to do so).

- **Information** has been more actively and regularly shared by providers with the public and clients so that they know about the program and can monitor what it delivers.

- **The interface meetings** provides a useful complement to the Kebele Appeals Committee (where it functions). Citizens and clients build an evidence base of under-performance using SA tools (score cards and surveys). Such issues and other implementation challenges were discussed and often resolved at kebele, woreda and to a lesser extend at regional interfaces.

- **Citizen action** encouraged providers to resolve a range of problems related to inclusion, accountability and transparency, which resulted in tangible improvements for PSNP clients. This improved trust and increased the likelihood that citizens/clients will stop unfair practices and that providers will use program resources as intended.

SA expert practice

The practice of SA experts engaged by the ESAP grantees shows a number of critical interventions, starting with **bringing the woreda PSNP stakeholders on board** with the social accountability program. In this initial phase, SA experts discovered that the PSNP Program Implementation Manual is not readily available locally. Providers developed capacity because they started consulting the SA and PSNP workbook developed for the SA experts and the PSNP Program Implementation Manual, and 'learned-by-doing' in the social accountability process.

During **mobilization of citizens and vulnerable households** for the social accountability process, the SA experts discovered that such households are known locally. They perceive the PSNP as a gift rather than as an entitlement that can be pursued. Much time of SA experts was spent on raising awareness among the public as well as the kebele providers about the PSNP charter and service standards. Woreda officials were keen to take the opportunity provided by ESAP to improve the PSNP about which they spoke openly and critically from the beginning.

Responding to the specific PSNP situation, SA experts made **some adjustments to the 'normal' social accountability process**, by enabling PSNP clients and services providers to be represented in the SAC; creating additional Focus Groups for PSNP clients (female and male client groups, temporary and direct support client groups); translating of the PSNP service standard developed for social accountability in local languages; and strong facilitation to enable vulnerable clients to speak up.

Most SA experts choose to work with the **Community Score Card** because they felt it has the most empowering effect. For many PSNP clients this was the first time to be invited to and speak in a community meeting. Two SA experts tested the **Citizen Report Card** and demonstrated that is can also have an empowering effect for PSNP clients, provided some adjustments are made to the original tool in ESAP's SA Guide, such as broad-based public awareness raising about entitlements; bringing the survey results to focus groups for separate citizen/client and providers reflection and subsequently to interface meetings for citizen and provider dialogue; and providing strong facilitation to enable PSNP clients to illustrate findings from their own experience in front of the PSNP providers.

The **interface meetings** give PSNP clients a unique opportunity to raise collective concerns with PSNP providers and government officials. The kebele interface is very effective, because the PSNP is much decentralized and most issues can be resolved locally without additional costs other than investing in good quality meetings where clients can be heard. Discussions avoid 'blaming' (even where malpractice is the proverbial white elephant in the room) and focus on solutions and avoiding future malpractice.

Where issues are beyond the kebele to resolve (e.g. delays in transfers) a **woreda interface meeting** is organized. Kebele providers are pleased when issues are taken to higher levels in this way: they find it challenging to communicate upwards about implementation problems. SA experts have found it challenging to encourage regional response: not enough was done by ESAP and the PSNP to bring the regional PSNPs on board with the pilot.

Joint-Action Plans are quite different from those in other sectors, as clients cannot do much to improve services: the ball is in the providers' camp. SA experts support the Social Accountability

Committee to **follow-up with providers** until action is taken and organize exchange visits among SACs so that they can learn practically from each-others attempts to improve services for PSNP clients.

Contrary to other sectors in which ESAP operates, there is no community contribution to realise the PSNP Joint-Acton Plans. Rather, SA ensures that the **program resources are put to better use**. For instance, very few woredas spend the contingency budget for clients that may have been overlooked during targeting, although there are many such cases and the contingency budget is specifically intended for that purpose.

SA experts in the institutional environment

SA experts have mainly interacted with kebele level PSNP actors, while maintaining a relationship with the Woreda Food Security Task Force. Only two SA experts worked with the Kebele Appeals Committee, in other woredas this mechanism was only functional during targeting. Many SA experts worked with the council, which in practice channels complaints to the responsible actors.

The MA had limited engagement with the institutional environment. Its main function was to monitor and provide technical support to the implementation of the pilot by the ESAP grantees. The MA did analyse PSNP data sheets to support regional policy dialogue on progress (or lack thereof) with service improvements. Regional responsiveness has been disappointing, although some regions begin to recognize the importance of social accountability also for higher level responsiveness. In part this happens after regions join field monitoring of the pilot woredas, which they tend to experience as 'eye-opening'.

Typical issues raised and provider responses

1. **Fair and transparent client selection** – issues raised across the 19 woreda relate to unfair targeting and graduation. Main responses have been retargeting 'by the book', and posting of client lists so that citizens can appeal. Not all unfairly targeted households can be easily unregistered, and at least one of the pilot woredas has taken a phase approach to this sensitive question.
2. **Timely, predictable and appropriate transfers/primacy of transfers** – many issues related to transfer payments were raised, including delays. Where feasible, woreda finance office tracked payments and this improved timeliness; providers post transfer schedules, which improves predictability; in one woreda temporary replacement cards were issued by the woreda, pending replacement of a lost client card by the region. This ensures clients who have lost their card do not miss payments. Issues raised about reduction in daily labour rates have not received a satisfactory explanation from the region (the woredas do not understand why this was done), and this continues to raise unrest among clients and to erode trust in providers that was carefully build with pilot.
3. **Public works** – Clients complain about labour related issues such as: having to work more than the 5 days required; women working as long and as much as men, while there are provisions that take women's needs into account; distance too far from the home; and insufficient resources to complete the public works. Providers could easily respect the rules once they were made aware of them in the social accountability process.
4. **Cash first** – In Tigray one woreda receives cash and the neighbouring woreda receives in kind payments. Clients consider this unfair. The issue has not been explained and not been resolved.

5. **Gender equity** - In general, through their participation in the SA process, clients and providers gained a better understanding about gender equity in the program and why this is important. They are thus better able to check that their rights are met (for clients) and to respond to program requirements in this area (for providers). It is encouraging to see that gender equity principles, for instance prioritise female-headed households during targeting, and transfer pregnant women from Public Works to temporary direct support, make sense locally and can fairly easily be implemented when providers are called to respect the rules during an interface meeting.

Key lessons for future PSNP and SA integration

- Providers improved implementation of the PSNP using the SA process: learning by doing. This proved an effective approach and should form the core of any future SA - PSNP integration.

- Much time has been spent on awareness raising among citizens/clients and kebele providers alike, about PSNP entitlements and processes. This can be sustained by the Social Accountability Committee, provided some incentives are organised for the long term. For future awareness raising, ESAP3 grantees could benefit from access to PSNP communication materials/strategy.

- The PSNP is complex and there are limitations to the knowledge that SA experts can have about it. Where PSNP experts engage in a more structured manner with the SA experts (as is the case with the other sectors) they can easily make program knowledge available to the SA process. This requires political will and commitment from the top.

- The pilot gained insights into critical issues around which citizens can monitor PSNP performance using a score card. A standardized score card could be developed for PSPN assessment by clients.

- The Citizen Report Card, when updated with lessons from the pilot, can manage more complexity than Citizen Score Cards, and could be used across woredas for specific issues that are known to be problematic in PSNP. For such complex accountability interventions, ESAP and PSNP will need to work together in a much more structured and formalised manner, detailing regional responsibilities and complementarity between the two programs.

- The Kebele Appeals Committee is mainly functioning during targeting but does not function for grievance redress. The council channels complaints which is not their role. Interface meetings can handle collective complaints, and Grievance Redress Mechanisms may be able to handle individual complaints and appeals. PSNP could consider shifting complaints handling to the Grievance Redress Mechanism, and collaborate with ESAP to make such a shift work through 'learning-by-doing' of GRM officers in the social accountability process.

- The government system does not seem to invite upward communication about implementation difficulties in the PSNP. This forces SA experts into bringing issues to the attention of the regional government, which is not their role. Ideally the providers and local CSOs that can represent clients should have access to regional interface meeting. ESAP3 will expand social accountability to regional (e.g. PSNP) support functions to decentralised program implementation. The PSNP could consider creating incentives for kebele providers and woreda PSNP officials to share implementation problems with the region.

1 Introduction

The Ethiopia Social Accountability Program 2 aims to give voice to all citizens so they can express their needs and concerns regarding basic public services. ESAP2 opens up existing and new channels of communication between citizens and responsible government bodies, so they can work together to improve quality and delivery of services. CSOs are contracted to facilitate this process in five decentralized, pro-poor sectors; education, health, water, agriculture and rural roads. The programme has been operational in 223 woredas (around a quarter of the total) and has been tasked to double that number in the next phase.

In 2014, the government endorsed a National Social Protection Policy. It seeks to address depth and severity of poverty which have not reduced as expected due to the inability of the ultra-poor to benefit from the national economic growth. The policy focuses among others on promoting productive safety nets and increasing equitable access to basic social services. In this context, and in the same year, a first Productive Safety Nets Program pilot in ESAP2 began 'to find ways to improve the quality of PSNP service delivery to PSNP Service Users'. The pilot was carried out in 12 kebeles divided over four woredas (key lessons in box 1). In 2016 the pilot expanded to 19 woredas[1], as shown in table 1. Considering the positive results of the pilots with improved targeting of vulnerable groups and more responsive frontline service delivery to PSNP clients, ESAP3 will work in all PSNP woredas where the program is operating, and where citizens identify PSNP as one of the priority sectors for social accountability.

This case study answers the following questions:

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- What have been typical issues raised by citizens, and what responses has been forthcoming – how were issues solved?
- How have stakeholders experienced their participation in the pilot?
- How have gender perspectives been integrated in the pilots?

Table 1: Pilot regions, woredas and CSO grantees

Region	Woreda	Contractor	Implementor
Amhara	Libo kemkem	ADA	SOS Sahel
	Ebinat		ADA
	Tenta	WSA	AWA
	Kalu		
Oromia	Seru	EOC	EOC
	Dodota		MENA
	Kuyu*	Cheshire	HUNDEE
SNNP	Gibe	Love in Action Ethiopia (LIAE)	
	Lemo		
	Duna		
	Soro		
	Shebedino*	AFSR	BICDO
	Misha	ADV	PPRO
Tigray	Raya Azebo*	ACSOT	HBAB
	Ofla		M4M
	Erob*		ADCS
	Saeseitseab emba		
Somalie	Kebribeyah	OWDA	CDSA
Afar	Gewane	Rohi Weddu	
* Woredas covered in the first and expanded pilot			

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[1] Although not officially part of the pilot, ESAP partner LIAE also facilitated SA in PSNP Shashogo woreda, basically because it was easy for the organisation to cover all woredas in Hadiya zone.

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> *Box 1: Lessons first PSNP Social Accountability Pilot*
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> The successful first pilot provided a number of lessons on appropriate SA tools, working modalities and procedures, including:
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> - **SA Tools.** The Community Score Card (CSC) was the most widely used tool. The PSNP has many stakeholders, which makes the CSC a good fit and if applied with high quality facilitation skills, the CSC has significant potential. However, it is possible to experiment with other tools as well (e.g. Citizen Report Card, Public Expenditure Tracking Survey, etc.).
> - **Interface Meetings.** In the beginning, PSNP Service Users were shy to confirm issues they had listed, rated and scored in separate FGs and sometimes had difficulty understanding results of scoring. The facilitation skills of ESAP partners are therefore critical to encourage open meetings and ensure all understand. Additional steps may need to be taken to build the confidence of the PSNP Service Users prior to the Interface Meetings.
> - **Joint Action Plans. (JAPs).** It is important that all PSNP stakeholders, especially Woreda Food Security Core Process, attend Interface Meetings in which JAPs are developed. Preliminary monitoring results are very positive with a number of grassroots solutions emerging to improve PSNP service delivery.

1.1 Methodology

This is one of 3 case studies developed by the ESAP2 MA at the end of the program as stand-alone documents. Each case study illustrates 1) how SA facilitation by CSOs has impacted perceptions of service providers and citizens of the other, resource availability to address specific issues, conflict/dispute resolution, local governance in the sense of kebele, woreda level planning, and 2) what citizens and local authorities from regional levels down perceive as the threats and benefits that SA presents.

The case studies are based on different sources of information. ESAP contracting partners were supported with technical expertise during three writeshops in April, July and October. The writeshops aim to help contract leads to share and reflect on the SA practice and the SA innovation in their cluster contract, and to write about it in an honest way. This enables them to better capture qualitative cases which illustrate how SA delivers for service providers and citizens and contributes to wider systems change and adaptation. The MA analyses this qualitative information which is presented in quarterly reports.

The MA has documented all regional meetings with ESAP stakeholders from the government, including the Bureau of Finance and Economic Development with its Financial Transparency and Accountability (FTA) program, sector bureaus, the Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM), the regional council and Ombudsman Branch office (where available),

Detailed monitoring and mission reports the MA and development partners are available as additional sources of information. We reflect quarterly with our team on the insights we gain from these field visits - looking for patterns, trends and cases that show typical examples of how SA works and what seems to shift. We take note of studies and papers produced by others about our work (see references).

Finally, for each of the cases, the SA expert of the ESAP2 MA has led a team of local SA experts who were familiar with the specific case topic to write the case together – where needed seeking additional information through interviews. In this case of the expanded PSNP pilot, a writeshop was organized with all woreda level SA experts that were directly involved in the pilot.

1.2 What is the PSNP?

The Productive Safety Net Program (PSNP) of the government of Ethiopia targets rural households vulnerable to food insecurity. It provides transfers in cash or in kind to selected clients for which they must in turn provide labour in Public Works. Those who are unable to work such as people with disabilities, elderly, and pregnant and lactating women without a support network receive Permanent or Temporary Direct Support. Temporary Direct Support clients are expected to participate in antenatal care or counselling sessions, in nutrition Behaviour Change Communication, child growth monitoring, and child vaccination. Clients can also be supported to take advantage of pro-poor services of the government which may enable them to improve their household status and become food secure. The voluntary 'livelihoods component' of the program aims to build household assets, by providing technical, financial and business skills advice/training; supporting business plan development; and referring clients to appropriate Institutions for financing. In the case of drought and other emergencies that threaten food security, the PSNP can temporarily expand to provide a safety net to those who risk falling into food insecurity. At the start of the expanded pilot in 2016, the PSNP reached 8 million people in 319 woredas in 8 regions and operated with an annual budget of 500 million USD.

Box 2: PSNP principles and targets

- **Fair and Transparent client Selection**. client are selected through community-based targeting, with an effective appeal mechanism to address inclusion or exclusion errors. **Indicator:** targeting and graduation processes are fair.

- **Timely, Predictable and Appropriate Transfers.** Transfers can be considered predictable if PSNP clients have timely knowledge of their eligibility for the program, and they know what type of transfer they will receive, how much of this transfer they will receive, and when they will receive it. A transfer is timely if it is provided to clients at the point in time during the year when they need the support. A transfer is appropriate if it meets the needs of households. *indicators:* Payment received at less than 3 hours walking distance; value of at least 15kg of cereals plus 4kg of pulses/person/month

- **Primacy of Transfers**. Since the PSNP is primarily a safety net, ensuring that clients receive transfers takes priority over all other considerations. Transfers should not be delayed for any reason, including those related to public works (PW) implementation. **Indicator:** Payment received within 20 days for cash and 30 days for food.

- **Public Works Concerns.** PW undertaken through the PSNP such as rehabilitation of the natural resource base and the provision of infrastructure cover issues such as the selection of PW subprojects, the quality of their design, their performance, operations and maintenance. **Indicators:** PWs planned and implemented following GoE's Guidelines integrated with DRR/Adaptation and mitigation plan; PWs reflect needs of client; PWs plans prepared and implemented following gender and social development considerations

- **Cash-first Principle.** When possible cash should be the primary form of transfer. This assists with the stimulation of markets – since people spend their cash in local markets – and the move away from food aid.

- **Gender Equity**. The PSNP is designed to respond to the unique needs, interests and capabilities of men and women to ensure that they benefit equally from the Program.

2. The practice of SA experts in the PSNP sector

The SA process generally follows five main steps, including: (i) Access to Information; (ii) Assessment with SA tools; (iii) Interface Meeting; (iv) Joint Action Plan Implementation; and (v) Monitoring Service Improvements. These are outlined below:

- **Step 1 Access to Information:** The Social Accountability process starts with access to information about service standards, plan targets and budgets. SA experts make sure that citizens have the confidence and build the relationships that help them to ask for such information.
- **Step 2 Assessment with SA Tools:** SA experts enable the use of Social Accountability tools, so that Service Users can easily assess the service situation from various perspectives.
- **Step 3 Interface Meeting:** When the assessment is complete, interface meetings are organized by SA experts to facilitate dialogue with providers about the service issues, and to identify and agree among all stakeholders on local solutions.
- **Step 4 Joint Action Plan Implementation:** A Joint Action Plan is implemented as agreed between citizens, Service Providers and woreda officials during the kebele or woreda level interface meetings.
- **Step 5 Monitoring Service Improvements:** Improvements are monitored by citizens and when performance dwindles, the Social Accountability process starts again.

Figure 1: Social Accountability Cycle

In this chapter 2 we discuss the kebele and woreda based practice of the SA experts at various stages of the SA process in PSNP:

1. Getting started with woreda PSNP stakeholders
2. Mobilisation and awareness raising (access to information)
3. PSNP representatives in the Kebele SAC and Focus Groups
4. SA tools
5. Interface – kebele
6. Interface – woreda
7. Joint actions and monitoring
8. Resource mobilisation

2.1 Getting started with woreda PSNP stakeholders

At the start of the SA process, SA experts contracted and trained by the MA conducted familiarisation discussions with woreda PSNP service providers to build support and gain access to information. Because the SA experts had already developed good relationships in the woreda, and had successfully completed more than one SA cycle, they reportedly did not encounter much resistance. For instance, LIAE had already worked in the agriculture sector and found it easy to move to the PSNP. Experts and PSNP woreda officials jointly identified and visited targeted kebeles where possible, and worked to obtain information that can help to assess PSNP services. AWA used the PSNP Project Implementation Manual (PIM)[2], to identify useful information that could be gathered, and received client identification criteria and lists, performance reports, and wage and food distribution reports from the woreda agriculture office FSTF.

SA experts found that the PIM is not readily available among kebele providers, so they are not always well informed about PSNP service standards. The SA experts therefore also targeted these frontline providers (e.g. the Development Agents and the Health Extension Workers) during public awareness activities about PSNP service standards. Access to information is important because it enables providers to use appropriate knowledge in their daily contacts with PSNP clients and improves the functioning of the kebele Food Security Task Force (FSTF) and the Kebele Appeals Committee (KAC) of which they are supposed to be member. Although PSNP training is organised annually at regional level, kebele stakeholders do not appear to have proper awareness of the PSNP standards. Several woreda PSNP officials expressed appreciation of the training materials and data collection sheet provided during the extended pilot (see annex), which they claim are much simpler and clearer than materials at their disposal[3]. One woreda official observed that *"it creates more confidence that we can live up to the standard"*.

Since SA project resources and time were limited[4], SA experts were advised to organise woreda level 'start-up' meetings early on in the ESAP2 Bridging Phase (BP), which would double-up as SA refresher training and serve to introduce the pilot. The Bridging Phase used a 'light approach' to keep SA on the agenda in the woreda and kebeles. Grantees involved in the pilot received an additional 5,000 USD[5] per woreda which they mainly used to fund SAC training on PSNP, focus group discussions and interface meetings in the kebeles and woredas.

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[2] The PIM was made available during training by the MA with the PSNP team. Other materials made available to the SA experts were a workbook describing PSNP basics and the institutional environment, and a PSNP standards format against which services could be assessed. The standards format doubled as data collection sheet for pilot monitoring.

[3] ADCS reported that the SA project supported a taskforce that prepared a technical manual on major public works in local language, organised training and distributed manuals. SA experts have suggested the PSNP PIM also be translated into local languages, as it is only available in Amharic and English.

[4] For various reasons beyond our control, timeframes for the ESAP2 Bridging Phase shifted several times during implementation. This meant SA experts had to rush at the start in May 2016, after a few months stretch resources from December 2016 to September 2017, then start-up again for the extension in February 2018. The state of emergency at the end of September 2016 and other security issues during the implementation period further added to the challenge of facilitating the SA projects during the pilot.

[5] This amount was for the BP period (effectively June 2016-September 2017), in the subsequent extension period (effectively March – September 2018) the pilot became part of ongoing SA project activities, and no additional resources were available.

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2.2 Mobilisation and awareness raising

At the start of an SA process, it is important to reach deep into the kebele to ensure that vulnerable groups receive basic information, which is achieved through mobilisation and awareness raising activities. PSNP clients are known from the target list, so their invitation is in principle straight forward. However, SA experts remarked that female headed household and people with disabilities tend to be overlooked and are normally not invited to community meetings. SA experts discussed with the Kebele SA Committee how such households could be mobilised. It could be challenging to reach those who may have been missed out during targeting, but experience shows that such households are usually known locally – what lacks is the capability to deal with such cases. SA experts encourage anyone with an interest in the PSNP to be invited into the SA process. In order to attract people to awareness gatherings it proved good practice to post the PSNP service standard in public areas.

Start-up meetings in the PSNP woredas were organised in collaboration with the Woreda SAC, and in consultation with the woreda level PSNP stakeholders. The meetings primarily concentrated on transparency, accountability and responsiveness (e.g. KAC) to issues raised by client regarding targeting, public works, gender and graduation. In some cases, SA experts made use of the posters developed by the PSNP, but these did not appear to be widely available. It was remarkable at this early stage of working with the PSNP program that service providers spoke openly and quite critically about the PSNP program. One official was quoted referring to the program as "problematic from targeting to graduation" and expressing the hope that SA would help improve services. In woredas where the first pilot had taken

> **Box 3: Introducing SA to PSNP stakeholders**
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> Rohi Weddu and the Gewane woreda pastoral and rural development office organized a one-day training on PSNP and SA for service providers, PSNP clients, and other community groups.
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> The CSO writes that *"this training opened the eyes of PSNP clients, service providers and service receivers to apply for PSNP standards"*. Participants appreciated the training, as it enabled them to better understand their rights and responsibilities.
>
> Most of them believed that there were issues regarding targeting, and they believe this training will enable them to properly apply the standards during the upcoming re-targeting process. Participants also believe that the transfer system is not in line with the standards, because there are transfer delays for both cash and in kind, and most clients travel more than 3 hours to receive their transfer and SA can help correcting these issues.
>
> In his closing speech, the pastoral office said that SA in the PSNP sector is most important to strengthen the current PSNP system at woreda and community level by filling the gap between PSNP service providers and PSNP clients.

place, the ESAP2 experience with PSNP was reviewed and groups identified a number of remaining issues. In the other 15 PSNP woredas, the knowledge shared during the meeting also began to trigger the identification of issues, as illustrated in box 3. The extended pilot apparently started on a positive note.

2.3 PSNP representatives in the Kebele SAC and Focus Groups

The existing Kebele SACs were restructured to include PSNP stakeholders, namely a representative each from the PSNP clients and the Kebele Food Security Taskforce. The kebele council supports the selection of citizens in the SAC and Focus Groups (FG). SA experts advised to select people who are known and respected by others, who can volunteer and have a willingness to reach out to others. New Kebele SACs were established in scale-up kebeles in all ESAP2 woredas. Some PSNP examples: in Kuyu

woreda the number of kebeles was scaled from 3 to 23 kebele SACs, of which 20 in PSNP kebeles, and Misha woreda from 3 to 15 kebeles, all covered by the PSNP. The number of SA Committee members as well as the composition differs and is a reflection of local diversity in terms of community organisations and traditional structures. SA experts work towards the target of 30% women in the SAC, as per the MA guidelines. SA experts did not report any challenges related to PSNP participation in the SAC, other than the challenges which are well known in general, related to government staff turn-over and limited availability of woreda officials.

Focus Groups (FGs) are an important component of the Community Score Card process. With FGs we recognise that the community is not a homogenous entity, but rather a diverse collection of social groups with at times conflicting interests. In ESAP2, SA experts used a definition of vulnerability based on which they form FGs (youth, women, elderly, People with Disabilities (PwD) and People Living with HIV/Aids (PLWHA)). The definition is adjusted to local diversity and sector policies (e.g. a group of pregnant women and mothers with children under 5 in the health sector).

For the expanded PSNP pilot, SA experts changed the way they usually form FGs by accommodating one or more groups of PSNP clients. WSA focused for Public Works on women, youth and farmers, and for Direct Support on People with Disabilities and People Living with HIV/Aids. LIA organised 4 FGs, 2 (one female, one male) for PSNP clients and 2 (one female, one male) for non-clients who also have an opinion about PSNP and can support the cause of PSNP clients. SA experts generally involve the Kebele Council in the selection FG members who are respected and in touch with others in the wider 'social group'. The council will also confirm the list of FG members.

The Kebele SACs and FG members received SA training, which basically followed the essentials from the PSNP training that the SA experts received from the ESAP2 MA and the PSNP team (June 2016). There are some challenges with training PSNP clients, who are oftentimes illiterate. However, experienced SA experts have found ways to make such participants feel comfortable among 'more educated' fellow citizens and service providers in the group. Ayliffe, a researcher who recently took part in a multi-country study the effects of social accountability on safety nets programs, found that "ESAP training is consistently cited by both citizens and service providers as having raised awareness about social accountability. Critically, the training provided by the SAIPs appears to be unique: none of our respondents had ever received similar awareness-raising from any other source." (2018 pg 32)

After training, SA experts supported the Woreda SAC to provide the PSNP standards to the FGs and to facilitate the Community Score Card (CSC) process to assess the PSNP services based on standards selected by the FG (see box 4). The SA experts translated the standard into local language, such as Sidamign in Shebedino woreda. Although many clients are illiterate, it helps recollection when standards can be shared orally in a language that they are most familiar with. PSNP clients (and some providers for that matter) perceive the PSNP as charity and consequently they feel they have no right to complain about it. Clients believe that authorities have the power to delay or speed up benefits, and that these are given out of the good will of the government. SA experts stress the fact that PSNP is an entitlement for all that fit the criteria and parameters of the program, and that providers have to respect the service standards.

FGs tend to focus on a few issues they feel strongly about. In Libo Kemkem for instance, FGs focused on standards and mechanisms of targeting and retargeting PSNP clients. In this process, the PSNP clients learn about the retargeting process and the fact that service providers were expected to be

accountable. Participants identified the main achievements and challenges faced so far, which they prepared to present at the kebele interface meeting.

2.4 SA tools

Community Score Card

Most SA experts have chosen to work with the CSC, since it is the SA tool with the most empowering effects, which fits well with the PSNP clients who regard the services as a privilege, not an entitlement.

Before conducting the FGs, it is good practice to ensure that PSNP standards are posted in offices and public meeting places, so that awareness is raised among service providers and clients about standards improves. The standards help the FGs to identify service issues. During the ESAP-BP the SAC took the lead in facilitating the FGs

> **Box 4: The Community Score Card in ESAP**
>
> Community score cards are the most widely-used social accountability tool in the pilot and the process involves the following steps:
>
> - awareness-raising about the PSNP charter among community, clients and providers, followed by selection of representatives in the SA Committee (one client, one provider) and client focus groups (female and male);
> - training of SA Committee, focus groups and service providers on both social accountability and PSNP service standards;
> - discussions by service user focus groups (composed of the selected client representatives and other social groups) and service provider focus groups to separately score services, using the PSNP service standard as a checklist to identify priority issues of from a gender and social inclusion perspective;
> - interface meetings to which the whole community is invited between service users (clients and no-clients) and service providers at both *kebele* and *woreda* levels (where needed) to discuss and agree priorities and to develop a joint action plan;
> - monitoring of service improvements from a gender and social inclusion perspective and, as necessary, repeating of the score card process.
>
> The CSC guidance from ESAP2 can be downloaded here: http://esap2.org.et/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/SA%20Chapter%205.pdf

and subsequent prioritization/scoring of indicators, which were then discussed at interface meeting to identify joint actions.

In the beginning, PSNP service users are usually shy to confirm issues they had listed, rated and scored in separate FGs. For most, this was the first time that they were coming together in an open forum to discuss PSNP service provision. With skilful facilitation, providers and users managed to openly debate, score and prioritize the issues together. JAPs are subsequently prepared to improve PSNP services. Generally, progressive change is happening due to committed SAC volunteers.

Citizen Report Card

Two woredas from the first pilot, Kuyu and Ofla, selected the Citizen Report Card (CRC) for the expanded pilot phase. CRC assesses service satisfaction levels with a survey methodology. In one of the ESAP2 learning events SA experts explained why they preferred CRC over the CSC: "CRC is 'less empowering', less oriented to service improvement results, time consuming, and needing costly external expertise[6]". The SA experts in Kuyu and Ofla wanted to test if the tool could be effective when used for a larger number of kebeles.

In Ofla woreda, a CRC was conducted among 250 PSNP clients in five kebeles (Hashenge, Hegumberda, Menkere, Adi Golo and Zata kebele). At the beginning of the process, the SA expert had

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[6] Under ESAP2, partners were required to hire external expertise to ensure quality of survey design, data collection and analysis.

an in-depth discussion with the W-SACs to design the CRC questionnaire, which was tested in an easily accessible kebele of the woreda with 10 community members. Fresh university graduates (5) were trained as enumerators. Data were analysed with statistical software. The SA expert made a simple presentation of the findings and SAC members provided enriching feedback.

In order to achieving service improvements, the SA expert together with the SAC organized an interface meeting (which is not part of the CRC methodology in ESAP's original SA guide: the SA guide stops with a wide dissemination of the findings), calling all key stakeholders in the woredas. During

> **Box 5: Female PSNP clients claim their fair share**
>
> Before SA-PSNP implementation in Gewane woreda (Rohi Weddu), PSNP payment was used by the husband only, and women could not claim their rights. This issue was raised by women during FGs. A JAP was developed where the SA project, key PSNP stakeholders and service providers organized a number of awareness raising events for PSNP husband's clients. In addition, a number of PSNP wife clients were supported to express their right to use the transfer equally with their husbands. Initially, some husbands struggled to accept the issue, but after several interventions husbands now accept the concept and are willing to progress.
>
> All PSNP clients have a PSNP client book with identification number. For those clients that are couples, the PSNP client book has a picture of husband and wife included. This enhances accountability and transparency in the PSNP program. The payment/transfer is written in the book, as per the engagement in Public Works. Attendance and other important data are also captured properly now as a result of the SA project.

this event the SA expert summarized the findings of the CRC survey, after which stakeholders formulated a JAP that was implemented in the woreda. Asked about the key lessons and way forward, Mums for Mum's SA expert said:

> *"the CRC process can be empowering for the community when it is complemented with FG's about citizens' entitlement to services and frequent sensitization about service standards and the roles of different actors in service delivery. One must use easy survey methods and make a presentation of the results that is understandable for all citizens. The survey findings can also be fed into the planning process of the sector."*

This experience demonstrates that the CRC could become a preferred method, but it requires some adjustments to the methodology presented in the ESAP2 SA Guide.

In the case of Kuyu, the CRC tool implementation took a very long time due to various reasons, including staff turnover in the implementing organisation HUNDEE and unrest in Oromia region. At the interface meeting in May 2018, PSNP clients and service providers agreed that most of the issues raised in the CRC were already addressed by the service providers as part of monitoring and follow-up activities from the CSC in the first pilot. They included a few unsolved issues in a new JAP.

The limitation of both CRCs was the fairly poor analysis of the results, with no gender analysis and no analysis of the differences in responses between PSNP clients and non-clients, although data were collected with a gender and PSNP profile of the respondent. This points at the need to much more clearly spell out the CRC methodology. This could include preparing standard surveys that can be adapted to local needs (for instance based on the sector datasheets developed during ESAP2 from issues that were often raised by citizens during the social accountability process), and describing the way data should be analysed, including disaggregating results for gender.

Although the CRC in Kuyu almost took two years to complete and did not add much to the original CSC exercise, it did reveal similar issues and covered many more kebeles than a CSC which is typically implemented a kebele level. CRC seems worthy of the ESAP3 tool box, provided that it is adjusted with steps such as broad-based awareness raising about entitlements; bringing the results to FGs for separate citizen/client and providers reflection and subsequently to interface meetings for citizen and provider dialogue; and providing strong facilitation to enable PSNP clients to illustrate findings from their own experience in front of the PSNP providers.

2.5 Interface – kebele

The ESAP interface gives PSNP clients a unique opportunity to collectively raise concerns with PSNP providers and government officials. These meetings promote open and frank dialogue, unlike other government meetings which tend to focus on top-down information-sharing. The uniqueness of the ESAP interface was confirmed by clients as well as providers and officials in the Ayliffe case study (2018).

The interface with PSNP client is most effective at kebele level, because the PSNP is much decentralised and many issues can be solved directly at kebele level. In the beginning, PSNP client are usually shy to confirm issues they have listed, rated and scored in the separate FGs. For most of them, this is the first time to come together in an open forum to discuss PSNP service provision. With facilitation, providers and users manage to openly debate, score and prioritize the issues together. Some issues can be immediately addressed, e.g. posting the payment schedule and the list of PSNP clients, or setting a date for re-targeting,

> *Box 6: A 3-day training, Focus Groups, and interface experiment*
>
> In Raya Azebo woreda, SA training, Focus Groups and interface meeting were organized at kebeles for 3 consecutive days with a total of 480 participants, mostly citizens. The citizen groups (including PSNP clients) and kebele officials made "hot" demands to woreda officials for areas of interest that need to be solved, such as:
>
> - Pregnant women and elders are participating in public works. The reason given is quotas and less monitoring by the Kebele Appeals Committee.
> - Graduation of households is based on quota not on fulfilling graduation criteria.
>
> During the interface meeting multiple questions were raised and many of these got a satisfactory response and/or were solved immediately after discussion.

and this shows PSNP client that providers are willing to listen and improve the services. Facilitation of focussed on dialogue and avoids openly blaming individuals for malpractice, even where this may be the case. There are no accounts of serious conflict during interface meetings. Discussions are solution oriented: How can the situation be improved, sustainably?

We observed at some interface meetings that SACs had developed lists of potential clients. We recommended avoiding such detail at interface meetings. These meetings should rather focus on making sure the targeting processes and Kebele Appeals Committee work well, so that targeting issues can be avoided in the future.

2.6 Interface – woreda

The SA experts and the Woreda SAC conduct woreda interface meetings for issues that cannot be resolved by the kebele, such as delays in transfer. Selected PSNP clients and kebele providers (kebele FSTF and KAC) meet with woreda service providers (woreda food security core process, woreda

administration, Woreda Office of Finance and Economic Development (WoFED), Social Security office, and council). It is remarkable that client, the poorest of the poor, and providers can discuss on equal footing. In some cases this proves more difficult to realize compared to SA processes in other sectors, but not everywhere. It is clear that much depends on the quality of facilitation by the SA experts, and that a previous SA experience in the woreda helps citizen engagement in a subsequent SA process cycle.

It can be challenging to engage woreda officials in these meetings, as they often claim to be too busy with other duties, such as an urgent political meeting. SA experts suspect that there could be other motives, but this is of course hard to substantiate. Fact is that many times interface meeting cannot be conducted as per the original schedule and this appears to be more often the case for PSNP. SA experts are advised to invite zonal and/or regional PSNP officials, which could put pressure on the woreda to participate (in addition to gaining

> **Box 7: JAP Issues and achievements Misha woreda**
>
> In its final meeting with the SA expert, the SAC of Misha woreda noted the following issues and achievements:
>
> - The selection was not inclusive of HIV positives and disables. Most client were council's families, traders and others, and the ultra-poor were not aware of the PSNP. Appropriate clients were replaced in the program.
> - Graduation was not transparent and was based on quota not on food security of the household. This is still pending, though clients are now informed on time.
> - The payment was not regular and could only be received after two or more months. Proper and timely transfer improved.
> - The public works locations are not convenient and very far from client residences. New locations for public works decreased distances.
> - Pregnant women were working for 6 and more hours. Women work load decreased and pregnant women no longer have to do public work.
>
> The report concludes with the observation that clients were able to participate in the PSNP implementation process which was facilitated by kebele and Woreda PSNP officers.

responses to complex questions), but this proves easier said than done when the region is not yet fully on board as in the case of this pilot[7]. ESAP is still viewed as an initiative to extract local accountability.

SA experts observe that kebele providers can also find it challenging to be heard by woreda officials: the government system mostly communicated top-down. Ayliffe (2018) documented such a case:

> *Interviewer: When people raise concerns ...how do you tell these complaints to the woreda officials, is this through formal letter or...?*
>
> *Respondent: As a DA, if I complain a lot they may re-assign me to another area (Kebele DA)*

Again, it is hard to substantiate whether DAs are actively dis-incentivised to share problems upwards, but fact is that the worries among DAs are real. SA experts report that the DAs are pleased when issues they would like to see improved are taken up to higher levels through the SA process.

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[7] The report of the first pilot observes: "Officials at woreda level perceive the PSNP as a sensitive area, but formal communication and assurance from federal level on the program together with further sensitization helped the process to move forward." Although efforts were made by the ESAP2 MA and the PSNP team, as explained in section 3, the same level of assurance may not have be achieved during the expanded pilot.

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2.7 Joint actions and monitoring

The nature of the PSNP Joint Action Plan (JAPs) is quite different from the JAPs in other sectors in which ESAP operates. Clients can do little to improve services, apart from taking their responsibilities as spelled out in the client charter, such as checking that their rights are respected and taking action when they are not, and participating in re-targeting. The ball is in the camp of the providers.

Generally, we see progressive change happening when SACs are committed enough to follow up with responsible providers until action is taken (see box 8). Where solutions require budget, SACs work to ensure that the issues are taken as an input to the woreda annual plan of the new fiscal year.

During implementation of the JAP, SA experts organised exchange visits so that SACs can learn from each other on leadership to the SA process and effective improvement of service priorities. See box 9 on the next page for an example of an exchange visit.

> **Box 8: A mini-public expenditure tracking exercise**
>
> After the JAP was prepared in Shashogo woreda, the delay in payment for clients in Do'esha Ambarcho was jointly investigated. According to the SA expert "it goes through government channels that can sometimes be very time taking on top of other challenges." Having reviewed this long process with K-SACs and W-SACs, the PSNP service providers proposed and designed the tracking of the benefits to reach the clients through the government accounting system. The transfer system was improved, and as result the PSNP client started to get their payment according to the schedule on time.

During the ESAP-BP (2017), the PSNP service standards and JAP were successfully monitored using a data sheet (see annex). The SA experts supported the SACs during quarterly meetings to update the sheets as a means to track progress and take action where it is needed. After reviewing the PSNP data sheets for the extension period (2018), we unfortunately had to conclude that the 2018 PSNP data set showed too many inconsistencies and had to be disregarded. In our analysis, the data sheet includes too many details compared to the other sector datasets. The large kebele based data set proved too hard for the SA experts to monitor with the limited resources of the ESAP-BP extension, where they had to rely on the K-SAC to collect data. Enough resources need to be made available for complex monitoring, and the level of complexity proved too difficult for the K-SACs to handle.

2.8 Resource mobilisation

Contrary to other sectors in which ESAP2 operates, there is no community contribution to realise the PSNP Joint Action Plans. The focus is on providers bringing services up to the standard and using program resources in a more responsive manner. There are several cases where woreda contingency budget was used to add destitute households to the client list (see box 10). There was also a case where PSNP Public Work was used to construct toilets for girls and boys in a primary school.

> **Box 10: Using the contingency budget**
>
> The SA expert in Kebrebiya explained how he had followed the case of Aliya, a single mother of five who had tried for two years to get into the PSNP. She had raised her problems at the interface meeting, where according to the SA expert "everyone could see her family is malnourished and very poor, so the participants in the interface supported her case". The council spoke to the DA, but the SA expert explained: "the DA are fearful to really talk because the issues are politicised and there may be repercussions." So, the SA expert ended up doing a word for Aliya at the Woreda FSTF, and it was decided to use the contingency budget. The SA expert reflects: "they could have done this years earlier to solve Aliya's problem. What to do… This is the reality. People like her will continue to need support to be included."

> **Box 9: PSNP Exchange Visit to Shebedino**
>
> LIAE organized a PSNP experience sharing visit to Shebedino (AFSR). Prior to the visit, Soro SAC careful prepared and selected participants, so that the team would bring back relevant experiences. The main area of interest was how to report the identified issues to the Kebele Appeals Committee and other concerned bodies. In all 14 persons (5 government officials, 6 SAC members and 3 SA experts) visited Shebedino. The hosting team was well organised and the visitors learned a lot from achievements, including:
>
> - The notion that PSNP is not charity but a right of each citizen who meets the criteria.
> - PSNP clients are transparently selected and notified on public bulletin boards, which avoids unfair targeting;
> - Elderly, pregnant women, lactating mothers, PLWHAs, and children below the age of 18 are not required to work for their transfer;
>
> Visitors also took note of helpful practices:
>
> - SA complements PSNP and promotes effectiveness because the FSTF and SAC work closely together to respond to the needs of the clients.
> - The SAC works on both sides: pushing officials for issues to be resolved like payment delays, and supporting client to make the most of their transfer (e.g. mediating between husband and wife to share benefits without creating conflict).
> - Grievance Redressing Mechanism has been put in place from kebele up to the woreda level, which helped much to get improved PSNP services.

3 SA experts in the institutional PSNP environment

During the PSNP training (June 2016) the ESAP grantees were somewhat overwhelmed by the complexity of structures presented, but after review with the SA experts involved in the first pilot, we concluded on the following important structures.

At woreda level:

- The **woreda agriculture sector office** - manages the overall PSNP and needs to be involved in pilot implementation
- The **Woreda Food Security Task Force** – manages and coordinates PSNP implementation, and can support kebele level actors to better perform under the program
- **WoFED** – in charge of PSNP budget execution (as for all other sectors), and needs to be involved in the pilot for transparency purposes
- **Sectors** such as Agriculture & Environment, Education, Health, Water, Rural Roads, and Women, Children and Youth Office - pay special attention that their services reach PSNP client and involve them where this needs to be improved as per the wishes of PSNP client expressed in the SA process.

At kebele level:

- The **Kebele Food Security Task Force** - manages the PSNP under the oversight of the Kebele Cabinet and the Kebele Council.
- The **Kebele Appeals Committee** - plays an important role in ensuring local-level accountability and transparency.

Finally - the front-line service providers are:

- **Development Agents**, who implement livelihoods activities and oversee Public Works
- **Health Extension Workers** for the implementation of soft conditionalities.

This chapter first reviews how the SA experts from the ESAP grantees worked with in institutional environment, and then reviews how the MA worked and engaged with the PSNP program and its stakeholders.

3.1 ESAP grantees in the institutional environment

SA experts have mainly interacted with kebele level PSNP actors, while maintaining a relationship with the Woreda FSTF. Figure 2 shows the institutional environment at woreda level, and marks the key points of engagement for the SA experts. The woreda PSNP process owner tends to be a member of the SA Committee, which helps to find solutions to issues raised by citizens.

Experience in the first pilot showed that SA had a positive effect on the functioning of the Community Food Security Task Force, and enabled it to better live up to the performance expectations of the PSNP. However, review with the SA experts during the PSNP case writeshop in October 2018 showed that the ESAP grantees engaged most frequently with:

- The DA at kebele level and the Agriculture Office which supervises them;
- The kebele and woreda FSTF;
- The kebele and woreda Councils;
- and the BoFED.

From other experience in ESAP2 we know that the SA process has a positive effect on kebele level staffing patterns. So too in several of the expanded pilot woredas. For instance, in all kebeles of Kebrebya the number of DAs was not in line with the standard. In kebeles like Fadayga and Daawelay there was only one DA where the standard recommends 3 DAs for each kebele. In addition, the DAs do not reside permanently in the kebele due to the absence of residences which has a negative impact on permanent technical assistance. Due to the efforts of the K-SACs in 2016, technicians were assigned in Gilo and Fadyaga kebeles.

In the final review meetings with the Woreda SACs, some interesting observations were made regarding the efforts of the SA experts. Among others, ESAP grantee ADCS explained that collaboration and coordination among the PSNP stakeholders was strengthened (e.g. Woreda and Tabia SAC, DA, Local Administration, Public Works Forman, FSTF and the KAC). Because of the SA process, manuals began to be consulted and this enhanced knowledge and capability of the providers. They started following the transparent procedures available in the PSNP-PIM. The SA expert also supported the organisation of consultation workshops on site selection, targeting/retargeting, and graduation. This example shows the power of 'learning-by-doing. These PSNP stakeholders had probably been trained, but they forgot. Because of their engagement in the SA process, they can 'learn-by-doing' to perform in the required manner.

Figure 2: The PSNP institutional environment at Woreda level (SA expert interactions marked red)
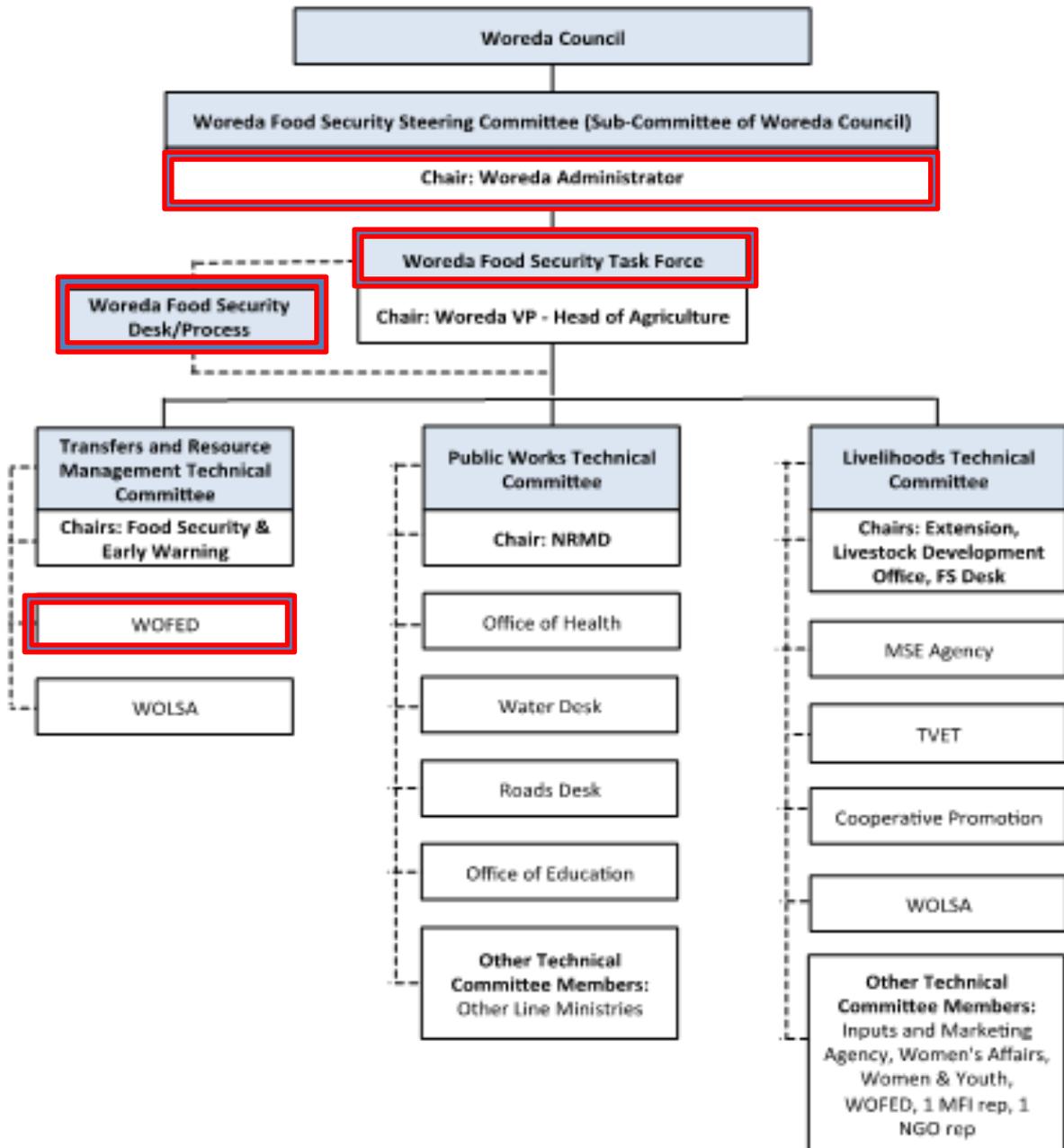
Considering our initial instructions about the PSNP institutional environment, it is remarkable that the SA experts did not work more with the KAC. The PSNP workbook for SA experts[8] states: "The **Kebele Appeals Committee** plays an important role in ensuring local-level accountability. Participates in all aspects of the SA process (scoring, interface meetings, monitor implementation of Joint Action Plans). Unresolved complaints are passed on to the council (kebele or woreda level)." In practice, however we found that only two SA experts had actively collaborated with the KAC. During MA monitoring visit we had already noted that the KAC was mainly functional during targeting. However, we had expected

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[8]　This workbook was developed for the SA expert training at the start of the expanded pilot by the PSNP team and the ESAP2 MA.

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a positive effect of the SA process on the functioning of the KAC, based on our experience in other sectors where SA tends to give a boost to such local management committees. The PSNP M&E expert Amhara region observes:

> *"The Kebele Appeals Committees is composed of Health Extension Workers, Elders, Community Care Coalition and the DA. It was designed to solve 90% of the complaints, but in practice it is not working. Most complaints come to the region. The other day we had two people from Wolo Zone in our office, which is 400 kilometres from Bahir Dar. They have no permanence and do not keep records."*

Rather than trying to work with a structure that appeared to be absent, the SA experts actively worked with the kebele council, which we failed to identify as critical at the start of the expanded pilot. In practice, it is the kebele council that channels client complaints to the responsible actor, not the KAC. Now that the Grievance Redress Mechanisms are being established with the woreda governments, this permanent structure could be supported to deal with PSNP complaints so that the council can remain focused on its oversight role.

Councils

The SA experts reflected on why and how they had worked with the council.

Why SA experts worked with the council

- Council has a member in the SAC and Council has a PSNP subcommittee[9]
- Council is the highest decision-making body in the woreda; usually it is dominated by Cabinet, but there is some improvement after recent SA training for Councils
- The Council in principle **provides oversight to the PSNP**, and has role to play in adjusting targeting
- Kebele and woreda Councils identify performance issues
- Kebele Council can transfer issues to woreda Council (this mainly happened in Amhara Region)
- PSNP budget is approved by the woreda Council.
- In Afar and Amhara regions, the Council plays a role in PSNP Public Works.
- Council has the potential to monitor budget utilization of PSNP, including usage of the contingency budget which can be used to adjust targeting, adding additional clients during the year. SA experts found no transparency on the use of contingency budget.
- Council has access to all kebeles: experience can easily be shared among kebeles.

How SA experts worked with the Council

- Council was invited to capacity building activities and awareness raising events to increase their knowledge on SA and PSNP

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[9] In Fogera woreda during testing of the SA and Council training materials, we found that the Economy sub-committee is charged with agriculture and food security. The PSNP PIM mentions a "Woreda Food Security Steering Committee" (also see figure 2 on the next page) but this structure appeared not to be operational as sub-committee under the woreda council in the pilot woredas.

- Council was invited during identification of PSNP issues and priorities (FGs, kebele interface meeting, development of kebele JAP)
- Council attended woreda interface meeting and JAP monitoring meetings (e.g. ADCS shared the MA data sheet with Council to follow up on the JAP)
- SA expert encouraged the Kebele Council to bring issues that cannot be solved at kebele level, to woreda Council (mainly in Amhara region)

Regional PSNP gender and social development experts

SA experts experienced that the PSNP functions in a decentralized manner, and most did not feel the need to connect with or invite the regional PSNP gender and development experts. The relationship between the SA experts and the regional PSNP experts developed for 10 out of 19 woredas. In Gibe and Misha woredas (SNNPR), the SA experts rather collaborated with the zonal PSNP expert. Some established contact for motivation and support, for instance in Kebribeyah woreda, Somali region, CDSA conducted the start-up workshop for stakeholders and PSNP clients with support from the regional FTA and PSNP Food Security Taskforce focal person. The regional presenter got the opportunity to further explain entitlements in response to participant questions. Generally, the PSNP experts were invited to woreda interface meetings and there are a few records of attendance.

Some efforts were made to encourage better linkages, such as exchange of contact information between the regional PSNP social development experts and corresponding SA experts. In addition, the regional PSNP experts were

> **Box 11: Sample issues forwarded to the region**
>
> - Why is the PSNP payment below the market price for labor? PSNP clients receive ETB 34 per day, while the market price is ETB 100 per day. Clients are thus not motivated to work due to the low payment. There has been a discussion with the PSNP implementer (REST), but it is beyond the capacity of the woreda and it has been forwarded to the region.
> - The PSNP budget for payment of public works is only for 6 months, while the work is longer than 6 months.
> - For elderly it is difficult to travel to receive their payment. Could those clients delegate someone to collect payment?
> - The community questions the limitation of 5 members per household. Woreda officials responded that it cannot be changed, because it is standard policy. Can it be reconsidered?

stimulated to participate in MA field monitoring visits, in quarterly regional FTA-SA meetings, in regional monitoring (planned at the regional FTA-SA meetings where the PSNP experts were invited – see more below), and in the Learning Benchmark event organized during the ESAP-BP.

During one of the MA monitoring visits we noted a number of questions that had been brought to the attention of the Tigray regional PSNP expert (MA monitoring Ofla and Raya Azebo woredas, 2nd quarter 2018), but they did not seem to receive a response. The MA observed the 'demands' would probably be hard to solve, since it would require a change in policy (see box 11). However, SA is not always about getting a solution, it is about getting a satisfactory response and that appears to be still pending.

3.2 The Management agency

The MA had limited engagement with the institutional environment. Its main function is to monitor and provide technical support to the implementation of the pilot by SA grantees. It was agreed with

that within the Expanded PSNP SA Pilot woredas, the implementation and M&E should as far as possible be dovetailed with the existing SA projects and M&E system of the MA:

- PSNP stakeholders (Service Users and Service Providers) will be involved in Project Management and Assessment (i.e. the start-up, mid-term and evaluation meetings at woreda level);
- PSNP stakeholders (i.e. one citizen, one provider) to participate in Woreda SAC
- Structured awareness raising, education and communication campaigns organized at woreda level include the PSNP (e.g. messaging that PSNP is part of ESAP and on SA to PSNP stakeholders)

> **Box 12: Conclusion regional PSNP dialogue Tigray August 2018**
>
> In the pilot woredas, the PSNP program faced various service provision problems, such as inappropriate targeting of PSNP clients, gender disparities, and lack of transparency and accountability. Through the SA process, PSNP client learned to have a dialogue with the service providers about their rights, and some problems have been solved.
>
> It was learnt that capacitating PSNP clients is critical to empower them to demand their entitlements as per the PSNP standards. It is also interesting to learn that many service provision issues are easily solved locally or are in progress of finding a solution in the woredas.
>
> In spite of the progress made, there are a number of issues in the JAPs that appear harder to solve. These are related to Public Works, GRM, and institutional arrangements of the PSNP that require higher level action. The regional PSNP coordination office should strictly follow-up how far each of the pilot woredas has progressed in terms of responding to the issues that have been included in the JAP. The coordination office also needs to conduct dialogues at different levels which enable all stakeholders to assume themselves as actors to address the identified issues under their jurisdiction.

- PSNP stakeholders participate in structured experience sharing events organized among woredas (as part of Woreda SAC and Council experience sharing and learning events in the SAIP projects)
- Regional PSNP Process Owners and/or Regional Gender and Social Development Experts participation in the quarterly Regional FTA-SA coordination meetings
- Key lessons learned and best practices identified and disseminated to the PSNP stakeholders.

The points that relate to kebele and woreda stakeholders have already been covered, as they were the responsibility of the ESAP grantees. Here we focus on the specific engagements of the MA with the PSNP institutional environment.

The **regional FTA-SA meetings** are hosted by the BoFEDs and facilitated by the MA, and bring the different SA stakeholders together: BoFED, sectors and PSNP (in 6 pilot regions), Councils, GRM/Ombudsman, and SAIPs. At the meetings we share the analysis of sector data sheets, which provide a sector-based overview of issues raised by citizens and solved through joint action (including pilot PSNP data). Regions select 1-2 sectors per meeting which they discuss in-depth. All 6 pilot regions had at least one meeting in which the PSNP data were discussed in detail. The number of PSNP participants gradually decreased to only 1 during the last meeting in August 2018. The conclusions regarding PSNP from that meeting in Tigray are presented in box 12.

Regions are encouraged to organise joint-monitoring with the ESAP partners, and most regions respond to this call. A recent SNNPR visit included monitoring of a PSNP pilot woreda (see box 13). These visits are usually an eye-opener for regional stakeholders, which underlines the fact that field visits are one of the best ways of creating higher level government buy-in for SA.

As for **disseminating key lessons** learned, next to updating stakeholders quarterly through MA reports (including two PSNP specific periodic overviews at the end of the ESAP2-BP and the extension), PSNP stakeholders were invited to writeshops for SA experts and learning events, some of which had specific PSNP themes.

The relationship with the PSNP team mainly transpired through the WB and largely consisted of occasional meetings and questions to elaborate on the quarterly report content. Mid 2018, the WB shared with the MA that one of the regions visited for the PSNP JRIS (it was not disclosed which region) was not informed and/or pleased about SA pilot developments. The MA suggested organising a meeting between the ESAP partners and the regional PSNP office, and also to visit the MoA together with the PSNP team to discuss better communication about SA implementation with the regions. We trust that this will be part of reflections at the start of ESAP3.

Box 13: SNNPR Region Monitoring Visit to Shebedino

The BoFED of SNNPR organised an SA monitoring visit with the regional pro-poor sector and the Women and Children Affairs bureaus to Shebedino woreda on 10 September 2018.

The delegation lead by Ato Teferi, deputy BoFED head, met with the W-SAC and K-SACs from PSNP kebeles, and citizens representing different groups (disabled, women, elderly, PLWHIV and PSNP clients). Based on points raised in the presentation by AFSR (ESAP grantee), the delegation set out to check the reality of the program and the status of implementation.

After detailed discussion with woreda and kebele stakeholders and the field visit, the regional delegates were excited with the change in attitude of the citizens, the service improvements, the efforts and commitment of the SACs, the sense of ownership developed among citizens and the inclusiveness of the program. They highly appreciated the results and admitted that they had not expected this high level of results. They apologized to the citizens for the fact that they had not taken the ESAP program more serious. The monitoring visit was closed with a promise by the regional group to closely work with W-SACs and different pro-poor sectors with regards to scaling-up SA to other kebeles and sectors and to the neighbouring woredas.

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4. Typical issues raised and the provider response

We have organised this chapter in line with the PSNP principles presented in box 2 (page :

1. Fair and transparent client selection
2. Timely, predictable and appropriate transfers/primacy of transfers
3. Public works
4. Cash first
5. Gender equity

For coherence, we repeat each principle at the start of the paragraph (box 2 also includes targets). The concerns and issues raised by citizens and PSPN clients in the SA process are presented and the common responses to these are summarized. Where issues have not yet been illustrated in previous chapters, some more detail is provided.

4.1 Fair and Transparent client Selection

Clients are selected through community-based targeting, with an effective appeal mechanism to address inclusion or exclusion errors.

The SA process revealed that client selection and graduation[10] has often not been fair and transparent. It was usually done by kebele cabinet and PSNP service providers while it should be done with community participation, based on clear criteria. This means that less vulnerable households are prioritised and registered as clients, and that some clients are graduated while they were still food insecure. Through SA, awareness about the selection and graduation criteria, processes and composition of the selection/graduation committee increased. This helped the most vulnerable who had not been targeted to come out and ask questions about their rights (see box 14). Most common responses to targeting issues are presented in table 2.

Table 2: Pilot regions, woredas and CSO grantees

Issue	Response
Unfair targeting	SA experts support PSNP stakeholders to select client "by the book" (i.e. the PSNP-PIM), with community participation and priority to female-headed households.
	The updated list of the clients is read out loud (to cater for illiterate persons) and is also posted, so that people can contest unfair recruitment.
Emergency client intake	Contingency budget used to address overlooked households (SA experts have remarked a reluctance to spend the contingency budget for such cases, although it is specifically meant for this purpose).
Complaints not handled	KAC was rearranged and strengthened as per the guidelines, to hear appeals if any.

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[10] The PSNP enables clients to build their assets which makes them less vulnerable to shocks. When clients have built enough assets they leave or 'graduate from' the program.

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The SA process obviously does not solve all unfairness. For instance, the Misha woreda PSNP officer explained to the MA monitoring team that some of the remaining targeting issues will be addressed during a second round of targeting where those that do not qualify for the program will be replaced. In other instances, clients can be found on the PSNP client list who do not exist in real life. While these are usually replaced with new clients as a result of the SA process, it has not become clear where those payments went. In one case such mal-practice almost led to firing of an official. The SA expert was keen to explain that SA ideally finds ways to prevent malpractice (not to punish it) by working on transparency about standards and processes and accountability in terms of explaining situations that appear to be not in line with the standard. Transparency and accountability make malpractice more difficult.

> **Box 14: How to become a PSNP client**
>
> PSNP has been implemented in Zeha kebele for the past six years, but Aster Kebede didn't know how become a client in the program. She was a member of one of the focus groups established as part of the Community Score Card implementation in 2016. During the discussion, she observed that targeting of clients lacks fairness and transparency, reason why she had not been selected previously.
>
> At the interface meeting a plan was made to retarget clients to address this issue. Following PSNP targeting procedures, it was verified that payments were being made for people who are not residents of the kebele and some who are deceased. People who should have been registered as clients, such as Aster, were identified and are now registered clients.
>
> Aster Kebede lives in Zeha Kebele, Ebenat woreda in Amhara region where ADA works.

In Jajura kebele, Soro woreda (LIAE) FGs found that graduation was not happening with community participation. As agreed in the JAP, the K-SACs, W-SACs and authorities together organized awareness sessions. As a result, the full participation of the community in selecting PSNP graduates was ensured, and the process was deemed fair by all involved. At the stakeholder review meeting organized by EOC-DICAC, stakeholders were also pleased with their achievement to use household economic improvement status rather than quota for graduation. HUNDEE reported that graduation by quota was stopped (since the first pilot) and to their knowledge, no client was graduated this year because none of the clients met the criteria. SA experts from Tigray report that graduation is no longer practiced in Tigray (a policy decision that is not related to the PSNP-SA pilot as far as we know).

4.2 Timely, Predictable and Appropriate Transfers

Transfers can be considered predictable if PSNP clients have timely knowledge of their eligibility for the program, and they know what type of transfer they will receive, how much of this transfer they will receive, and when they will receive it. A transfer is timely if it is provided to clients at the point in time during the year when they need the support. A transfer is appropriate if it meets the needs of households.

Since the PSNP is primarily a safety net, ensuring that clients receive transfers takes priority over all other considerations. Transfers should not be delayed for any reason, including those related to public works (PW) implementation.

The SA process revealed many issues related to transfer payments, including delays. ADCS reported a reduction in transfer time to PSNP client from 45 to 30 days at the end of the SA project. Some transfers in kind are more than 3 hours walking because there is no local storage facility. In some cases this was not yet solved (e.g. Gebeyabura, Gelilador and Yigla kebeles in Gewane woreda). SA experts

also encountered misunderstanding about what it means to be a client, for instance only up to 5 members of the household can be targeted for a transfer, which many continue to perceive as unfair.

Recent **reduction of daily labor rates** creates a lot of unrest among PSNP clients. EOC-DICAC reported a reduction from ETB 37 per day to ETB 27 per day. This has created dissatisfaction among PSNP clients and eroded the trust between service providers at woreda level and the PSNP clients which had been built up a bit by the SA process, because there has been no consultation or explanation. According to Ato Arabu, Food Security Officer, the reduction of payment is the decision and direction of the regional government. The woreda had no say in the process and is only implementing the decision. He admitted that the decision lacks transparency and they have not provided any clarity to PSNP clients which resulted in gossiping that the money is *'eaten'* (abused) by woreda officials. The SA expert is trying to get better information from the regional government that can help ease the situation, since the woreda officials do not feel empowered to follow-up with the region on such matters.

ADV also reported a reduction in daily labour rates, which according to them is "due to some unforeseen circumstances at the side of service providers where the region did not dispatch the whole tranche based on the agreed amount. This created a problem for the clients as there is less payment but high inflation".

In Tigray PSNP clients receive ETB 34 per day, while the market price for labour is ETB 100 per day meaning that PSNP clients are not motivated to work (MA monitoring). There has been discussion with PSNP NGO implementer (REST) but the issue is beyond the capacity of the woreda and has been forwarded to the region where it is pending a response.

SA experts have also played a role in speeding up replacement of lost client cards, which have to be issued from the region. This is obviously not a role that the SA expert should play, but woreda officials appear powerless at times to raise and solve such issues with the region in a timely fashion. Clients often face a long wait for a lost card to be replaced at regional level (missing transfers in the process). In Kuuyu, clients were provided with a temporary client card – ensuring that they do not miss any transfers while they wait to receive their official replacement card from the regional office.

Again, SA experts encourage practices "by the book", which usually improves the timely transfer situation (as does mobile payment, which is introduced in some of the woredas). PSNP service providers are for instance encouraged to regularly post payment schedules at kebele level which improves predictability of payments. In case of delays, the WoFED is asked to look into the situation (see box 8, page 20).

4.3 Public Works

Public Works undertaken through the PSNP such as rehabilitation of the natural resource base and the provision of infrastructure cover issues such as the selection of Public Works subprojects, the quality of their design, their performance, operations and maintenance.

Public Works should in principle reflect the needs of the clients, but they do not appear to be consulted during prioritisation or design. This is not a complaint from clients during the SA process, but an observation by the SA experts. PSNP public works planning suffers from the general understanding

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within local government that participation is about community contribution, in the case of PSNP: labour. The sole benefit of Public Works appears to be that Clients can work for their transfer. Clients thus complain about labour related issues: having to work more than the 5 days required; women working as long and as much as men, while there are provisions that take women's needs into account; distance too far from the home (see box 15); pregnant women not being transferred to temporary direct support; and insufficient resources to complete the public works.

Usually, awareness raising is sufficient to ensure that the rules are followed. During an MA visit to Raya Azebo clients explained that they learned that "pregnant women need to be transferred to direct support. Public works is divided differently between men and women, for example, men will do 10 meters of terracing and women 5 meters. Women can come later to Public Works and leave earlier than men."

> *Box 15: The long road to Public Works*
>
> Hayat Mohammed took part in the FGs organized for PSNP, where she raised an issue related to public works. With reference to the PSNP standard, she argued that clients should engage in public works near their residence. However, clients in Ashenge kebele have to travel far on foot. Ato Getachew Tesfaye, the kebele's DA, told her to first take care of her responsibilities before asking this question. He also said that clients don't get to work where they choose and that the DA can assign them to areas (rivers) where public work is needed. With this explanation, he turned Hayat's question down.
>
> Hayat explained that the area where they are assigned to work is too far and when they reach it, they are too exhausted, and she cannot deliver as desired. The issue was presented in the woreda level interface meeting. Although the woreda PSNP implementers mentioned that the PSNP standard should be respected, the issue hasn't been resolved yet. Hayat is still complaining about the long distance she has to travel which affects her ability to take care of her children and do house chores. There's a plan for woreda PSNP providers and representatives of the woreda agriculture bureau to visit the kebele and discuss with the kebele service providers so the issue can be resolved.
>
> Hayat Mohammed is a PSNP client in Ashenge kebele of Ofla woreda.

In Lemo Woreda, Shurimo Kebele (LIAE) clients were not committed to Public Works, although it is part of the obligation. The issue was raised, prioritized and considered in the JAP. The K- SACs, W-SACs and the authorities worked together and effectively motivated PSNP clients for the Public Works.

Where needed SA experts organise client dialogues with responsible actors to find solutions. The added value of a strong facilitator in such meetings has already been demonstrated in the first pilot (see box 1). As a result of such dialogues before new Public Works in Irob, travel distances are now respected, enabling clients to complete the Works on time and get the transfers on time. Some cases beyond the woreda (e.g. insufficient resources for Public Works) are brought to attention of the regional PSNP expert (see box 10).

4.4 Cash First Principle

> *When possible, cash should be the primary form of transfer. This assists with the stimulation of markets – since people spend their cash in local markets – and the move away from food aid.*

An issue related to the cash first principle came up in Tigray. One woreda receives cash and another in kind payments, and this is not deemed as fair (see box 16).

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> *Box 16: Different transfer practices between woredas - Tigray*
>
> During the interface meeting clients explained they receive ETB 170, contrary to the info provided by the MA (i.e. PSNP indicator in the SA pilot guidance note): *Payment received has a value of at least 15kg of cereals plus 4kg of pulses/person/month*, that is ETB 220. There was no positive response from the woreda. When the WSAC asked about experiences in neighbouring woredas, they mentioned that clients were given grain. The WSAC presented this issue to the regional government and was informed that the practice is different in these woredas because in one the government is implementing PSNP and in another REST (an NGO) is implementing it. We feel that the existence of two different PSNP packages in neighbouring woredas is unfair and discriminates among PSNP clients, because people are not being equally compensated. The issue has not been resolved to date.
>
> Account by Ato Zereat, chairman of the SAC in Sabi kebele, Sabi Tsaeda Amba Woreda, Tigray region.

4.5 Gender Equity

The PSNP is designed to respond to the unique needs, interests and capabilities of men and women to ensure that they benefit equally from the Program.

Typical issues that came up in the SA process were:

- The rights of poor female-headed households to be prioritized in the targeting process
- The rights of pregnant women and lactating mothers to be shifted to temporary direct support
- Participation of pregnant women and lactating mothers, women with malnourished children in BCC sessions. Clients and providers (DAs and HEW) do not always know about this soft conditionality.
- Benefits for couples, in particular the right of women to decide on how to use their entitlement (see box 5).

In general, through their participation in the SA process, clients and providers gained a better understanding about gender equity in the program and why this is important. They are thus better able to check that their rights are met (for clients) and to respond to program requirements in this area (for providers). It is encouraging to see that gender equity principles make sense locally and can fairly easily be implemented once the rules are known. The added value of the SA process for PSNP performance in the area of gender equity is very clear in this respect.

5 Conclusion, lessons and recommendations for ESAP3

In this final section, we draw conclusions and lessons from the expanded PSNP-SA pilot, and formulate recommendations for ESAP3.

5.1 Conclusion

The expanded pilot has demonstrated that SA is beneficial to the PSNP in five areas that are widely recognized in the SA literature:

- **Mobilisation** - Food insecure households are vulnerable by definition, and this makes it hard for them to know about the program and to claim their right to be considered as a client. Where they have been targeted, clients will consider their entitlement as a gift rather than an entitlement. Few will consider complaining, for fear of losing their benefits. Those who wish to complain may not know where to go (the Kebele Appeals Committee is rarely functioning), and risk traveling long distances to be heard. Where the wider community is engaged around issues of vulnerability, a high level of solidarity can be observed in the SA process. ESAP offers opportunities for (potential) PSNP clients to know more about the program, to be targeted, to receive benefits as intended, to take responsibility as required, to be heard as a group when services are not up to the standard, to help solve problems, and to be graduated in a fair and transparent manner. Through ESAP, PSNP clients can also be exposed to 'mainstream' government services and community action, which may create chances to develop social capital.

- **State action** - PSNP service providers at kebele level, such as DAs, HEWs and Kebele Administrator, take on PSNP duties among many other responsibilities. They may not always know all the ins and outs of the complex PSNP and have not been trained to provide an explanation to the people they serve or to channel complaints upwards. The kebele councils are also ill-equipped to supervise PSNP implementation, and to carry out their PSNP duties as expected (e.g. they are responsible to establish the Kebele Appeals Committee, which leads the annual targeting exercise and serves as a Grievance Redress Mechanisms – PIM 10-3). ESAP has raised awareness levels among these kebele level providers about the PSNP charter and service standards, and has supported them to respond where clients have legitimate claims and concerns based on evidence collected using SA tools, in particular the Community Score Card (focus groups) and to a lesser extend the Citizen Report Card (survey). Involvement in the SA process has created interest and willingness of woreda officials and PSNP service providers to continue to use the SA process to obtain a client assessment of PSNP service performance and to improve service delivery to and with PSNP clients. Service provider responsiveness and accountability has enhanced, leading to improvements in PSNP in terms of quality, efficiency and effectiveness (chapter 4).

- **Information** - SA experts have boosted knowledge about the PSNP on demand and supply sides and have increased accountability for PSNP standards and processes for targeting, transfer, gender equality, public works, and graduation. Service providers have experienced the benefits of the transparency measures of the PSNP, for which resources are available, such as client cards, posting of client lists, payment schedules and the charter of client rights and responsibilities. Active information sharing with the public has increased public knowledge about the program and interest in checking that it delivers.

- **The interface** - ESAP grantees have paved the way for mainstreaming PSNP in ESAP3, including in government systems for citizen engagement. The SA experts provide a much-needed service that helps the PSNP to identify and work with the most vulnerable as intended. They have introduced SA tools (score cards and surveys) through which a credible evidence base of service performance can be established and discussed at the interface: between the PSNP clients as a group and the kebele level service providers. The kebele interface meeting provides a useful complement to the Kebele Appeals Committee, which can only hear individual complaints (where it functions). Where SA experts and SACs gained strong understanding of PSNP, this helped them to open doors and discuss challenges at woreda and regional interfaces.

- **Citizen action** - Although much remains to be done, the SA experts and SAC have helped clients and providers to resolve a range of problems related to inclusion, accountability and transparency. Tangible results have created a sense among clients and providers alike that SA can help to get fair and better services, and to make more transparent use of the resources in this decentralised government program, the largest among the pro-poor sectors resource wise. Where clients can expect improvements to be forthcoming, they are more likely to take action to stop unfair practices and to benefit to the fullest from the program.

5.2 Lessons from the expanded PSNP-SA pilot

1. The PSNP has fair, transparent and accountable processes, but these are often not practiced locally. The PIM which spells out these processes in (too?) much detail, is most often not available locally, and where it is available, it is rarely used in day to day implementation. The added value of SA has been that PSNP providers started to consult the PIM and act in line with it. This has enabled many PSNP clients to see their (collective!) rights respected. The collaboration between the two programs stimulates 'learning-by-doing' in terms of PSNP implementation, which enhances the performance of the program and ensures that resources are spent in a better way. This has given ESAP credit in the pilot woredas and some regions.

2. SA experts have spent considerable time on awareness raising about PSNP principles and standards, as these were not well known among service providers, clients and the public alike. With time, SACs took up this role of awareness raising, which helps to keep PSNP providers honest, accountable and responsive. One clear benefit of this ESAP investment is fair targeting procedures that are more likely to identify the most vulnerable households. Incentive structures (e.g. exchange visits, volunteer awards) need to be designed for SACs or local CSOs to actively maintain public awareness campaigns over time and without ESAP.

3. Many PSNP service issues do not require budget to be resolved. Changes occurred because client issues were brought to the attention of the responsible PSNP actor, who could subsequently deal with the issue. Kebele SACs monitor that action is indeed taken by providers.

4. In principle SA experts do not need to have deep understanding of programs, this should be available with the providers. The development and implementation of SA expert training on essential decentralised features of the PSNP was important because kebele providers were poorly informed about essential processes. Areas where this was not done with enough detail, e.g. the composition and functioning of the KAC, have not been brought "to the standard". Inviting regional PSNP experts to the training of SA experts, while useful as a resource, was not enough to

forge a close link between the two programs. ESAP and the PSNP could develop a more structured collaboration to bring the PSNP regional experts to the field to provide explanations and assist in solving problems that have a systemic origin. The best learning for PSNP program improvement happens with exposure to SA where it has to function, where the rubber meets the road: at kebele level. ESAP and FTA have a structured partnership (see references MOFEC, 2016), in which MoFEC and the MA commit to *and jointly resource* 4 areas of collaboration at kebele, woreda and regional levels: joint training of clients and providers; participatory planning and constructive citizen-state collaboration; joint monitoring; joint documentation and public communication.

5. The PSNP principles, client charter and service standards developed for the expanded pilot (annex) form an important basis on which citizens and clients can assess the performance of the PSNP program using the SA process. This could evolve into a score card which can be used for community monitoring (the ESAP3 program is taking this course in the other sectors). More complex monitoring of PSNP performance improvements (e.g. number of clients that were retargeted due to mal-practice) will need to be done by the ESAP/SA experts together with the PSNP/ regional PSNP experts, for which arrangements (including resources) will need to be made.

6. The expanded pilot demonstrated that Citizen Report Cards can be used effectively in the context of PSNP, provided the tool is updated with additional steps that cater for facilitated reflection and dialogue about the survey findings. Score cards can usually not manage more than 10-15 issues at a time, because they are handled directly by citizens with SAC facilitation. Surveys can manage more complex question sets but need to be handled by the SA experts. A combination of both tools could be very effective for institutionalisation. Citizens can initiate and manage a score card process when they feel this is needed (PSNP may wish to guard against score card fatigue, by leaving the initiative with clients rather than making it a regular recurring event). The CRC could be used at scale to organise accountability for specific issues that are known to be problematic in PSNP.

7. We observed two difficulties with the KAC as a complain handling mechanism. 1) Some KAC members are providers and this can be a conflict of interest; for this reason, client do not trust the KAC. 2) The KAC is finding it hard to operate during the year. Where the KAC was not functioning as a grievance redress mechanism, the kebele SAC and kebele council channelled client complaints to the responsible actor at woreda level. This is not a role of the council. The pilot had some, but limited effect on revamping the KAC. SA experts have suggested that the appeal function of the KAC could find a more sustainable home with the GRM offices.

8. Issues beyond the woreda to resolve were brought to the region by SA experts, but this may not be the best way forward: it is not their role. They do it because the government system doesn't seem to invite upward communication about implementation difficulties, and there are no CSOs that represent citizen views (the mass-based organisations mainly function as channels for downward communication). Some of these issues were discussed in the regional FTA-SA partnership meetings for policy dialogue with the SA experts. Again, it is not the role of SA experts to represent citizen and provider views in regional dialogues. Ideally the local governments and CSOs should be heard at such fora. ESAP3 will explore how regional governments may begin to organise this.

5.3 Recommendations for ESAP3

1. **Vulnerable groups** - Expand the definition of vulnerable groups to include PSNP clients: the chronically food insecure who hold a PSNP client card. This will ensure that PSNP client are always included in service assessment (not just assessment of the PSNP), some of which have special services for the ultra-poor. In non-PSNP woredas, the definition of vulnerable groups should include food insecure and female headed households.

2. **PSNP and the agriculture sector** - Expand the definition of the agriculture sector (i.e. enhancing production, including supply of agriculture inputs) to include the PSNP. However, considering that only one JAP in the pilot actually included both agriculture extension and PSNP services issues, PSNP is best assessed separately from the other agriculture services. This will enable the program (and its client) to get the attention it deserves and the energy it needs from volunteers to pursue improvements.

3. **Livelihoods** – There were very few improvements registered in the livelihoods program. When SA experts understand the challenges faced by this program component, they may be able to make an informed decision about future SA intervention. It could be that the nature of the challenges in the livelihoods component doesn't lend itself to resolution through an SA process.

4. **SA and PSNP training** – Adjust the PSNP-SA training manual and the workbook developed for the expanded pilot based on lessons learned (in particular on KAC and grievance redress), and in the style of the 'SA and Council' training materials: the SA experts will become the users of the 'SA and PSNP' training manual, and the kebele providers, SACs, councils will be the users of the 'SA and PSNP' workbook (covering the PSNP basics, including processes for selection and graduation). Focus of materials should be at kebele level, because many of the PSNP service issues can be resolved at this level.

5. **Communication** – PSNP to make communication materials such as the PSNP Program Posters available to SA experts, and provide insights into the regional communication strategy, so that SA experts can support the program to communicate optimally with client as well as kebele level providers.

   Produce a Participatory Video in which various stakeholders in the PSNP pilot show how they have benefitted from SA (similar videos have been produced to promote SA and the council, and Gender Responsive Budgeting). Use this video (in combination with peer-exchange and field visits) to increase awareness about SA among stakeholders in the PSNP program at all levels.

6. **Score Cards** - Develop a concise, standardized score card that could be used by PSNP client to assess services, and by the MA (and the PSNP) to monitor progress. The issues in the score card should be selected to systematically drive service improvements in areas that are known to be problematic in the program and that have been resolved through the SA process (see section 4), or have the potential to be improved through SA (e.g. identification and planning of Public Works). Explore how PSNP monitoring and evaluation and management decision making processes can be strengthened with information from SA (and vice versa – see for instance the next point: Surveys).

7. **Surveys** - Future CRCs should be conducted with support from researchers to ensure adequate (gender) analysis. CRCs could be undertaken across woredas covering all issues in the standard (see annex) or specific issues that are known to be problematic in the PSNP. SA partners would work with CRC researchers to bring survey findings back to the respective woredas and kebeles for discussion in FGs prior to interface meetings with service providers. Such a feedback loop to

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clients, supported by SA experts, may also be created for selected performance surveys conducted by the PSNP. CRCs can also directly feed regional dialogues with CSOs that can represent PSNP clients.

8. **Councils** - The Kebele and Woreda Councils have the potential to develop much more vigilance regarding PSNP implementation, and they can also play a role to ensure that PSNP client continue to engage with service providers (and vice versa). While SA experts have worked closely with the councils, more could be achieved if this were to become a deliberate strategy. SA experts could develop oversight capacity of the council, in particular strengthen the Economy sub-committee which is charged with agriculture and food security. PSNP training investments in the Council (not just cabinet) could be very sustainable, since councillors stay in the community and are often re-elected. The PSNP program, in collaboration with the regional council, could monitor the effectiveness of council oversight in the PSNP, comparing councils in ESAP targeted areas with non-targeted areas, and draw lessons for future training investments.

9. **Move KAC complaint handling to GRM** – Now that the GRMs are becoming more operational with support from ESPES – Enhanced Shared Prosperity through Equitable Services (of which ESAP is also part), is may be time for PSNP to consider shifting complaint handling to the GRM. ESAP could play a role to make such a shift work: GRM officials can 'learn-by-doing' during the SA process. The FTA-SA partnership will be expanded to include GRM under ESAP3, which will further facilitate the recommended shift.

9. **Public Works** – Much of the Public Works issues can be resolved with participatory planning that considers community priorities. The PSNP could consider aligning Public Works planning with the woreda planning and budget cycle for the Block Grant. An additional advantage would be that PSNP Public Works investments can be used to respond to citizen priorities in the five pro-poor sectors (such as rural roads maintenance and renovation/construction of health, education and agriculture extension facilities and infrastructure (irrigation, dams/water holes for animals). This could be piloted as part of ESAP3 development of practical citizen engagement instructions for the budget cycle with MoFEC-FTA.

10. **Incentives and regional accountability** - ESAP is still viewed as a way to extract local accountability. In ESAP3 it is recommended to view the regional PSNP from their ultimate responsibility to ensure effective decentralised program implementation. Regions should incentivise kebele providers in particular (i.e. the DA) to engage with citizens and to communicate problems upward without fear of repercussions. Consider including and rewarding responsiveness in the performance assessment of DAs and woredas (e.g. timely payments). Regions should be required to respond to questions that reach them through the ESAP; to use SA experts, the SACs and the councils as additional means to communicate with the public about (changes in) the program; and to support WoFEDs to study and resolve payment/food transfer delays which were identified through the SA process.

11. **MoU** - Formalize collaboration with PSNP in a MoU that details regional responsibilities and complementarity between the two programs (similar to the FTA-SA partnership with MoFEC and the BoFEDs). SA experts will find it much easier to gain buy-in and to communicate with the appropriate level within the PSNP program to find solutions. The MoU could among others require federal and regional PSNP actors to regularly attend ESAP events and review meetings (and vice versa where appropriate).

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Annex: PSNP service standards for social accountability

PSNP category	PSNP service details
Targeting	Targeted households should be members of the community that are chronically food insecure (3 months of food gap or more per year) in the last 3 years or have suddenly become more food insecure as a result of a severe loss of assets
	Fairness/transparency (i.e. targeting lists should be posted and/or read orally for community endorsement)
	Full community participation in targeting process
	Inclusion of all family members as PSNP clients (up to cap of 5)
	Inclusion of households with malnourished children as Temporary Direct Support client (all things being equal)
	In polygamous households, second (and additional) wife considered as a female headed household
Gender and Social Development	Fair inclusion of men and women in PSNP as either PW or Direct Support clients
	Ensure 50% women representation and active participation all committee's and governance structures (i.e. KFSTF, KACs, Community Watershed Task Force, etc.) (50% quota for committee participation)
	Special consideration of female-headed households (i.e. all things being equal women headed-household is prioritized for inclusion)
	Women have 50% less working hours than men and lighter tasks
	Early transition to pregnancy leave and longer duration of leave after birth (1 yr)
	client Card includes picture and name of both male and female household heads
Graduation	Households graduating in the previous year should be given at least 12 months' notice
	Graduating household should be food secure for full 12 months
	Full community participation in selecting graduates
	Graduation benchmarks posted
Transfer	Payments made within agreed timeframe (20 days for cash and 30 days for food)
	Transfers received within 3 hours walking distance
	Transfers received have value of at least 15kg of cereals and 4kg of pulses per person per month (i.e. full entitlement should be received, without deduction)
	Use of transfer should be decided jointly by husband and wife

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PSNP category	PSNP service details
	Contingency resources received within 60 days of threshold being reached/identification of needs (e.g. 5% woreda and 11% federal)
	Awareness of fixed payment date (i.e. transfer schedule/payment data should be posted at kebele level)
	Use of contingency resource to address malnourished children under TSF/CMAM
	Women's right to access to collect transfer
	PSNP client should have a client Card and timely replacement of lost client Card
Transparency & Accountability	Awareness of program objectives, targeting criteria and methods, payment dates, amount of cash or food transfer, purpose of the transfer and importance of using it to meet the basic needs of the households, purpose of PWs and how they are planned, purpose of livelihoods interventions and how a client can participate, gender provisions, responsibilities of implementers and clients, importance of working towards graduation and existence of mechanisms for grievance redress.
	Woreda, kebele and community staff and Task Forces to make use of all opportunities to share above information (e.g. community meetings during targeting, PW planning meetings, community livelihood consultations, meetings to inform clients and communities, etc.)
	All client are issued a client Card with name, photograph, details regarding entitlements and space to record receipt of transfers.
	client lists posted in public locations in PSNP areas
	Charter of Rights and Responsibilities posted next to client List but remains posted throughout the year (also included on client Cards)
	PSNP Program Posters describing specific aspects of program implementation will be available and put up in offices at woreda and community level
Public Works	PSNP PW clients are entitled to transition to Temporary Direct Support if required (i.e. sickness or pregnancy)
	Households should not work more than 5 days per household member per month
	No one person should work more than 15 days per month (if a person is covering 2 other labour poor household members). If there are other able bodied people, the whole family is expected to work no more than 20 days/month.
	Proper setting of labour cap to the actual level of adult able bodied labour available to participate in PWs (no more than 15 days/able bodies adult)
	Ensure that women's 50% workload and PLW are considered in Person Days (PDs) calculation
	PW planned and implemented following GoE's Community Based Watershed Guidelines or Rangeland Management Guidelines

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PSNP category	PSNP service details
	PSNP clients satisfied with PSNP planning process (organization, community participation, incl. women, identification of need, final selection) and reflect needs
	PW norms are followed (50% workload reduction for women)
	PW subproject constructed according to technical standards in info-techs
	Mitigating measures are implemented for PW subprojects
	Arrangements for community engagement and/or operation and maintenance are established for PW subprojects
	PW subprojects implemented following all gender and social development (GSD) considerations
	PW are located within walking distance of client's home
	No participation of children (under 18) in PWs
	Working conditions are satisfactory
	Adult male and female PW client participate in monthly (min of 6 sessions/year) community based health and nutrition and sanitation BCCs (3 sessions = 1 PD)
Permanent Direct Support	Aged, labour-poor, sick, pregnant, children (<18), people with HIV/AIDS, etc. are not required to engage in PW
	Direct Support clients are entitled to 12 months support
	Direct Support client participate in soft-conditionalities
Temporary Direct Support	Pregnant and women transition to temporary Direct Support before 4 months on the basis of health facility referral (amongst women who reach the 4th month of pregnant during the PW period)
Soft-Conditionalities	Provision of Community Based Nutrition Activities (PLW participation)
	Provision of community based nutrition counselling services
	Transfers should not be deducted from clients for non-participation in soft conditionalities
Coordination & Institutional Arrangements	Committees must be elected and comply with the guidelines
	Committees hold regular meetings
	Ensure participation of women (50%)
Grievance Redress Mechanism	client complaints are addressed timely (99% resolved within one month)
	If client not satisfied with KAC decision, complaint have be escalated to Kebele Council
	Complaints are recorded and registered (i.e. use of standard formats)
	Kebele Appeals Committee membership should be impartial and not overlap with individuals involved in central roles in the implementation of the Program,

PSNP category	PSNP service details
	particularly targeting (i.e. no member of the KAC should also be a member of the KFSTF / CFSTF).
	Women should be represented on KAC
	KAC should be elected by community representatives
	Pre-scheduled meetings times for KAC members
	Timely reporting of summary of cases addressed to Kebele Council
	KACs receive capacity building
	Immediate and timely replacement of KAC members who drop-out
	Linkage with formal GRM at kebele and woreda levels
Livelihoods	Households self-select into the Livelihoods Component (i.e. no-one is forced to participate) and prioritized based on a) targeting for the livelihood transfer, or b) readiness to take the next step in their livelihoods.
	The poorest households are targeted for Livelihood Transfer
	50% of livelihoods clients are women (including female household heads as well as women in households with men)
	Livelihoods support is provided at places and times that enable women to attend
	Livelihoods training is provided as per the Livelihood Checklist.