



RESET II – WOLAITA CLUSTER

Case study of a resilience programme based on an integrated approach

Altai Consulting for EUTF I Ethiopia – July 2018



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July 2018

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Cover picture: Youth group assisted by the REAL project and their forage nursery in Damot Pulasa, Wolaita.

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The EU Trust Fund (EUTF) Horn of Africa (HoA) Monitoring and Learning System (MLS) was initiated in July 2017 and is being implemented by Altai Consulting. The overall objective of the MLS is to strengthen the EUTF interventions in the HoA region through the creation of a monitoring and learning system, which should provide an evidence-based approach for programming and implementing interventions.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This report was prepared by Mathilde Verdeil, Justine Rubira and Eric Davin.

The authors of this report are grateful to Immaculada Guixe Ancho (Delegation of the European Union to Ethiopia, Addis Ababa), Kebede Gudissa (International Development Enterprises) and Olani Wirtu (International Development Enterprises), as well as to the REAL project staff who dedicated their time and knowledge to this case study. Translation on the field was performed by Bereket Duko.

ABBREVIATIONS

CI.Be.	Caritas International Belgium
CMM	Crisis modifier mechanism
DRR	Disaster risk reduction
DG DEVCO	Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development
ECC-SDCO	Ethiopian Catholic Church Social and Development Commission
ECHO	European Commission Humanitarian Office
ETB	Ethiopian Birr
EU	European Union
EUTF	European Union Emergency Trust Fund for stability and addressing root causes of irregular migration and displaced persons in Africa (EUTF for Africa)
FGD	Focus group discussion
HH	Household
HoA	Horn of Africa
iDE	International Development Enterprises
KIIs	Key informant interviews
M&E	Monitoring & Evaluation
MFI	Microfinance institution
MLS	Monitoring and learning system
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
NRM	Natural resources management
PSNP	Productive Safety Net Programme
REAL	Resilient Economy and Livelihoods
RDPP	Regional Development and Protection Programme in Ethiopia
RESET	European Union Resilience Building in Ethiopia (also known as RESET I or EC SHARE)
SAFE	Sustainable Agriculture and Food Security Enhancement
SINCE	Stemming Irregular Migration in Northern & Central Ethiopia
SNNPR	Southern Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples Region
SOSSE	SOS Sahel Ethiopia
WASH	Water, sanitation and hygiene
WEG	Women economic group

Ethiopian words used in the report:

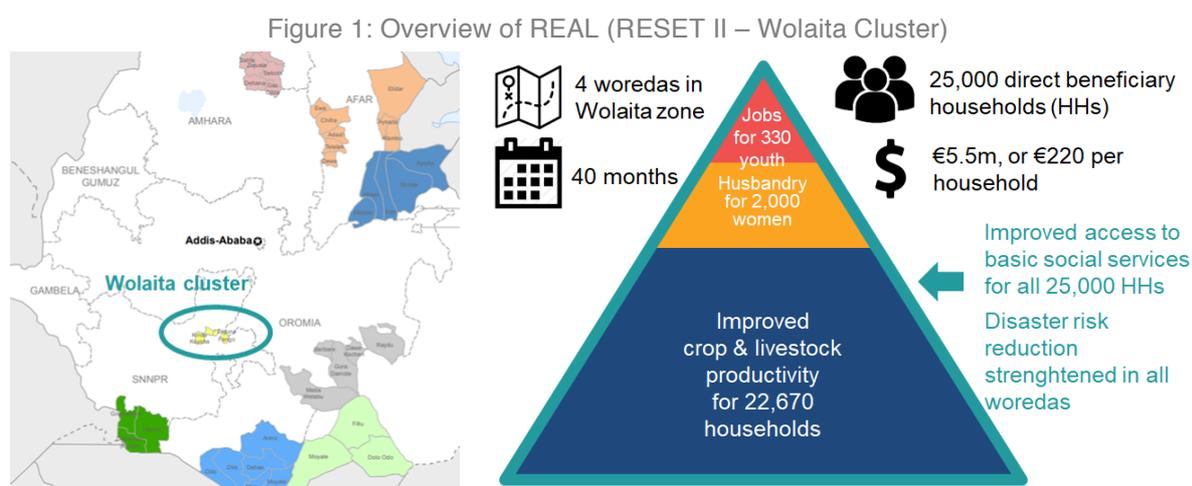
Kebele	Smallest administrative division, equivalent to a group of villages
Woreda	Group of kebeles, synonym of 'district'

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The RESET II – Wolaita Cluster Case Study focuses on one project, which is part of a large integrated resilience programme funded by the EUTF Horn of Africa (HoA) in Ethiopia. The case study highlights best practices from the project’s organisation and approach and provides some insights on the link between resilience and migration. The case study started with a review of project documents and relevant literature, followed by two weeks of fieldwork in Addis Ababa and Wolaita, where 12 communities were visited and 24 interviews with key informants, as well as 9 focus group discussions, were conducted.

a) RESET II – Wolaita Cluster: Project highlights

Approved in 2015, the Resilience Building and Creation of Economic Opportunities in Ethiopia (RESET II) project was one of the first funded by the EUTF HoA and is also one of the largest, with a budget of €48.3m. Following the first phase of the programme, known as ‘RESET I’, RESET II focuses on building resilience in drought-prone rural areas and is organised into eight geographical ‘clusters’. RESET II activities in the Wolaita cluster, located in the Southern Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples Region (SNNPR) region of Ethiopia, are implemented under the acronym ‘REAL’: Resilient Economy and Livelihoods.



In Wolaita, extremely small landholdings do not allow people to live sustainably off their land, leading to chronic food insecurity and large migratory flows – mostly towards urban areas. To address these issues, the REAL project is targeting 25,000 households in four woredas (districts), which represents about a quarter of the population of these woredas (see Figure 1), and adopted an approach that is in line with the resilience-building ‘best practices’ identified by the EU in Ethiopia.

b) Identified best practices

- **A strong integration of consortium partners optimises resources and expertise:** REAL implementing partners are organised as a consortium and share offices and staff. This helps minimise administrative costs and maximise the benefits from each NGO’s thematic and geographic expertise.
- **Sustainability is increased by integrating the project’s actions with those of the government and other partners:** the project involves the government in all its training activities in order to enhance its capacity and also involves microfinance institutions (MFIs) and other private partners early in the project design, which contributes to the sustainability of the project’s actions.

- Integrated services diversify households' livelihood options and strengthen resilience:** Each beneficiary household receives at least two interventions, in line with the EU's 'basic resilience model' (see Figure 2). A 'typical' family may be linked with a MFI to buy drought-resistant seeds and fertilizer and/or latrine slabs, and may also receive training on agricultural practices, health, nutrition and/or family planning. The main advantage of integrating the services provided to beneficiaries is the creation of synergies ('1+1=3' approach) – for example, providing nutrition training in addition to improved seeds helps maximise the impact on households' nutrition.

Figure 2: REAL's contributions to the four cornerstones of the EU's 'basic resilience model' in Ethiopia



- Well-sequenced activities and continuous engagement with stakeholders strengthens the adaptive capacity of communities in a sustainable manner.** REAL activities are sequenced over time by associating short-, mid- and long-term activities. A 'crisis modifier mechanism' (CMM) was also integrated into RESET II to respond to very short-term needs and emergencies. REAL emphasises livelihood diversification to boost the adaptive capacity of communities in the mid-term, while longer-term activities, such as family planning and disaster risk reduction (DRR), directly address the root causes of shocks and migration. Efforts were also made towards sustainability by ensuring a continuous engagement with beneficiaries, minimising maintenance costs, promoting environmental sustainability and creating markets that will remain after the project ends.

- Qualitative assessments and initial feedbacks suggest that the REAL project may contribute to providing alternatives to migration.** The provision of basic services and improvements in farming productivity are lifting some households out of poverty and may therefore decrease the number of children who have to drop out of school and migrate to cities to earn money; the long-term impact of and ability to increase farming productivity is likely to be limited, however, given the average size of landholdings. While the job creation aspect provides some youths with other options than migration and encourages others to come back, additional structural efforts beyond the project's capacity would be necessary to significantly impact youth employment and youth migration.

c) Perspectives

While the benefits of a well-integrated approach were confirmed by most beneficiaries and stakeholders met during the fieldwork, measuring the impact of the project on resilience and on migration remains a challenge. Resilience is a dynamic phenomenon that requires the measurement of both changes in household well-being and of the intensity of shocks, which the project's current monitoring and evaluation (M&E) tools are not able to measure. The project's contribution to reducing forced migration in the region will not be evaluated. In addition, without impact evaluation it will be difficult to disentangle the impact of the project from the impact of related government programmes or of other external factors (attribution). Therefore, more robust evaluations may be needed in the future. As a first step, one could consider evaluating the combined impact of the project and of related government activities.

2. BACKGROUND AND PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

2.1. OBJECTIVE AND METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this first case study for the MLS is to identify best practices from RESET II, such as its integrated approach, and first insights on the link between resilience and migration, by focusing on the Wolaita cluster. In order to do so, the following activities were conducted:

- Project and programme documents were reviewed and additional secondary research was conducted on resilience and migration in the context of Ethiopia and Wolaita particularly;
- Key informant interviews (KIIs) and focus group discussions (FGDs) were organised in Addis Ababa, in Sodo (the capital of Wolaita, where the consortium offices are located) and in each of the target woredas, with project staff from each of the consortium non-governmental organisations (NGOs), project beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries, as well as government officials at the zone, woreda and kebele levels.¹ Fieldwork lasted two weeks, 24 KIIs and 9 FGDs were organised in total, and 12 communities were visited. Additional documents were also provided by project staff.

2.2. REAL AND RESILIENCE BUILDING IN ETHIOPIA

Even though poverty has decreased in recent years, many regions in Ethiopia remain food insecure and vulnerable to drought – an issue compounded by the high population growth rate. Although the percentage of the population living below US\$1.90 a day has decreased from 55% in 1999 to 36% in 2004, vulnerability to crises remains high, especially as it is coupled with fast population growth – from 67 million inhabitants in 2000 to 102 million in 2016 (and forecasts of 188 million in 2050)² – making Ethiopia the second most populated country in Africa.³ Around 8 million resource-poor food insecure people require assistance from the government's Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP)⁴ to meet their minimal food needs six months out of every year, and 7.88 million are in urgent need of relief food or cash assistance.⁵

The EU resilience programme in Ethiopia started after the 2011 drought in the Horn of Africa, when both the Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development (DEVCO) and the European Commission Humanitarian Office (ECHO) mobilised additional resources with the idea of supporting resilience through integrated interventions and geographically-targeted projects. However, until 2016, different activities financed by both DEVCO and ECHO coexisted without constituting a single project, though they were covered by a common name: European Union (EU) Resilience

¹ Woredas are the equivalent of districts, and kebeles the equivalent of groups of villages.

² United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, 'World Population Prospects: The 2015 Revision' (2015).

³ World Bank.

⁴ Funded by the World Bank, the PSNP provides 700 ETB per month to the most vulnerable families in the most vulnerable kebeles during the months when food scarcity is highest (January to July).

⁵ OCHA, 'Ethiopia: Comparative Analysis of Emergency Food and PSNP Beneficiaries in 2017' (2017).

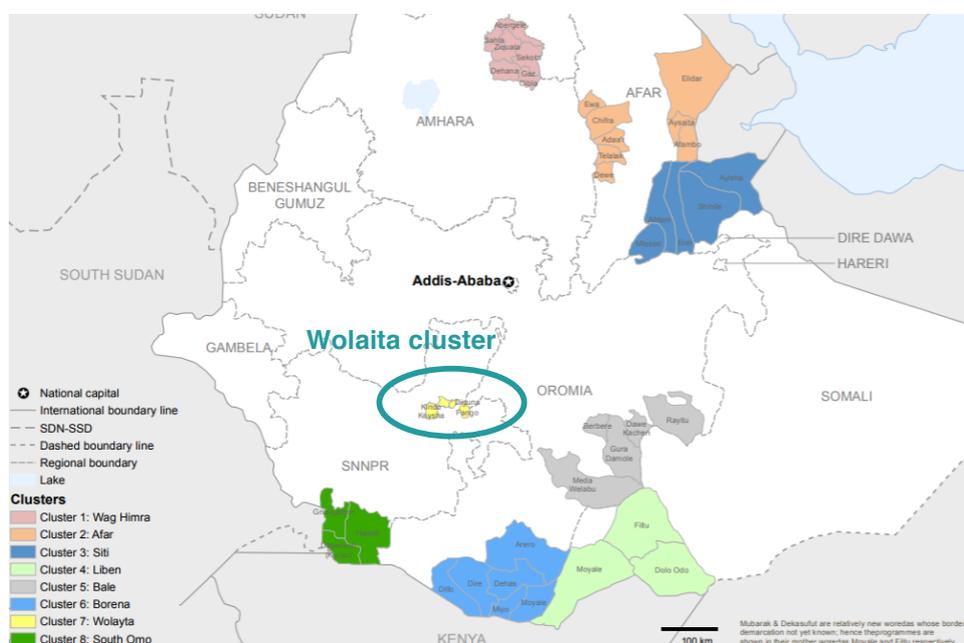
Building in Ethiopia, or RESET (today known as RESET I or EC SHARE). In 2016, RESET II started as a single programme in the same geographical areas as RESET I (and sometimes the same implementing partners), this time financed by the EUTF for Africa, with a total budget of €48.3m. In 2016, the EUTF provided an additional €22.5m in funding, which is disbursed in the same clusters as 'RESET Plus' and has specific thematic areas of focus (for example, family planning or rural job creation).

Through RESET II, the EUTF aims at addressing the root causes of instability and vulnerability that can in many cases result in migration from rural areas. Irregular emigration from urban areas and refugee protection are addressed by two complementary projects: '*Stemming Irregular Migration in Northern & Central Ethiopia*' (SINCE) for emigration from urban areas and the '*Regional Development and Protection Programme in Ethiopia*' (RDPP) for refugees.

RESET II is implemented in eight 'EU Resilience Clusters', which are geographical areas formed by groups of adjacent woredas selected based on their vulnerability to recurrent droughts, their high levels of food insecurity, the presence of experienced implementing partners and a within-cluster homogeneity of livelihoods and climatic characteristics, so that a common strategy could be developed for the entire area of the cluster.

The Resilient Economy and Livelihoods, or REAL, project corresponds to the RESET II activities implemented in the 'Wolaita cluster', one of eight clusters (see map below). Wolaita is one of the 14 zones of the SNNP Region, with a northern tip 330 km south-west of Addis Ababa. Four woredas were selected in Wolaita: Boloso Sore, Damot Pulasa, Duguna Fango and Kindo Koyscha. Three of them (all but Kindo Koyscha) were already covered by the Sustainable Agriculture and Food Security Enhancement (SAFE) project, which corresponds to the RESET I activities implemented in Wolaita.

Figure 3: The eight clusters of the EU Resilience-building Programme in Ethiopia



2.3. RESILIENCE AND MIGRATION IN WOLAITA

The two main sources of vulnerability in Wolaita are the high population density resulting in very small landholdings that do not allow families to live sustainably off their land, and the high dependence on crop production vulnerable to climate shocks. With a 2015/16 population estimated to stand at 657,586,⁶ the Wolaita cluster presents an average density of 507 people/km.⁷ Compared to the seven other RESET clusters, average landholdings in Wolaita woredas are among the smallest (0.36ha per household, where 1.5ha are estimated to be needed for a regular household to be self-sufficient)⁸, while dependence on crop production is the highest:⁹ 85% of the community depends on subsistence agriculture for their livelihoods.¹⁰ Partly as a result of this, according to a study published by Wolaita University 37% of households are below the poverty line in Wolaita, against 22% for SNNPR as a whole¹¹ (while the poverty rate for Ethiopia is similar to the one in SNNPR).¹²

Little data exists on migration from Wolaita, but qualitative evidence collected during interviews with community members suggests that it is due to both the small landholdings, which do not allow rural families to produce enough to cover their basic needs, and to the lack of alternative jobs. In addition, a survey conducted by Spanish NGO *Ayuda en Acción* in 2017 (see Focus Box 1 below) indicates that 45% of the sampled households mentioned that at least one family member had migrated; that out-migration has sharply increased over the past few years; that most migrants are minors (76% in the case of Boloso Sore); and that migration is mainly in the direction of urban areas, internal to Ethiopia. The latter finding is supported by a study¹³ conducted in all RESET II clusters, which found that only 13% of male migrants and 7% of female migrants from the eight clusters travel abroad. In addition, two-thirds of the male migrants, and three-quarters of the female migrants remained in their region of origin (rather than going to Addis Ababa, for example). Regarding the few international migrants, qualitative evidence collected among inhabitants from the four project woredas and key informants indicate that female international migrants tend to migrate to Dubai, while male international migrants tend to migrate to South Africa.¹⁴

⁶ Projections from the REAL consortium, 'Situation Analysis Report on Cluster 7—Wolaita Cluster' (2016).

⁷ REAL consortium, 'Situation Analysis Report on Cluster 7—Wolaita Cluster' (2016). This initial analysis was conducted by representatives of the consortium members and SAFE project staff to identify gaps and opportunities that could inform the design of the REAL project.

⁸ Willem Olthof and Sarah Svedin, 'Resilience in Practice—Ethiopia Case Study' (2014).

⁹ Alebel B. Weldesilassie, Getnet Alemu, Tibebe Sado and Habtemariam Kasa, 'Situation Analysis of the Eight Geographical Clusters Under the EU Resilience-building Programme in Ethiopia (RESET)' (2016).

¹⁰ REAL consortium, 'Situation Analysis Report on Cluster 7—Wolaita Cluster' (2016).

¹¹ KII with the Wolaita zonal vice head of the finance department.

¹² Ministry of Finance and Economic Development, 'Ethiopia's Progress Towards Eradicating Poverty: An Interim Report on Poverty Analysis Study (2010/11)' (2012).

¹³ International Food Policy Research Institute and Ethiopian Development Research Institute, 'Profile of Vulnerable Households in PSNP RESET areas' (2018).

¹⁴ Data from migration offices in Wolaita indicates that 324 youth from Wolaita took the irregular route to Europe since the beginning of 2017—which is probably an under-estimation, as many irregular migrants presumably go reported to the authorities.

Ayuda en Acción, an NGO working in Boloso Sore and neighbouring Boloso Bombe, conducted a survey in these woredas and found that **45% of the sampled households mentioned that at least one family member had migrated**. In Boloso Sore, **29% were aged 10 to 14 and 47% were aged 16 to 18**.¹⁵ The study also found that 99% of migrant destinations were within Ethiopia (major cities such as Addis Ababa, Adama or Hawassa). This number is not likely to be much lower in the other woredas where REAL is implementing its activities: according to the zonal head of the Social Affairs Department, Boloso Sore and Damot Pulasa are the origins of most international migrants, while Kindo Koysha and Duguna Fango are more effected by migration internal to the country. The *Ayuda en Acción* survey indicated that **41% of migrants had only completed grades one to four**, that they were mostly engaged in activities such as shoe-shining, daily labour and being maids, and that the remittances sent back home were ‘insignificant’. Though there might be a memory bias, and it is possible that whole families migrated, **52% of all migrants – that families can recall – left Boloso Sore in 2017** (right after the 2016 severe drought), against only 13% in 2016 and 9% in 2015, while the remaining migrants mostly left before 2013.

2.4. DESIGN OF THE REAL PROJECT

2.4.1. REAL OVERVIEW

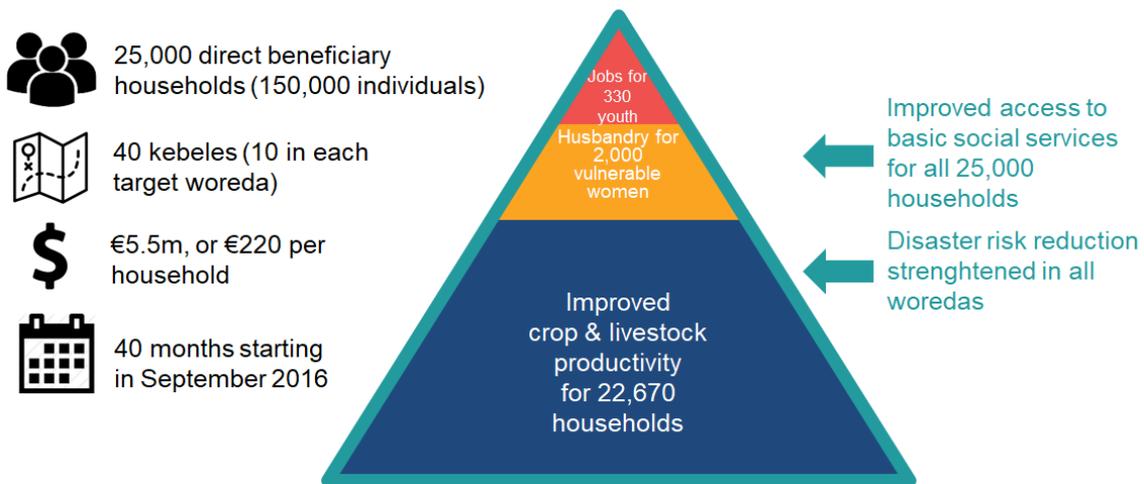
The specific objective of the REAL project is to increase the resilience to shocks and stresses and strengthen economic opportunities for the most vulnerable 25,000 households of the Wolaita cluster. This number was based on the budget (€5.5m) and the goal of International Development Enterprises (iDE), the lead of the consortium, of spending €220 per household.¹⁶ As a result, the REAL project assists about a quarter of the households living in the four target woredas.¹⁷

¹⁵ *Ayuda en Acción*, ‘Internal Migration—The Case of Wolaita’.

¹⁶ Interview with the Ethiopia Deputy Country Director of iDE.

¹⁷ Number of households from ‘Situation Analysis Report on Cluster 7—Wolaita Cluster’, and assumption of six members per household.

Figure 4: REAL overview



As observed in Figure 4 above, most of these households benefit from two results: improved access to basic social services (health, WASH, nutrition – mainly in the form of trainings, provision of hygiene and medical supplies, water systems and latrines), and improved farm productivity (notably, through the provision of fertilizer and of improved varieties of seeds and animals). In addition, 2330 individuals benefit from livelihood diversification opportunities: 2000 vulnerable women are engaged in husbandry, and 330 educated youth are organised in groups, which are assisted to develop various economic activities (forage nursery, beekeeping, etc.). Another aspect of the project is the improved Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) and Natural Resources Management (NRM) capacities of communities and governments: early warning committees are strengthened (especially at the kebele level) and watersheds and degraded land are rehabilitated. The last aspect of the project consists of awareness-raising activities around the risks of migration for 2000 community members and 80 community leaders.¹⁸

The project mostly targets the most vulnerable community members, as defined by their food insecurity. Female-headed households are given priority, and, for some activities, an additional requirement is that the household is able and willing to pay back a loan.¹⁹ Exceptions for targeting the most vulnerable include the following:

- Some richer households were selected so as to maximise the services provided to the community. For example, in each woreda, bulls from an improved breed that regularly inseminate cows from the community were given to richer farmers, because bulls need a lot of forage and therefore require the recipient farmers to have relatively large landholdings.
- The youth targeted by the job creation activities are educated (university or high school level), as per the government’s priority.²⁰

¹⁸ This number might be increased as project implementation progresses.

¹⁹ REAL project, ‘Targeting and Gender Mainstreaming Procedures’.

²⁰ This is in particular because a lot of jobless educated youth may discourage families to send children to school.

2.4.2. REAL WITHIN THE EU AND EUTF FRAMEWORKS

The design of the project as described above is based on the EU's 'four cornerstones' for building resilience in Ethiopia (see Figure 5 below): i) improving the provision of basic services; ii) supporting livelihoods as well as diversifying them; iii) increasing access to safety nets for the most vulnerable; and iv) strengthening DRR and preparedness to shocks.²¹

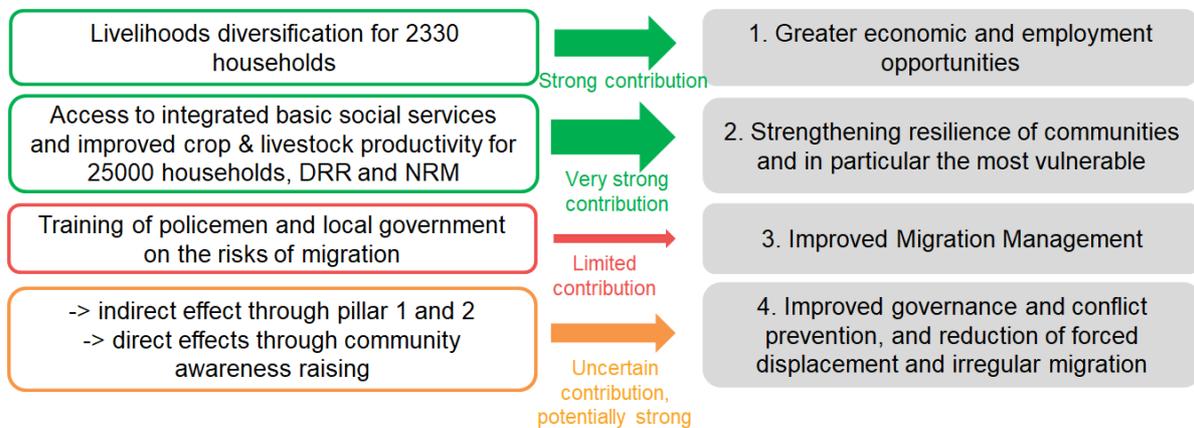
Figure 5: Some of REAL's contributions to the four cornerstones of the EU 'basic resilience model' in Ethiopia



As can be observed in Figure 5, the project is directly engaged in three cornerstones,²² and supports the provision of the fourth cornerstone (safety nets) by the Ethiopian government through the PSNP.

In parallel, REAL contributes to the four EUTF pillars to varying extents, with a strong emphasis on pillar one and two, as shown on the figure below.

Figure 6: REAL contribution to the EUTF pillars



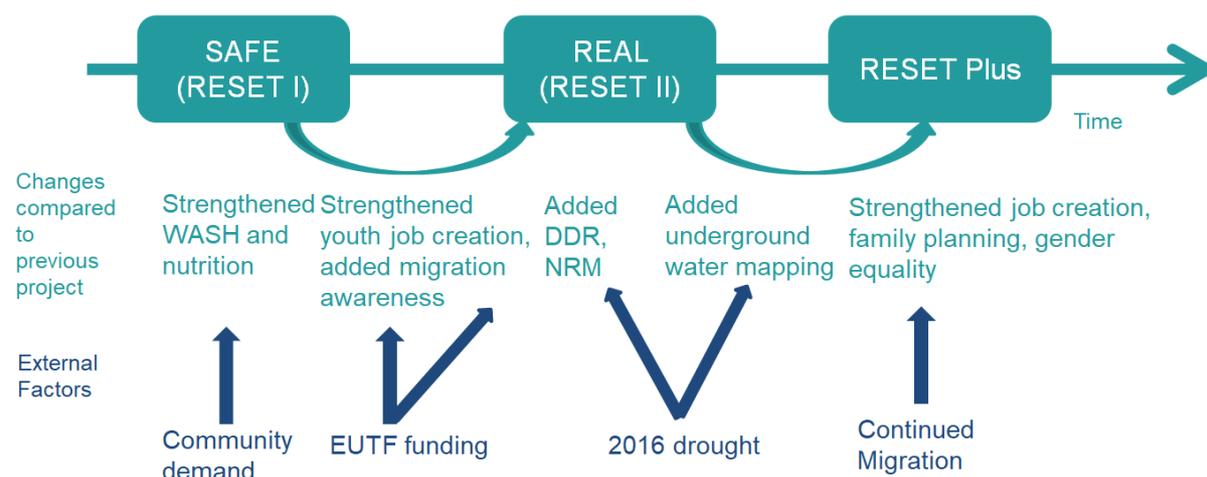
²¹ ECHO Ethiopia/EU Delegation to Ethiopia, 'Linking EU's humanitarian and development interventions in the context of resilience building: The case of Ethiopia'.

²² The only basic service not included in the project design is education, since educational achievements in the cluster were deemed to be acceptable and the government was already actively engaged in it.

2.4.3. EVOLUTION OF THE PROJECT OVER TIME

The design of RESET activities in the Wolaita cluster evolved to adapt to external factors (see Figure 7). In terms of basic social services, SAFE activities were initially focused on health, but both the community and the government asked for a strengthening of WASH and nutrition activities.²³ In addition, REAL strengthened job creation activities, and DRR, NRM and migration awareness activities were integrated, notably due to the fact that the new project was to be funded by the EUTF.

Figure 7: Integration of RESET II with other RESET phases in Wolaita



Finally, due to the recurring droughts, RESET Plus in Wolaita will be focused on mapping underground water in order to drill boreholes, which are the most efficient WASH intervention in case of drought. RESET Plus will also promote family planning and gender equality to address population pressures in the area and, indirectly, the continued migration.

3. PROJECT ORGANISATION: INTEGRATING PARTNERS OVER TIME

3.1. INTEGRATING IMPLEMENTING ORGANISATIONS TO MAXIMISE EFFICIENCY

All RESET II clusters are managed by consortia of NGOs. The degree of integration varies among the clusters, and the Wolaita consortium is one of the most successful in this regard. The REAL project is being implemented by a consortium of five NGOs: iDE, headquartered in the US; Amref Health Africa (Amref), headquartered in Kenya; Caritas International Belgium (CI.Be.); and two Ethiopian-based organisations, Ethiopian Catholic Church – Social and Development Commission

²³ Notably, by integrating the ‘hardware’ aspect with the ‘software’, for example, by not only providing training but also latrine slabs for households and equipment for hospitals.

(ECC-SDCO), and SOS Sahel Ethiopia (SOSSE). While iDE, as coordinator, is responsible for donor contract management and reporting, all partners are collectively responsible for the implementation of the project.²⁴

The first advantage of integrating NGOs in a consortium is to benefit from the expertise of each organisation.²⁵ The NGOs have divided the results expected from the project based on their respective expertise, taking leads for specific results but often working together on them. For example, Amref, which specialises in health and sanitation activities, has the lead on the sanitation aspect, but iDE is in charge of its sanitation marketing component as it is an activity that it has conducted in other areas in the past.

Working as a consortium also contributes to geographic expertise sharing. Each NGO is in charge of the overall supervision of activities conducted in one woreda. For example, SOS Sahel Ethiopia is responsible for the supervision of the activities conducted in Kindo Koysa, since they have been present in the area for over 20 years (see Picture 1).

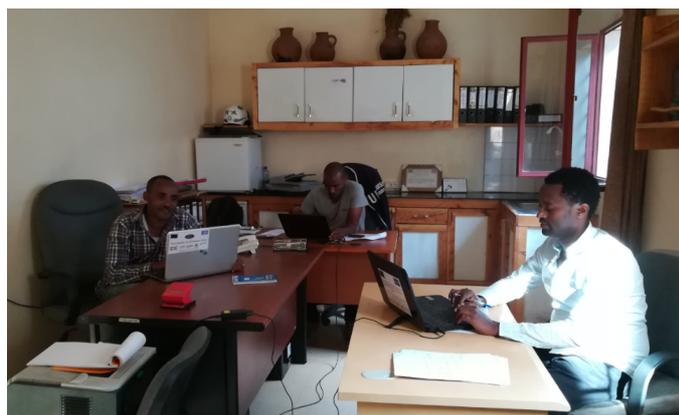
Picture 1: On the side of the road from Kindo Koysa to Sodo, a woman sells mangoes from trees that were planted by SOS Sahel Ethiopia 20 years ago



Another important advantage of the consortium is the division of administrative costs. NGOs share the same office, finances and administrative staff (drivers, secretary, cashier, and finance/administration officer) as well as field project cars and office equipment. One limitation to this approach, however, is that, despite all staff being technically accountable to the team leader, they are not 'administratively' accountable to him since they are not part of the same organisation. Integration also entails additional coordination time and effort: for example, the Wolaita consortium took the time to agree on common written guidelines.²⁶

Picture 2: In this office room, four staff from the different NGOs work together (from the left to the right: ECC-SDCO, Amref, iDE, with SOS Sahel, hidden from view)

However, it is likely that the specificities of the Wolaita cluster make the integration of NGOs more efficient and that this organisation may not be suited to all contexts. One of the reasons for the success of the Wolaita cluster could be that all NGOs of the consortium have clearly-defined



²⁴ REAL project, 'Joint Administrative & Financial Guidelines' (March 2017).

²⁵ Amref is specialised in health (and nutrition) as well as sanitation; SOS Sahel in natural resources conservation, water, and emergencies; ECC-SDCO in livestock (notably, they have a network of veterinary doctors), WASH (notably spring rehabilitation), migration and women's economic development; while iDE specialises in crop production and irrigation, crop value chains, household irrigation, and sanitation marketing.

²⁶ REAL project, 'Joint Administrative & Financial Guidelines' (March 2017). The lead agency negotiated with each IPs technical & finance committee for over four months.

fields of expertise, which eases the distribution of tasks, compared to clusters where some NGOs might already have expertise in all sectors. In the latter case, integration gains may not compensate for the additional coordination costs.²⁷

3.2. INTEGRATION WITH OTHER PARTNERS TO ENSURE SUSTAINABILITY

The ‘cluster approach’ created and promoted by RESET aims at ensuring not only internal coordination within the consortium, but also external coordination with other stakeholders working on resilience in the cluster, such as the government, microfinance institutions, other NGOs, etc.

3.2.1. INTEGRATING GOVERNMENT

The integration of the consortium activities with those of the Ethiopian government appears particularly strong in Wolaita.²⁸ The setup of zonal and woreda-level project steering committees, of a woreda-level technical committee, and of a kebele-level beneficiaries’ selection committee contribute to ensuring smooth partnership. As a sign of the close integration between REAL and government efforts, the latter provided user rights for land to be cultivated by youth groups, assisted by the project. Government officials underlined that communication was facilitated by having in each woreda a single designated ‘focal point’ liaising between the government and all NGOs of the consortium.

All trainings are provided first by the project staff to government workers; it is then those government workers who train community members, with support from the project staff. Zonal, woreda and kebele governments are also involved in project design and monitoring (in particular, through regular meetings of steering committees). At the woreda level especially, members of the local governments who were met for this case study seemed aware of every project detail.

A particular aspect of project-government collaboration is the integration of REAL with the flagship government safety net programme, the PSNP. Though there was no memorandum of understanding between RESET II and the government in this regard – there should be one for future EU resilience projects – most of the project beneficiaries are also PSNP beneficiaries²⁹, and in the woredas in which it is active, RESET II is contributing to the livelihood component of the PSNP.³⁰

This collaboration with the government might not be easily applicable to other clusters. The success of the Wolaita cluster in terms of collaboration with the government could be partly explained by the fact that the government setup is strong in this zone compared to others. This could be

²⁷ According to the project leader, the successful integration is also due to the coordination experience of the lead organisation (iDE) and the assignment of experienced staff.

²⁸ All levels of government met (zone, woreda and kebele) appeared very satisfied with the level of collaboration of the project, which they judged to be higher than other interventions in their areas.

²⁹ This strengthens the impact of the safety nets provided by the government. For example, during food-scarce months, a family will receive money from the PSNP but also nutrition-related trainings from REAL, the latter allowing the family to maximise the nutritional intakes from the food bought with PSNP money.

³⁰ The PSNP includes both unconditional and conditional food and cash transfers, as well as activities to support livelihoods. In areas where it is active, RESET II livelihoods activities (providing access to inputs for farmers and livelihoods diversification to vulnerable women and youth) replace (and often go beyond) similar activities that would have been implemented by the PSNP.

because the Wolaita population has historically been settled, while other regions in Ethiopia are inhabited by a pastoralist population – and settled populations are more likely to demand services and accountability from their local government.³¹ A second explanation for the close collaboration could be that there are less NGOs in Wolaita than in other zones, making coordination easier and causing the government to potentially be more open to and supportive of interventions from NGOs.³²

Advantages and limitations of working with the government

Working with the government contributes to ensuring the sustainability of the project. As mentioned above, for all training or awareness activities implemented within the population, government workers are first trained so that they can be the ones to dispense the trainings, even after the project ends. However, the government's high staff turnover is an issue, as well as the fact that they sometimes prioritise the government's own efforts or political activities.³³

Working with the government reduces the duplication of efforts. Duplication of efforts is avoided with the government (woreda-level officials highlighted that '*the NGOs are filling our gaps*') but also with the other NGOs: since the woreda steering committee meets every three months and evaluates the project as well as all other projects taking place in the woreda, woreda officials can easily identify potential duplications of activities and communicate it to any stakeholder.³⁴

There is a risk of subjective beneficiary selection by the kebele, but it is minimised by establishing eligibility criteria and targeting procedures, including community representatives (for example, women representatives) in the election committee in charge of selecting the beneficiaries, checking the actual vulnerability of a sample of selected beneficiaries by project staff, and establishing complaints mechanisms for the community. The latter notably involves gathering the community to discuss inclusion and exclusion issues and providing a phone number to community members so that they can express their concerns. This mechanism is, however, not fully functional: project staff suggested that it might be hampered by the limited access to phones.³⁵

3.2.2. INTEGRATING MICROFINANCE INSTITUTIONS

The collaboration of the project with two microfinance institutions, OMO microfinance and Vision Fund, also contribute to ensure the sustainability of activities both for current and future beneficiaries:

- Current beneficiaries will be able to keep buying fertilizer, improved seeds, sanitation materials (latrine slabs),



³¹ KII with project staff.

³² KII with the RESET II coordinator.

³³ In a further effort to ensure sustainability, government workers receive per diems if they are trained out of their hometowns, but not while they conduct the trainings themselves, so that they keep providing the trainings even after the project ends and no per diems are provided anymore.

³⁴ As an example, in a specific area, it was planned that the consortium would supply sweet potatoes, but the government was already receiving them from another NGO, so REAL switched to other crops.

³⁵ KIIs with project staff.

etc., as they now know about and are linked with suppliers and with microfinance, and are used to paying for those items.³⁶

- In a similar way to SAFE, REAL provided OMO with 3.5 million Ethiopian Birr (ETB) aimed at covering the loans made to beneficiaries during the project, with the condition that loans continue being made to similar beneficiaries and at similarly fixed rates after the project ends.



However, using loans has some downsides. During RESET I, 32% of beneficiaries who received a loan from OMO microfinance defaulted on it, against 9.4% for OMO's other loans (non-related to RESET).³⁷ The OMO district manager indicated that a few REAL beneficiaries had to use the money they received from the PSNP as a safety net to repay loans.³⁸ There were also reports of MFI officers not coming to collect reimbursements. An evaluation of microfinance-related activities under RESET made by ASiST³⁹ notably recommended to place more pressure on the MFIs to: follow up on the disbursed loans; to take more time helping beneficiaries to develop financial discipline through access to savings before getting access to credit⁴⁰ and to provide them with financial literacy training; and to clarify communication from the MFIs regarding the fact that their products are loans, since it is common that *'NGO funds are considered as grants, even when channelled through MFIs'*.

3.2.3. INTEGRATING OTHER ORGANISATIONS

To complement the coordination with project partners presented above, regular coordination meetings chaired by the government and led by the RESET NGOs take place at zone- and woreda-levels, with a number of stakeholders working on resilience-building within the cluster, such as local and international NGOs and UN agencies.

³⁶ Some beneficiaries are able to repay the first loan, borrow again, and further diversify their income-generating options. In the case of beneficiaries who cannot get a loan because they do not have any collateral, which is the case of most members of WEGs, for example, the project will ask them to save a small amount of money before they are given animals and then to save 5 RTB every month, which they can use to replace the animals if they die of natural causes. The approach seems to be at least partly sustainable: a woman member of a WEG created during the SAFE project in Duguna Fango explained that among the women who received a goat or sheep along with her, half are now 'successful', in the sense that they now have a cow (this is an indicator of success because they can feed the milk to their children). However, during last year's drought, this woman had to take a loan with an interest rate of 50% with a local moneylender.

³⁷ The OMO district manager emphasised that this high percentage was common for all donor-funded projects, with beneficiaries sometimes having 'attitude-problems', i.e. thinking that they should not have to repay the loan.

³⁸ A farmer met in Damot Pulasa, who had been helped to receive improved potato seeds, reported that out of the four farmers in his kebele who got access to the improved seeds like he did, two farmers failed to grow them (either because of lack of water or because they did not handle them properly), but they are still expected to refund the loan, 'though it's difficult for them'.

³⁹ ASiST Mission report, 'High-level assessment of microfinance-related activities under RESET', April 2018. ASiST is an advisory service of the European Commission managed by the unit in charge of rural development, food security and nutrition within DEVCO.

⁴⁰ In this regard, the provision of small ruminants and participation in public work was deemed to be a step in the right direction as it encourages beneficiaries to save before receiving a loan.

4. PROJECT APPROACH: INTEGRATING AND SEQUENCING ACTIVITIES

4.1. INTEGRATING SERVICES TO BUILD RESILIENCE

4.1.1. THE 'INTEGRATED SERVICES' APPROACH

According to several informants, Wolaita is one of the clusters that presents the best example of the 'integrated services' approach. The idea is that multiplying interventions with the same beneficiaries should provide the latter with a 'big push' to get them out of poverty ('1+1=3'). This is a common approach for all RESET II clusters, but in other clusters – potentially because NGOs are working together less closely – there are situations in which those who receive WASH interventions are not the same as those who receive agricultural inputs, for instance. In Wolaita, the project is built in such a way that each target household should receive at least two interventions/services.

Focus Box 2: Example of integrated services: Tafari Zewde in Damot Pulasa

Tafari Zewde, a farmer shown on the right, is a good example of the integrated services approach adopted by REAL. Through the project:

- He received a bull from an improved breed, which will inseminate 80 to 100 community cows (the offspring will produce 40% more milk than the existing cows), after which the bull will be entirely his;
- He was given planting material for drought-resistant forage to be used for his bull but also to be sold to those in the community who need it;
- He dug a well, and the project linked him with OMO microfinance to get a loan, which financed 25% of the purchase of an irrigation machine (shown right). The remaining 75% was subsidised by the project. Irrigation allows him to plant vegetables that the kebele is lacking – he is the only farmer selling vegetables in the area.
- He received trainings on health-related issues, climate-smart agriculture, compost use and household irrigation, and his wife will enrol in nutrition training to learn how to cook the vegetables to maximise their nutritional value.
- He is registered for and waiting for a latrine slab.

In line with REAL's consortium approach, the bull was provided to him by ECC-SDCO, the forage nursery by SOS Sahel Ethiopia, the improved seeds as well as the rope and washer pump by IDE, and the health-related training by Amref.

Picture 3: Tafari Zewde



4.1.2. ADVANTAGES AND LIMITS OF INTEGRATING SERVICES

A clear advantage of integrating the services provided to beneficiaries are the synergies created. For example, households provided with improved vegetable seeds are also provided with relevant training, fertilizer and cooking classes aimed at improving the nutritional value of meals prepared with the vegetables, ensuring that the intervention has a direct impact on nutrition in the household.

Integrating services can also increase the take-up of services initially less sought out by households. For example, during SAFE – when activities were less coordinated – Amref would sometimes go to certain beneficiaries to offer them solely family planning, which, on its own, was not considered very appealing. Now, with REAL, family planning activities are systematically integrated with WASH and livelihoods interventions, leading to a higher acceptance rate. It is also helpful that family planning is sometimes promoted at the end of an unrelated training attended by both husbands and wives – which is crucial in a context where it is often the husband who has the final say on the implementation of family planning.⁴¹

Integrated services facilitate follow-up and increase its efficiency by reducing its costs. Several beneficiaries and project staff mentioned that they had never seen such intense follow-up from a project. For example, if farmers are provided with inputs and are also involved in a natural resource management project that gathers all vulnerable farmers in the area some days of the week, the community facilitators do not have to visit them on their individual farms but can take advantage of the gathering to also follow up on the inputs previously provided to the farmers.

A limitation is that non-beneficiaries (and maybe to a lesser extent, the government) sometimes do not understand why the action should be limited to a few ‘privileged’ households or kebeles (villages), and would prefer to spread fewer interventions across a larger number of beneficiaries and kebeles.⁴² Additional awareness and communication activities should therefore probably be included in future projects to explain to the broader community the advantages of providing many services to a limited number of beneficiaries, and to highlight the services which benefit the whole community (for example, the provision of supplies to medical centres). A related best practice is the organisation of project eligibility validation meetings, which gather the community and allow the discussion of inclusion and exclusion issues.

4.2. SEQUENCING ACTIVITIES OVER TIME AND ENSURING THEIR SUSTAINABILITY

4.2.1. INTEGRATING SHORT-, MID- AND LONG-TERM ACTIVITIES

RESET II activities combine short-, medium- and long-term actions to be able to:

- In the short-term, ensure that partners can move from a long-term resilience-building mode to an emergency response mode for a determined period of time when needed thanks to a

⁴¹ Kills with three members of the Damot Pulasa woreda administration.

⁴² A further indication of this is that when asking what improvements could be made to the project during FGDs, most participants (especially government-affiliated ones) suggested to extend the activities to new beneficiaries and kebeles instead of strengthening the current activities.

‘Crisis Modifier Mechanism’ (CMM): the CMM allows for additional flexibility to make changes within projects’ activities and budgets, as well as the allocation of additional funding from the ‘crisis modifier fund’ of €2.3m, set aside to address unforeseen crises in any of the eight clusters. However, in 2017, REAL had to use its contingency funds very early in the project’s lifespan to respond to the drought, as the CMM was not set up yet, leaving it with limited contingency funds in case of future need.⁴³

- In the medium-term, build 1) the absorptive capacity of communities through the provision of basic social services that strengthen human capital, for example, or the provision of crops resistant to drought; as well as 2) their adaptive capacity through the diversification of livelihoods in particular.
- In the long run, directly address the sources of shocks through DRR, NRM, or family planning, for example.

4.2.2. LESSONS LEARNED FROM REAL ON ENSURING SUSTAINABILITY

Below are some key insights that project staff believe can ensure the sustainability of resilience-building interventions:

- **Minimise the maintenance burden with a sustainable project design.** For example, RESET II opted to build ponds rather than boreholes, partly because, even though ponds are more likely to dry out during a drought, they are simpler to maintain and their sustainability is more likely to be assured.⁴⁴ Another example is that when women from Women Economic Groups (WEGs) receive goats or sheep and chickens, they are asked to save 5 ETB every two weeks as insurance: if one of their animals dies from natural death even after the project ends, it will be replaced by the accumulated savings, and not by the woman’s savings only.

- **Ensure a continuous engagement with beneficiaries.** Some Beneficiaries from RESET I (SAFE project) who did not ‘graduate’ from the PSNP⁴⁵ are beneficiaries of RESET II (REAL project).

- **Create a sense of ownership.** For example, the watersheds rehabilitated by REAL are run entirely by local watershed management committees led by community members.

- **Take advantage of the ‘integrated services approach’ to promote environmental sustainability.** For example, farmers who receive inputs are provided with training on the use of organic fertilizer if they have enough land (as space is needed for the production of fertilizer from animal waste); women who are given goats or sheep are also given improved forage seeds and trained on forage production and harvesting, so that the goats or sheep do not deplete the surrounding natural resources.

- **Perhaps most importantly, generate lasting change by creating markets that will remain after the project ends.** As mentioned previously, items are bought by farmers using a loan, not given for free – being now linked with microfinance and used to pay for the items, farmers will

⁴³ Interview with the EUD project manager. In the future, the Crisis Modifier Fund will be managed by an external organisation that will provide funds to all clusters to support emergency response and key DRR activities that are aligned with the Contingency Plan of each woreda.

⁴⁴ KII with the REAL project coordinator.

⁴⁵ Households who graduate are identified by a Community Food Security Task Force, who identifies potential graduates from the wealthiest groups of PSNP beneficiaries, the number of which is based on a predicted rate of graduation (based on the annual crop production, and other factors). Additionally, no household can be graduated if it does not fulfill the following criteria: ‘A household graduates from the PSNP when it achieves food sufficiency without external support’.

presumably keep buying them after the project ends. Improvements in sanitation are achieved by creating both a supply – by training manufacturers to build latrine slabs – and a demand – by training marketing agents who will advertise the benefits of latrine slab use to households (and earn a commission on each latrine slab sold). This approach is not without difficulties, however: transportation is underdeveloped, and the slab manufacturers have to rely on the project to deliver the slabs to beneficiaries. Often it is the local demand which is too weak. At the time of the fieldwork, many slabs manufacturers had stopped production as the price of their raw material (cement) had increased but they were not allowed to significantly raise their prices to ensure that the poorest households would still be able to afford the slabs. Another example is a chicken-breeding youth group created during SAFE in Duguna Fango, who is now selling very few chickens, partly because there is not enough demand for their chickens. To strengthen this demand, REAL now buys the chickens from the group and gives them to the WEG.⁴⁶

5. BUILDING RESILIENCE, PROVIDING ALTERNATIVES TO MIGRATION

5.1. QUALITATIVE INSIGHTS ON THE PROJECT'S IMPACT ON MIGRATION

The economic literature suggests that strengthening resilience could, in some cases, decrease migration (see Focus Box 3 below). Qualitative information collected from informants in the target woredas supports this hypothesis, though the link remains mostly hypothetical.

Focus Box 3: Review of selected literature on the impact of shocks on migration

Some research papers using macroeconomic data conclude that shortages in rainfall historically strengthened the urbanisation process in sub-Saharan Africa (Barrios et al. 2006)⁴⁷ and that weather anomalies reinforce international migration through their impact on wages, especially in countries depending on agriculture (Marchiori et al. 2011).⁴⁸ Therefore, building resilience to phenomena such as drought should contribute to reducing both rural-urban and international migrations.⁴⁹

Other research using microeconomic (survey) data finds more mixed results. Clay and Mueller (2001)⁵⁰ used panel data in Ethiopia to conclude that among men, labour-related movements and migration out of the district more than doubled under severe drought and that men from land-poor

⁴⁶ During the SAFE project, the WEG were only receiving sheep or goats and not chickens.

⁴⁷ Salvador Barrios, Luisito Bertinelli and Eric Strobl, 'Climatic Change and Rural-urban Migration: The Case of Sub-Saharan Africa' (2006).

⁴⁸ L. Marchiori, J-F. Maystadt and I. Schumacher, 'The Impact of Weather Anomalies on Migration in Sub-Saharan Africa', Discussion Paper 2011-34.

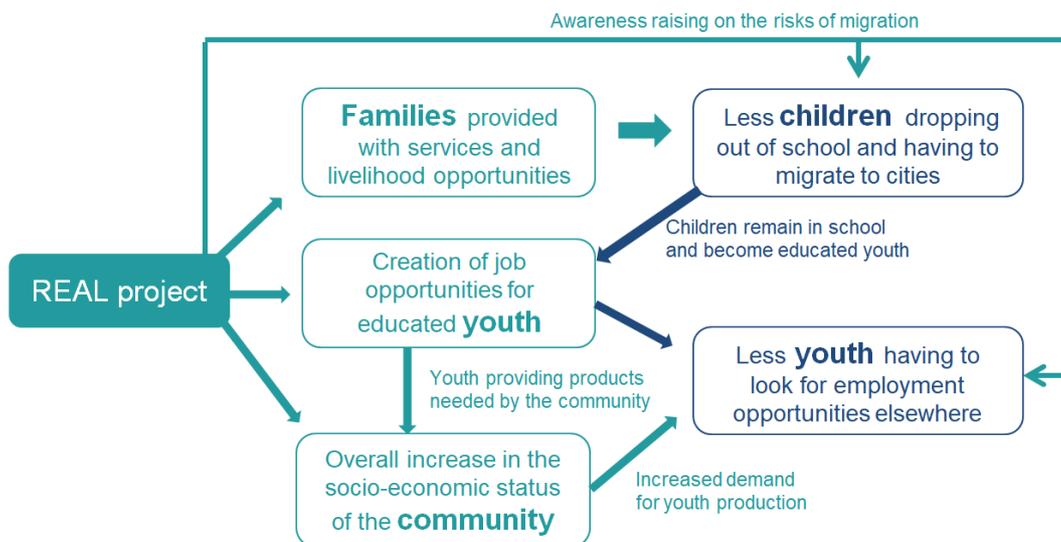
⁴⁹ Jean-François Maystadt and Valerie Mueller, 'Environmental Migrants: A Myth?', IFPRI Research Brief.

⁵⁰ Clark Gray and Valerie Mueller, 'Drought and Population Mobility in Rural Ethiopia' (2011).

households were most vulnerable to these effects. However, moderate droughts did not have any significant effect on migration, and had opposite effects on women.⁵¹ According to a survey conducted in North Eastern Ethiopia by Wondimagegnhu and Zeleke (2017), respondents said that drought was the main factor for migration; however, no significant econometric impact could be found.⁵²

Interviews conducted with informants, beneficiaries and migrants suggest that the REAL project may contribute to providing alternatives to migration primarily in two different ways (see Figure 8 below):

Figure 8: Possible impact of the REAL project on migration



1. By helping families rise out of extreme poverty, the project may help prevent children from dropping out of school and having to migrate to cities to fulfil their basic needs. Key informants suggested that this could be the project’s main impact on migration. Migrant children met with in Addis confirmed that it was their families’ extreme poverty levels that incited them to migrate (see Focus Box 4, below). If the project does indeed reduce children’s internal migration, the overall impact may be significant as children are believed to constitute most of the migrants from the target woredas: according to the *Ayuda in Acción* study, over three-quarters of migrants from Boloso Sore are under 18 years old, with 29% aged 10 to 14.

⁵¹ Presumably because of a decreased ability to marry during a drought due to the dowry, which may be more difficult to pay when household assets may be reduced.

⁵² Beneberu Assefa Wondimagegnhu and Mesfin Eshetu Zeleke, ‘Determinants of Rural Out-migration in Habru District of Northeast Ethiopia’, *International Journal of Population Research*, Volume 2017 (2017).

Focus Box 4: Experience of three children who migrated from Boloso Sore and Damot Pulasa to Addis Ababa⁵³

T, M and B are aged 14 to 16. They arrived in Addis less than a year ago from Boloso Sore and Damot Pulasa, having dropped out of grade 7, 8 and 10 respectively. Today, T and M are shoeshiners while B sells clothes on the street (illegally). They mentioned two reasons for their migration to Addis: the first reason was that their families could not afford their basic needs, such as food, education (expenditures for books, pens, etc.) and clothing, and the second was the influence of their peers – youths having already migrated to Addis coming back to their villages in nice clothes and talking about the advantages of living in the city. Therefore, the children chose to earn some money rather than seeing their families struggle to feed them. None of their families were receiving any support from the government or from NGOs; they believe they would have stayed if all their school expenses had been covered (including pens, notebooks and school meals), if they had known more about the dangers of migration and if entrepreneurship activities for the youth had been supported in their woreda.

They have all started regretting coming to Addis: *'I thought that life was going to be perfect but things are not going as I thought they would,'* says T. Most days, they do not manage to earn more than 50 ETB (about US\$1.8), and they can barely cover their food, transportation and accommodation expenses. They say that they face discrimination from local people (even insults from clients), and in the case of B who is selling clothes illegally, harassment from the police. They are thinking about going back but explain that they have to save some money first because they cannot come back and face their family empty-handed. B is thinking about going to South Africa to earn some more money first. However, if they come back, none wants to engage in agriculture because there is not enough land, and even if there were, *'You don't earn enough from that'.*

2. By providing employment opportunities for educated youths, the project encourages youths to stay in their community instead of having no choice but to look for work in the cities and can allow youths who migrated to come back to their community. About a third of the members of youth groups met during the fieldwork⁵⁴ had already migrated when they were selected by the project and decided to come back to/stay in their villages because of the job offer they received from REAL (see

Focus Box 5, below). In the long run, the overall rise in living standards of the community should also contribute to creating a demand for products that could be provided by the youths. In the short-term, however, and given the small number of jobs directly created by REAL (330, not including the small business activities that might be developed by women from the WEG), the project is likely to have a limited impact in this regard. In Kindo Koysa, 3192 youth were identified as being educated but jobless, and only 60 were provided job opportunities by the project. In addition, the jobs that are created may not be sufficiently attractive for some educated youths: 3 out of a group of 10 who met in Duguna Fango wanted to migrate to South Africa or the Middle East once they had accumulated enough money with their work at the current forage nursery supported by the project. Most

⁵³ FGD held in Addis Ababa on 30 March with three youths from Boloso Sore and Damot Pulasa.

⁵⁴ Three groups were met in Boloso Sore, Duguna Fango and in Damot Pulasa.

beneficiaries underlined the need to have a ‘big factory’ that could ‘accommodate a lot of youths’ in the area—but this is beyond the project’s capacity and primary aim. To significantly impact youth employment and therefore youth migration, a completely different approach may be needed, with the government and the private sector helping to build new industries while, as suggested by project staff, projects such as REAL could contribute by building the skills necessary for such industries. This is particularly important as even if the project prevents children from dropping out of school and migrating, those children will become youths for which those large-scale job creations are needed.

Focus Box 5: The migration experience from Ardisou Otoro

A young man, leader of a youth group initially assisted by the SAFE project in Boloso Sore, was coming back from Sudan when the group was created. He left for the first time in 2008, going to Addis with no goal of migrating further, initially. After spending three years there, incurring a lot of expenses, and friends telling him that he could earn more in Sudan, he decided to go there illegally. He earned a reasonable amount of money, but living conditions were very difficult. He thought about going to Europe but decided it was too dangerous, so after six months, he travelled back to his village. He says that he would have migrated again if the SAFE project had not given him the opportunity to be a member of the youth group to which he currently belongs.

Picture 4: Ardisou Otoro on the right



Some resilience-building activities probably contribute more than others to providing alternatives to unplanned migration. The provision of basic services and the improvement of farms’ productivity – which are the main aspects of the project – contribute to increasing food security and can reduce children migration in the short-term, but are unlikely to have a large impact on youth employment, as landholdings are too small to create significant additional employment opportunities for youths. Even if productivity is significantly increased,⁵⁵ and if basic services are provided to the community, the youths will probably keep migrating if no attractive jobs are created for them. Conversely, family planning activities reduce demographic pressure on the land and can contribute both to increased resilience and to decreased migration. DRR activities, to the extent that they help mitigate the impacts of drought, could also contribute to reducing migration.

In any case, it is likely that the relationship between resilience/poverty and migration is non-linear and different for each individual and geographical area. Some of the youth met in Duguna Fango mentioned that they wanted to use the additional income from the project to migrate. A female beneficiary of SAFE and REAL who was met in Damot Pulasa indicated that even with the increased resilience that she experienced with the project, she would still like to migrate – but if she were ‘rich’ (which she defines as having two oxen and two cows), she would stay in her village.

⁵⁵ This was supported by FGDs conducted in each woreda, where farmers confirmed that agriculture alone would not be able to absorb the labour supply from youths.

5.2. COMPLEXITY OF MEASURING THE IMPACT OF RESILIENCE PROJECTS

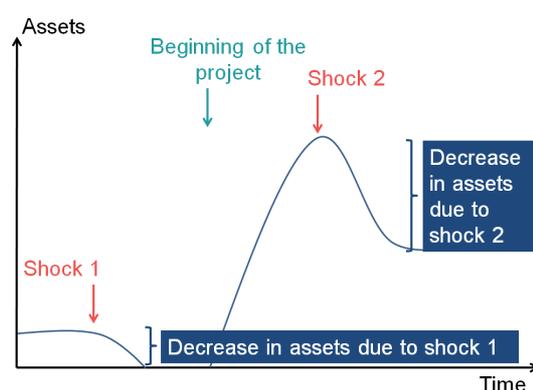
5.2.1. MEASURING RESILIENCE

Measuring the impact of any project on resilience is challenging, in particular because resilience is a dynamic phenomenon – ‘*resilience is not an outcome, but a capacity that influences outcomes*’.⁵⁶ Faced with this challenge, the majority of existing approaches use as proxies households’ characteristics *a priori* assumed to be building blocks of resilience (assets, access to services, available infrastructure, social transfers etc.),⁵⁷ which is problematic as the causal relationship between these ‘building blocks’ and resilience is usually not demonstrated.⁵⁸

The impact of REAL on resilience will be measured by the distress sale of assets by households during shocks, as measured by “pre-post” surveys,⁵⁹ but this might lead to incorrect conclusions.

The baseline survey concluded that the distress sale of assets was one of the most frequent coping strategies adopted by households. An issue with the approach is illustrated in Figure 9: if households accumulate assets thanks to the project (small ruminants for the WEGs in the case of REAL, for example), they might be able to sell more assets compared to the previous shock (when they may have had no asset to sell whatsoever), but this time potentially without having to reduce their welfare – for example by selling assets that they consider as savings rather than having to reduce food consumption.

Figure 9: Measuring the distress sale of assets



Rather than measuring coping strategies, resilience projects could therefore focus on finding proxy measures for household well-being: for example, the number of days/weeks/months during which household consumption was below a specific threshold. An issue is that this would be significantly more difficult to estimate – both for the household asked to estimate its consumption and for the project to determine an appropriate threshold. A proxy could be the number of months of self-reported food insecurity, which is an indicator adopted by other RESET II clusters – but the definition of ‘food insecurity’ might be very different from household to household. Alternatively, the project could simply use the graduation rate from the PSNP in the kebeles of intervention, which would in addition save on survey costs, as this number should be directly available from the government.

⁵⁶ USAID, ‘Measuring Resilience in USAID’.

⁵⁷ Christophe Béné, ‘Towards a Quantifiable Measure of Resilience’, Institute of Development Studies working paper (2013)

⁵⁸ ‘RIMA-II’ resilience analyses conducted by the Food and Agriculture Organization attempt to do so by conducting econometric analyses, but even such techniques cannot conclude to causal relationships with certainty.

⁵⁹ “Pre-post” studies examine whether participants in an intervention improve or regress during the intervention, and then attribute the changes to the intervention.

Measuring household well-being alone is not enough, as resilience should measure the change in well-being compared to the intensity of shocks⁶⁰ (for example, losing 20% of your income following a five-month drought is a better resilience outcome than losing the same percentage following a similar-intensity one-month drought). Even if household welfare is shown to have increased between the baseline and endline survey, the baseline data could have been collected while households were effected by more intense shocks than during the endline survey, leading to spurious conclusions. An improved resilience indicator could therefore be the ratio of the change in household welfare following a shock over the intensity of the shock experienced. The latter could be measured using variations in rainfall data in the case of a drought, for example. The simplest version of this resilience indicator could measure the evolution of number of PSNP recipients in the kebeles of intervention over a given period, divided by shortfalls in rainfall in the same kebeles over the same period.⁶¹

A further challenge to measuring the impact of a project on resilience relates to the speed of recovery. As welfare will tend to rise with the time elapsed since the shock occurred, baseline and endline surveys will only be comparable if they are implemented within identical timeframes following a shock.

The observations noted above are however irrelevant if no shock occurs over the duration of the project. In this case, the M&E system will have to identify characteristics that are thought to enable people to cope better with hypothetical shocks,⁶² and measure these characteristics. This could be complemented by measuring the percentage of households thinking that they would be able to cope with a future shock.

5.2.2. MEASURING THE EFFECT ON MIGRATIONS

As for the impact on migration, it is not measured for the REAL project. Given that all informants met concluded that whole families rarely migrate, it would be possible to get a proxy for the migration rate by asking households the number of family members who migrated. Of particular interest to the REAL project would be to measure the number of children having to drop out of school due to food insecurity in the family, or of youths migrating out of the woreda due to lack of job opportunities. The major challenge will be that many of the project activities (including family planning, DRR, NRM) will only have an impact on migration in the long term and cannot be measured during an endline survey after only 40 months.

5.2.3. TACKLING ATTRIBUTION ISSUES

Attribution issues⁶³ will remain a challenge. Even if the project is not implemented in kebeles where other NGOs are already implementing similar activities,⁶⁴ results produced by NGOs from non-

⁶⁰ The 2012 Commission Communication on the EU approach to resilience defines it as ‘the ability of an individual, a household, a community, a country or a region to withstand, adapt and quickly recover from stresses and shocks’.

⁶¹ This has the disadvantage of not taking into account other forms of shocks, such as crop diseases that frequently effect households in the Wolaita woredas.

⁶² This can be done by organising FGDs with local communities to identify the characteristics of resilient households.

⁶³ Attribution refers to the extent to which changes in outcomes of interest can be attributed to a particular intervention. Attribution refers to both isolating and estimating accurately the particular contribution of an intervention and ensuring that causality runs from the intervention to the outcome.

related activities (and results produced in other kebeles) might interact with the impact measured by the REAL project. In any case, the current M&E tools will not be able to disentangle the impact from the project and the impact from the PSNP, as kebeles targeted by the REAL project are almost always covered by the PSNP as well. Only a rigorous impact evaluation would be able to solve attribution issues.⁶⁵ As a first step, there could be an interest in measuring the combined impact of both government and project activities, with M&E systems to be co-developed by implementing partners and the government.

6. CONCLUSIONS

This case study shows how integrated approaches can more efficiently build the resilience of vulnerable rural communities. For a limited cost per household (€220), 25,000 households in 40 kebeles of the Wolaita zone are experiencing concrete improvements in their lives.

However, beyond the job creation aspect, which has a direct impact on youth migration, the link between resilience-building and migration remains speculative at this point. The complexity of the relationship between resilience-building and migration is recognised by the REAL project,⁶⁶ but lack of evidence on the link between the two hampers the design of concrete solutions and the ability to effectively integrate migration into the project's scope. If project partners were to decide to directly target alternatives to migration (as opposed to the mostly indirect way in which the issue is addressed currently), significantly more investment would be required – for instance, in job creation. Further (quantitative) research would also be necessary to clearly demonstrate what links there are (if any) between other aspects of resilience-building and migration. One could also consider the extent to which RESET II clusters would be able to address migratory flows: REAL targets an average of 6,000 households per woreda over three years, but according to the *Ayuda en Acción* study, in 2017 alone, 10,000 households from Boloso Sore woreda had a household member who had migrated. Therefore, if project partners were to decide to directly target migration, they would need to build on the assets successfully developed by the programme, envision opportunities for scaling up the most successful activities and further develop partnerships with the government and the private sector.

The conclusions outlined above are based on qualitative-only research in one geographical area and on a limited number of KIIs and FGDs (33 in total, in 12 communities).⁶⁷ In addition, the project was still in its early stages at the time of the fieldwork, and while the team also met some RESET I beneficiaries, the work and subsequent analysis was limited to the direct outputs of REAL (as opposed to its outcomes). Further case studies in other RESET II clusters, as well as strengthened M&E systems, should shed additional light on these preliminary findings.

⁶⁴ KII with the REAL M&E officer.

⁶⁵ According to the World Bank, 'An impact evaluation assesses the changes in the well-being of individuals that can be attributed to a particular project, programme, or policy (...) To be able to estimate the causal effect or impact of a programme on outcomes, any method chosen must estimate the so-called counterfactual, that is, what the outcome would have been for programme participants if they had not participated in the programme.' (World Bank, 'Impact Evaluations in Practice', 2011).

⁶⁶ For instance, migration is not among the impact indicators in the project's logical framework.

⁶⁷ 85 people were interviewed in total, either alone or as part of FGDs.

Nevertheless, the case study highlights some lessons learned, including:

- **Effective integration of NGOs within a consortium requires significant investments** (notably in time), and seems particularly suited for projects where each organisation has a specific role and/or speciality.
- **Integrating services provided to each household may limit the number of households reached in total (generally to the poorest) but it creates synergies that will potentially make the project's impact more sustainable.** It is important to communicate this fact to the whole community and to advertise the services that benefit all community members to avoid misunderstandings.
- **Lasting changes can be implemented by creating markets that will remain after the project ends, noting that creating whole value chains requires significant funding.** Given the market shortfalls effecting areas such as Wolaita, organisations aiming at creating sustainable markets should have sufficient funding available to address all shortfalls effecting the area of intervention (supply, demand, transportation, etc.), and have clear exit strategies to ensure that the created markets persist after the project ends.
- **Using loans instead of grants allows the project's impact to be more sustainable, but does not come without challenges.** The default rate on loans would probably be lower if beneficiaries received additional financial awareness education before receiving the loan, and if MFIs had the right incentives to follow-up on the loans disbursed.
- **Traditional resilience-building activities may not be the most direct way to address migrations.** Resilience-building activities such as service provision or increased agricultural productivity may reduce the forced migration of children but will probably have little impact on youth migration unless sufficient (and attractive enough) employment is created.
- **Finally, the design of resilience-building programmes' M&E systems should involve a reflection on the measure of resilience.** It is unclear whether the indicators adopted by RESET II partners will be able to accurately measure how the projects effect resilience. There is a need to invest time in the definition of indicators that could effectively measure this, particularly in anticipation of future RESET phases. More broadly, there was no impact evaluation of RESET I, and no such evaluation is planned for RESET II. Given Ethiopia's strategic position within the EUTF portfolio and the emphasis the Trust Fund puts on resilience-building in the Horn of Africa, and in Ethiopia in particular, there may be an interest in investing in rigorous impact evaluations of resilience-building projects – perhaps in partnership with local universities.