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Targeting in Complex Emergencies: Somalia Country Case Study

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"Haddii quudku yaryahay, qeyladu waa badan tahay"

("When food is not enough, there will be a lot of quarrels")

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The Authors

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Acronyms

AFLC	Acute Food and Livelihoods Crisis
AMISOM	African Union Mission in Somalia
AU	African Union
CP	Cooperating Partner
EC	European Commission
EDP	Extended Distribution Point
EMOP	Emergency Operations
DFID	Department for International Development (UK)
FEA	Food Economy Analysis
FEWSNET	Famine Early Warning Systems Network
FFW	Food For Work
FIC	Feinstein International Center
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organization
FDP	Final Distribution Point
FSAU	Food Security Analysis Unit
GAM	Global Acute Malnutrition
GFD	General Food Distribution
HE	Humanitarian Emergency
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
ICU	Islamic Courts Union
IDP	Internally Displaced Persons
IPC	Integrated Phase Classification
MCH	Maternal and Child Health
NCA	Norwegian Church Aid
PDM	Post Distribution Monitoring
PRRO	Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation
SAM	Severe Acute Malnutrition
SFC	Supplementary Feeding Center
TFG	Transitional Federal Government
TNG	Transitional National Government
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNOSOM	United National Operation in Somalia
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VAM	Vulnerability Assessment and Mapping
WFH	Weight for height
WFP	World Food Programme
WVI	World Vision International

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Executive Summary

Somalia has been in a state of conflict since the late 1980s and has not had a central government able to govern the country since the fall of the former President, Siad Barre, in 1991. The conflict is essentially one for control over power and resources, notably land, where clan identity has been manipulated for political and economic ends. Over time the conflict has become increasingly influenced by both regional rivalries (Ethiopia/Eritrea) and international politics (the US and the war on terror). 2008 is likely to see deteriorating humanitarian conditions, as the combination of poor harvests and increasing conflict is compounded by rapidly rising global prices for food in a country heavily dependent on imports.

The World Food Programme has been operating in Somalia since the beginning of the conflict and since 1999 has had an on-going Protracted Relief and Rehabilitation Operation that now provides about 90,000 metric tons of food aid per year. The majority of this is targeted to the South-Central part of the country where political stability has been the most elusive. The biggest single category of assistance has been general food distribution for food-insecure rural populations as well as for IDPs. Given the current battle between the Transitional Federal Government (backed by the Ethiopian Army) and the Union of Islamic Courts for the control of Mogadishu, there is a now substantial amount of food assistance going to urban populations as well.

The study examined community participation throughout the food aid program cycle to understand the role of recipient communities in the targeting of food assistance under the conflict conditions in Somalia. Food assistance has always been intended to be targeted to the most vulnerable groups in the affected population. Targeting at the geographic level of district and livelihood is well informed by analysis, but is less informed by adequate assessment at the village and household level. Security considerations, limited staff numbers and other constraints have long meant that the actual oversight of what happens with food must be left in the hands of local leaders at the village or IDP camp level. Under these circumstances there have been allegations of widespread diversion of food aid by militias and other powerful actors before it reaches the community level, and widespread practices of the redistribution of food aid beyond the WFP-targeted recipients at the community level. The same considerations that limit the access of WFP to oversee targeting also limits access for follow up and monitoring, so the real impact of redistribution is not known.

This research is one case in a study commissioned by the World Food Programme to investigate the participation of recipient community in the targeting and management of humanitarian food assistance in complex emergencies. The study involved a substantial desk review of existing documentation, and two weeks of field work in March and April 2008. The purpose of the study was to understand the ways in which participatory or community-based approaches to targeting have been attempted, within the definition of community-based targeting suggested by WFP. The study was not an evaluation of targeting methods, although some critical examination of targeting was necessary in order to understand the constraints on community participation.

The WFP definition of community-based targeting includes the notion of working through local or traditional leaders to target food to the most vulnerable. In Somalia, WFP relies to some extent on local leadership to oversee and target food aid within the community. But the study team found big differences in the accountability and legitimacy of local leadership in different locations. These ranged from a reasonable degree of accountability of leadership in rural communities where the presence of clan elders and religious leaders allowed for some checks and balances and some redress mechanisms; to populations effectively kept in check by "gate keepers" who control information, access, and resources. The latter type of local leadership tends to predominate in IDP camp situations. Though "committees" of "local leaders" exist in both situations (and a continuum between these two types), the degree to which leaders actually represent the "community" differs enormously, and it is not surprising that most of the evidence about diversion of assistance comes from situations in which representation is the lowest. Relief Committees are reportedly used to assist in food aid targeting by some of WFP's Cooperating Partners, but the study team could not visit any of these areas.

The practice of redistribution limits the number of people in any recipient community who are excluded from food assistance, but also ends up ensuring that no one receives very much. Strong views were expressed virtually everywhere the study team was able to visit that external assistance in the form of food *should* be shared equally within communities. Other forms of assistance, particularly those internal to the community, might be specifically targeted to individuals, but the notion of targeting external food assistance to some and ignoring others was perceived as anathema more or less across the boards,

Much of the process of food aid targeting remains opaque to recipients. They are often not aware of their entitlements or the process of determining who is entitled. Redistribution rarely takes place in an organized or supervised way, and is often so ad hoc and disorganized that it results in fighting or even in loss to looting. In the absence of good monitoring, it is difficult to assess impact or targeting error.

Improved targeting would be promoted by an improved analysis of context, increasing the capacity of staff and partners to target at the village level, and a willingness to work with the reality of sharing and redistribution. Other means of improving the participation in targeting, given the existing constraints, include identifying and bolstering appropriate checks and balances, involving all stakeholders in the planning, improving transparency through informing the community of overall food aid being delivered (even if people cannot be informed of their individual entitlements because of the dynamics of redistributions), and making better use of localized complaints mechanisms.

Section 1. Background

History and Evolution of Conflict in Somalia

Somalia has experienced conflict for over 17 years.[1] Conflict was preceded by a long period of clan based divide and rule politics to suppress opposition to enable the government to stay in power. Resistance movements, encouraged by Ethiopia, sprang up across the country, and Siad Barre's government was finally overthrown in 1991.

The conflict is essentially one for control over power and resources, notably land, where clan identity has been manipulated for political and economic ends. Over time the conflict has become increasingly influenced by both regional (Ethiopia/Eritrea) and international politics (the US and the war on terror). The conflict can be divided into at least three phases: The disintegration of the state and conflict between clan based militia (1991-2000); the formation of new governments; but armed opposition by clans marginalized within the new government (2000-05); and the rise of the Islamists and Ethiopian occupation (2005-present).

Between 1991 and 1993, major conflict between rival clan based militia took place in the riverine and inter-riverine areas of Middle and Lower Shebelle, Lower Juba and Bay Region, which were the most fertile and resource rich areas of Somalia. Mogadishu also became a battleground between rival militias. Conflict was associated with widespread killing, looting, destruction, displacement and caused a major famine. In 1992, the UN Security Council authorized a limited peacekeeping operation, UN Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM I), mainly to ensure security for the delivery of humanitarian assistance, but whose use of force was limited to self-defense. However, violence continued, and in December 1992, the US organized a military coalition, UNITAF (or Operation Restore Hope) for purpose of creating a secure environment for humanitarian operations. UNITAF was followed by UNOSOM II, the aim of which was to restore peace and stability as well as national reconciliation so as to recreate a democratic Somali State. However, while large amounts of humanitarian assistance were provided during this time, neither UNOSOM nor UNITAF were successful in creating a secure environment. UNOSOM finally left in March 1995, having failed to restore government.

By the late 90's, parts of Somalia were occupied by different militia, some of whom declared autonomous states or administrations. For example, in 1999, the declaration of the autonomous administration of Bay and Bakool, and the state of Jubaland in the South. At this time, armed conflicts had become mainly sub-clan affairs as a response to crimes, or clashes within clans over resources and political power. There were some exceptions, however, for example scorched earth policies against Rahanwein villages in Bay Region in response to the declaration of the Rahanwein autonomous state.

[1] Sources for this section included: BBC, IDMC (2006), IDMC (2007), Menkhaus (2007), and OCHA (2008), as well as interview field notes

In 2000, a peace conference in Djibouti, led to the formation of a government, the Transitional National Government (TNG). The TNG was however dominated by Mogadishu based Hawiye, and soon faced resistance. Between 2001 and 2004, clans and factions opposed to the government grouped under the umbrella of the Somalia Restoration and Reconciliation Council (SRRC); backed by Ethiopia. The SRRC and Mogadishu-based warlords fought against TNG forces and its allied militias, resulting in heightened armed conflict in southern and central Somalia. Large numbers of people were displaced in both 2001 and 2004. In a new peace deal in 2004, factions agreed to set up a new parliament and the Transitional Federal Government (TFG). However, both president and prime minister were close allies of Ethiopia; power was concentrated in the hands of the SRRC Alliance, thus marginalizing the leadership of the former TNG. Opposition to the TFG included Hawiye based Islamist movements.

For a short period in 2005, the Islamist group in Mogadishu achieved relative security under the "Mogadishu Security and Stabilization Plan". By mid-2005, the Islamists had organized in the Supreme Council of Islamic Courts, or Union (ICU). A jihadist militia also emerged, the "*al-Shabaab,*" which engaged in political assassinations of Somalis suspected of collaborating with the TFG, Ethiopians or the US. Opposition to the ICU was consolidated in the form of the Alliance for the Restoration of Peace and Counter-Terrorism (ARPCT), an alliance of secular Mogadishu based warlords and businessmen, and backed by the US. Heavy conflict between the ARPCT and the ICU followed, between February and June 2006. By early June 2006, the ICU took control of Mogadishu and later much of the south.

In December 2006, the Ethiopian Army launched an offensive on the ICU in Somalia, resulting in war between the ICU and the TFG allied with Ethiopian forces. The reason for the offensive has been linked to Ethiopian and US concerns about the increasing power of the Islamic movement in Somalia, and the opportunity this provides for safe havens for Al Qa'ida and Ethiopian resistance movements. By late December, the ICU had been defeated and the TFG captured Mogadishu with Ethiopian support. However, there was large scale armed resistance against the TFG, which provoked a violent response leading to large scale displacement from the capital between February and May and again in October 2007. At the time of this research, the TFG is still nominally in power in parts of the south, and Ethiopian forces remain in the country; mainly in Mogadishu and Baidoa. Opposition groups have come together under the "Alliance for the Re-Liberation of Somalia" which was established in Asmara, and includes the ICU (this group is also known as the Asmara Alliance or simply the Alliance). "*Al Shabaab*" continues as the more extreme militant wing of the Islamists. In recent months, both Alliance and al-*Shabaab* have regularly attacked towns with TFG presence, taking weapons and then retreating. The UN Security Council authorized an AU peace keeping mission in February 2007, which to date has had little impact and is very under-staffed (until recently only 1,500 Ugandan troops whereas the original plan called for 10,000 troops. This latest episode in the Somali conflict is considered by many to be the most severe humanitarian crisis since 1993.

Vulnerability

Several different factors combine to cause vulnerability to food insecurity in Somalia. Clearly conflict and displacement shape one critical component of vulnerability. As the war has been fought along ethnic, or clan, lines, clan affiliation has played an important role in shaping people's vulnerability as has the impact of the conflict on social networks between and within clans. In addition, Somalia has suffered frequent drought, floods, and economic shocks, the impact of which varies according to different livelihood groups.

Political and Social Vulnerability

Before the conflict, the most politically marginalized were the riverine populations of the Juba and Shebelle and the inter-riverine areas of Bay and Bakool. These populations also inhabited some of the most fertile agricultural land, but are minority groups with lower social and political status than the main Somali pastoral clans. Minority groups have been systematically dispossessed from their land, first by the Italians (to establish banana plantations in the Juba and Shabelle valleys) and later by, mainly urban, Somali entrepreneurs using government connections. This process started well before the conflict, but accelerated during the initial phases of the conflict in the early 90's. In Lower Shebelle, for example, a new set of landlords claimed much of the land in the riverine areas. Thus a group of capitalist land owners was created, and alongside, a group of indigenous smallholders and day laborers (African Rights 1993).

Minority groups are estimated to represent about 20% of the Somali population (IDMC 2006). None of these groups have been well represented politically, and are marginalized from the rest of society. They include the Sab Somali (Digil and Rahanwein clans), indigenous Cushitic people such as the Shebelle and Gabwing, and the Bantu. The Bantu consist of a number of groups: some are descendents of original inhabitants of the area and others are descendents of slaves brought into the country in the 19th century. The latter are not part of the clan system at all. Other marginalized groups include the Benadiri, Midgaan, Bajuni, Eyle, Tumal, Yibir, Galgaala, characterized by the stigma of their occupational status and grievances of "ritual uncleanliness" (Narbeth and McLean 2003). For example, the Eyle were traditionally hunters, the Tumal blacksmiths, etc.

The vulnerability of the riverine and inter-riverine populations to famine in 1991 was a direct consequence of their political marginalization. Being unarmed they were subject to large scale looting and theft first by retreating government soldiers and then by militias. As early as 1993, reduced land-holdings for small-holders could only support them under very good climatic and security conditions (De Waal 1997). Bantu and Rahanwein minorities were also pushed closer to river banks, particularly in Lower Shebelle and Lower Juba, making them more vulnerable to seasonal flooding (IDMC 2006).

The conflict also caused a breakdown in lineage based alliances between clans. As the conflict intensified, the contact and trust between different clan communities was undermined and over time society became increasingly fragmented. With conflict increasingly between lower levels of the clan system (sub-clan and sub-sub-clan) or between villages, rather than between major clans, the issue of stronger clans

marginalizing weaker clans does not appear to be as big an issue now as it was in the earlier years of the conflict. Weaker clans associate themselves with stronger ones for protection reasons, which can sometimes involve payment, whether in kind (labor) or cash.

Since 2004, the establishment of government and opposition to it has introduced a new dynamics into the conflict and consequent vulnerability. Vulnerability to attack and displacement now depends as much on political affiliation to the TFG or the opposition as on clan. For example, most of the IDPs in Afgoye are there because they are affiliated with the opposition to the TFG. Despite this new dynamic, however, many people interviewed for this study still considered IDPs and marginalized (or minority) groups the most likely to be vulnerable to food insecurity and to exclusion from aid distribution.

Within the clan, kinship controls the social relationships between people in a given community (Narbeth 2001). For example, for the agro-pastoral Rahanwein, villages are the focus of social and political life and people in one village usually belong to the same sub-clan. Requests for assistance are generally made first of all to immediate family, who may or may not live within the same geographic community. If they are unable to help then assistance is sought from the clan. From the early 90's networks of assistance contracted as peoples access to resources declined - migration routes were blocked, or areas that traditionally provided employment suffered severe fighting. In addition, assets were lost due to repeated displacement.

There is no direct or literal translation of the term “vulnerability” in Somali. However, vulnerability is referred to largely in terms of (WFP 1999):

- Clan status and affiliation (a weak or small clan has limited access to resources)
- Access to weapons (those who are not armed are vulnerable)
- Lack of familial support (the elderly with no support from children, women without husband to support them, widows with children, or those without any economic support).

Displacement

Violent conflict in the early 90’s led to large scale displacement. By mid-1992, there were an estimated 2 million displaced in Somalia. Many of the displaced belonged to the marginalized groups discussed above, and it was they who suffered disproportionately from famine. For the decade or so following the mid 1990s, the humanitarian situation was characterized by smaller-scale displacement and localized conflict, but with tens of thousands nevertheless displaced by localized conflicts every year. The majority of IDPs remained in their home region to seek protection where their clan is dominant, and were able to return home after a few weeks or months (IDMC 2006). In 2003, there were an estimated 320,000-350,000 IDPs (Narbeth and McLean 2003). By 2006, the estimate was 370,000-400,000, most of whom were in Mogadishu, where about 250-300,000 IDPs were thought to live in some 200 settlements, and some 90,000 along the Shebelle river, Gedo and Lower Juba (IDMC 2006).

There is currently still an "old" IDP caseload of about 400,000 people caught in protracted displacement in the country. Most of these are thought to belong to ethnic minorities or socially marginalized groups. Many IDPs in rural areas have been there for 15 years or more. Rather than treating this group as a separate category for assistance provision, the strategy is now to consider assistance on the basis of needs rather than IDP status. In many peri-urban or urban settlements there will be some IDPs, some poor, and some economic migrants, but their vulnerability may be the same. Migration for economic reasons, as well as asset loss due to conflict, is becoming an increasingly significant phenomenon. Since the 1990's people increasingly moved to Mogadishu and Kismayo in southern Somalia, as a result of conflict, natural disasters, as well as the absence of basic services such as health and education in rural areas. This means that there are an increasing number of poor and destitute people living in or around larger settlements or towns to look for work.

Displaced people from minority groups outside of their clan area are particularly vulnerable to abuse, including violence, rape, forced labor, evictions, land dispossession and theft by the dominant clans (IDMC 2006). IDPs from these groups have limited access to the judicial systems, customary or Sharia law (Narbeth and MacLean 2003). In Mogadishu and other southern towns, IDPs have been reported to pay up to 50-75% of their earnings or food aid to aid gatekeepers, or are forced to work for the gatekeepers, in part for protection reasons (Narbeth and McLean 2003, IDMC 2007). Currently, these issues appear to be important mainly in the north for people displaced from the south, and in Kismayo. In much of the south, IDPs move to areas where their clan dominates, and exclusion from assistance may no longer be a major issue in this case.

Large-scale displacement once again occurred in 2007, as a result of the battle between the TFG/Ethiopian Army and the Islamists in Mogadishu. In total 700,000 IDPs are estimated to have fled from Mogadishu. The displaced are mainly settling in Afgoye, some 25 kilometers north of Mogadishu or elsewhere in Lower Shabelle, but some moved to other areas farther afield. Many IDPs, particularly those outside of the Afgoye area, belong to traditionally marginalized groups and their situation is particularly precarious in terms of access to resources, vulnerability to abuse and exploitation and protection in general. Last year, UNHCR reported about 200,000 IDPs in Afgoye using satellite imagery, hut counts and reports from local partners, but recent information suggests that the number may be much higher. There is no way to objectively verify these estimates.

Vulnerability to Drought, Floods and Economic Shocks

In addition to conflict, Somalia suffers frequent drought and floods, which has the impact of creating situations of acute food insecurity and humanitarian crises, for large numbers of people on a regular basis. Drought occurred in 1995/96, floods in 1997, followed by frequent drought between 1999 and 2002 and again in 2005/06 and 2007. Last years' drought has mainly affected the agro-pastoral populations in Bakool, Gedo regions, and also pastoral, farming and agro-pastoral groups in Hiran. In contrast, the riverine populations are more vulnerable to flooding, and riverine populations in middle and Lower

Shebelle experienced floods in 2007. Pastoral populations have suffered a persistent loss of assets and a decline in terms of trade, causing a drift to urban areas.

Conflict has increased vulnerability to drought and floods in a number of ways. First, livelihood opportunities are limited due to asset loss, limited infra-structure and basic services. Intermittent conflict not only led to displacement, but frequently prevents people from cultivating their land. Riverine communities are more vulnerable to flooding either because the land they farm is now closer to the river (see above), and because they farm smaller plots of land. Lack of maintenance of canals which irrigate land further from the river is another factor. These canals sometimes irrigate the land on which old IDPs have settled, potentially creating tension between riverine communities and the settlers (for example in Jowhar). All livelihood groups currently suffer from high inflation in the price of basic goods, including food stuffs. In addition to drought, this was commonly attributed to the recent increase in the number of checkpoints, where transporters have to pay to pass, but is likely also a result of increased food prices globally. With the increase in prices of basic goods, it is also more difficult to get credit as traders or businessmen are less able to provide this.

In early 2008, the FSAU estimated there to be about 1 million people in need of humanitarian assistance and livelihood support, in addition to assistance required for about 1 million displaced (FSAU 2008).

Vulnerability to malnutrition and mortality

Information on the prevalence of malnutrition between 1991 and 1997 generally confirms the information on the vulnerability of particular groups to famine and food insecurity. The highest prevalence of malnutrition were recorded during the 1992 famine in selected places in Bay Region; with up to 55 and 70% global acute malnutrition (<80% WFH). Crude mortality rates were similarly high: the highest being 23.4/10,000/day amongst Baidoa displaced. Displaced populations generally had a higher prevalence of malnutrition than resident populations: for example 43.8% global acute malnutrition amongst Belet Weyne displaced in 1992 and 9.2% amongst residents at the same time (Cambrezy 1997). .

There is limited information on malnutrition prior to the conflict, but available information does give an indication of seasonal patterns and impact of drought pre-conflict. For example, a survey in Hiran showed 4.0% global acute malnutrition during the wet season in December 1985 and 12.7% in the dry season in May 1987 (which was also a time of drought). A survey in Bay region at the same time, recorded 23.5% global acute malnutrition. A recent analysis of trends in malnutrition in Somalia (between 2001 and 2007) gives no such seasonal pattern. In fact, the prevalence of malnutrition appears to stay remarkably similar across seasons, with a median of 13.3% acute malnutrition (< -2 Z-scores) in the short dry season (*Hagaa*) between July and September, and a median of 16% both during the short rainy season (*Deyr*) and long dry season *(Jilaal*) (FSAU 2008).

The regions and livelihood groups which were most affected by famine in the early 90's, are still those which regularly suffer the highest rates of acute malnutrition. The agro-pastoral

population in Bay and Bakool, the riverine population along the Juba and Shebelle rivers, and IDPs (compared to pastoral and urban populations) generally still have the highest prevalence of acute malnutrition; with riverine populations having the highest median prevalence of acute malnutrition between 2001 and 2007 (17.6%). FSAU analysis shows that acute malnutrition prevalences remain high (>15%) even in years of good production. This is thought to indicate that acute malnutrition is at least in part due to poor access to water, sanitation and health care. Malnutrition data will therefore give a slightly different picture of severity of crisis across Somalia than the food security phases of the FSAU. For example, the most recent analysis indicates a larger area as "critical" in terms of the nutrition situation than are under acute food and livelihoods crisis or humanitarian emergency under the food security classification system.

WFP program in Somalia

Since the start of the conflict, the World Food Programme (WFP) provided assistance to Somalia through a series of Emergency Operations, and since 1999 has had an on-going Protracted Relief and Rehabilitation Operation. The most recently approved PRRO, covering 24 months from August 2006 to July 2008, targets 2.1 million people and provides some 170,000 metric tons of food assistance. Food needs have continued to grow with back-to back poor harvests, combined with recent growing insecurity and a rapidly increasing population of displaced people.

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The objective of the PRRO is to save lives and protect livelihoods contributing to national stability; to improve the nutritional status of women, children and other at-risk groups; and to support access to basic education. Intended target groups include: chronically resource-poor rural livelihood groups – agro-pastoralists and farmers; pregnant and lactating mothers, children under 5, school-aged children, people living with TB and HIV/AIDS; IDPs, and households affected by conflict or natural disasters (WFP 2006). The intent of this PRRO had been to scale down general distribution, and move towards other program modalities, such as food for work. However, the events of 2007 and 2008 have required more attention to people needing general food distribution.

Categories of Food Assistance

The biggest single category of food assistance is for general distribution – particularly for conflict and drought affected rural populations, or chronically poor livelihood groups. Internally displaced people constitute the second biggest program (which is also food for general distribution, but the needs assessment process is different from the first category – see below). A growing program involves providing general rations to families of malnourished children through the supplementary feeding program. In more stable areas of the country, some amount of food for work is carried out. School feeding programs make up the balance of the WFP Somalia portfolio. Table 1 outlines the major program categories, with the planned and actual total number of people who received assistance; and the planned and actual tonnages of food for 2007.

Table 1. WFP Somalia – Actual vs. Planned Food Distribution 2007						
Activity	**Beneficiaries**			**Food (MT)**		
	Plan	**Actual**	**Actual vs. Plan %age**	**Plan**	**Actual**	**Actual vs. Plan %age**
IDPs	240,000	288,000	120%	19000	16,480	88%
Relief (GFD)	625,000	877,000	140%	72,700	49,882	68%
Selective feeding	148,000	175,000	118%	10,060	12,333	123%
School feeding	70,000	64,000	91%	3,140	2,700	86%
FFA/FFT	130,000	122,000	94%	8,100	8,927	110%
Total	**1,213,000**	**1,526,000**	**125%**	**113,000**	**90,322**	**80%**

Source: WFP Somalia

WFP uses a calculated ration size of 2,128 Kcal per intended recipient, based on an average household size of six, and assuming that there is no ration dilution after distribution. Both these assumptions are often not applicable on the ground. Other agencies use different ration sizes or assumptions. But as noted in Table 1, the actual amount of food distributed was less than planned in 2007, the number of recipients was much greater than planned. This reflects a reduction in the intended amount of food to be received, and this was before redistribution at the village level further reduced the amount of food assistance per recipient

Offices and Staff

Most of the focus of the food assistance to Somalia is in the South-Central part of the country, with somewhat less than one third going to Puntland and Somaliland in the Northeast and Northwest respectively. In South-Central Somalia, WFP has four offices: in Wajid (with some 16 staff), Mogadishu (7 staff), Merka (7 staff), and a new office in Bu'alle (so far 3 staff). Due to security concerns, many of the staff are permanently based in Nairobi, and only travel to Somalia intermittently. This makes staff capacity on the ground a major consideration in programming, and in the program approach, which in recent years, has increasingly relied on Cooperating Partners (CPs).

Given the bulk of assessment and analysis work done through the Food Security Analysis Unit for Somalia (FSAU), WFP has a rather small Vulnerability Assessment and Mapping Unit in comparison to other programs of a similar size. For more information on FSAU, see the section on information systems.

Working with partners

WFP Somalia works through some one hundred partner agencies in nearly 150 different locations. The vast majority of these are Somali NGOs; a handful are government institutions and about ten are international NGOs. The task of partner agencies varies – not all local operating agreements are identical – but in the general distribution, the usual tasks of the CP include "mobilization" of the community prior to distribution; overseeing the distribution itself; conducting some kind of follow up visit to ensure that the food

reached its intended target; and reporting to WFP. “Mobilization” mainly means informing community leaders of the time and place of the distribution, and informing them of the targeted number of recipients in their community (village, or FDP). The capacity of CPs varies enormously, and both the CPs themselves and WFP staff recognize the need for greater capacity building activities with the CPs.

Non-WFP Food Assistance Programs

CARE International and ICRC are currently the only other organization in Somalia distributing food. In 2007, CARE distributed some 43,000 metric tons of food, which is about half of WFP’s operation. CARE and WFP have a memorandum of understanding regarding operational areas, so that they do not duplicate each others efforts (or leave some areas without coverage). CARE’s program is somewhat different in that they target a lower amount of food depending on the assessed status of recipient groups. CARE also registers all its recipients – a time consuming process that WFP generally does not do. ICRC only occasionally distributes food now, when there are gaps, for example recently in response to conflict in between Somaliland and Puntland.

CARE, WFP and ICRC also use different ration sizes. WFP’s planned ration should provide 2100 kcals/person/day, CARE plans rations of 1400 kcals/person/day for people in acute food and livelihoods crises and 1900 kcals in humanitarian emergency phases (according to FSAU’s food security classifications). ICRC distributes higher rations than WFP. ICRC also purchases much of its food locally, or imports using local traders, thereby being able to provide food aid with a lead time of about 3 weeks, injecting cash into the local economy and providing culturally acceptable foods.

Important Background Issues in Targeting and Distribution

Corruption and distrust

Somalia has been an aid recipient since the 1970's. Aid increased following the Ogaden war and the influx of refugees into Somalia in 1980's when Somalia became one of the largest aid recipient in Africa – having switched sides from the Soviet Union to the US during the Cold War (De Waal 1997). Large amounts of aid poured in and corruption was rife, as Siad Barre’s government used aid to reward supporters and facilitate land-grabbing strategies. A diversion rate of 85% destined for refugees in northern Somalia in the 1980’s has been reported (Askin 1987, referenced in De Waal, 1997). At the start of the conflict in 1991, therefore, the Somali population was already highly suspicious of the objectives of humanitarian assistance (ibid).

Looting, diversion and exclusion during extreme crisis

ICRC was the first agency to start food distribution in response to the famine caused by conflict and displacement; in March 1991. By mid-1992, this included (dry) general rations for one million people, and cooked food (soup kitchens) to 600,000. Committees of clan elders carried out the dry distribution, but due to political bias, logistical and personnel constraints, ration receipts were highly variable and some groups were excluded entirely. It was largely the displaced, Bantu groups, Somalis of the “wrong” clan affiliation and

Ethiopian refugees that were excluded from the dry ration distribution (De Waal 1997). The soup kitchens, or wet feeding, programme was started to increase access to food aid for these groups and to reduce the risk of looting (Jaspars 2000). Equal amounts of food aid were provided in cooked and dry form to prevent political tensions. While successful in reaching the most vulnerable groups, the ICRC operation soon began to face serious problems; food aid was taken by guards, drivers, kitchen supervisors, and contractors and elders registered "ghost kitchens" and "ghost villages". It also involved major compromises, including the hiring of armed guards and accepting a high level of looting and diversion (De Waal 1997). Aid provision during the UNOSOM period faced similar problems. In addition, extortion of relief goods, income derived from monopoly of the import of certain goods needed by relief agencies, was thought to strengthen the war effort. Late intervention by the UN created an atmosphere of suspicion in the country. The impact was an erosion of trust between local population and the UN. The aid operation in the early 90's also left a legacy of individuals vying for contracts with the UN for rental of premises, vehicles, security guards, transport of food aid, with clan and political affiliation as important factors in the selection of national staff (Narbeth 2001). These constraints of operating in Somalia remain to this day.

Problems of targeting and sharing of food aid during protracted crisis

The PRRO which was started in 1999 included a relief component for targeted households. Suggested target groups at that time included: female headed households, pregnant and lactating women, households with malnourished children, IDPs, people suffering temporary loss of income and those with no alternative source of income. In 2000, WFP supported a major study on the targeting of food distribution, in relation to vulnerability and beneficiary participation (Narbeth 2001). This study was carried out amongst the agro-pastoral populations in Bay and Bakool regions. The method of targeting and distribution at that time is described in Box 1 below.

The study found that in practice vulnerable households, whether defined by WFP or by the community, could not be prioritized by the local authorities. In practice, prioritization was first made on the basis of village, then satellite village, then clan, sub-clan etc. Leaders often divided food equally between sub-clans or villages. Sometimes, conflicts arose due the multi-settlement and multi-clan nature of the EDPs. Every household was given the same amount, in part because leaders face threats of physical violence when attempting to exclude certain households, and also because food aid was seen as a free external resource, with everyone believing they were entitled to a share.

In some cases, however, those responsible for distribution took more than their fair share. It was left up to villagers to help vulnerable groups, through redistribution of food aid, but those considered most vulnerable in Somali society were often different from WFP's intended target groups (see below). In addition, targeting IDPs was difficult because the understanding of who is an IDP differed between WFP and Somalis. In Somali terms an IDP is everyone who has moved from their homes of origin, even if they have established access

Box 1. Targeting and distribution in Bay and Bakool regions, Somalia in 2000

In Bay and Bakool regions of Somalia, WFP's main partners were local communities and local leaders. WFP clustered villages under a particular EDP and counted the number of houses in each. It then "mobilized" the community in a public gathering and informed them of beneficiary numbers, selection criteria and ration sizes. Beneficiary communities were expected to appoint "implementing committees" to receive food commodities. These were given vouchers just prior to distributions, which gave information on the number of vulnerable households and the ration scales. Distribution to households was then the responsibility of local authorities. To prevent people from other communities benefiting from the allocation (people who follow the food convoys), the issuance of the voucher, the arrival of the food convoy and WFP monitoring staff had to coincide as closely as possible. A secure enclosure is selected, where women are screened to ensure correct number of bens present. Women are then called forward in groups of 5 or 10, sign a beneficiary acknowledgement form, and sit on their allocated ration until the distribution is completed.

to social and economic networks of the host community. This was different from the definition used by WFP, which was: persons forced to move from their home of origin as a result of insecurity and/or a threat to, or as a result of, reduced livelihood opportunities (WFP 1999).

The study also found that leakage, or inclusion error was inevitable since the vulnerability and distribution model did deal with the social complexity and inter-relationships that exist in Somalia. Post distribution monitoring (PDM) in the late 90's showed that ration dilution occurred for two reasons: First, the intended ration does not reach the household, for example because of inaccurate population figures or misappropriation. Getting accurate population figures is difficult in Somalia in part because numbers are highly politicized; clan power is linked to numbers. Second, dilution occurs after it reaches the household. What happens after distribution was beyond WFP's control. Once food aid became part of the resource networks of the community, it was subject to the same social processes as any other resource. Food aid moved within communities (redistribution to widowers, those not present at the distribution but part of it, etc), but also between communities, districts and even regions. In addition, some food aid was sold. The study found little evidence of exclusion error. Narbeth (2001) found that minority groups amongst the Rahanwein, or groups considered socially inferior, were mainly marginalized in terms of inter-marriage with more powerful sub-clans, but that otherwise they had equal entitlements and privileges to others in the clan, including access to food aid.

The study concluded that targeting of food aid resources based on externally generated socio-economic criteria had limited value in the regions of study (Bay and Bakool).

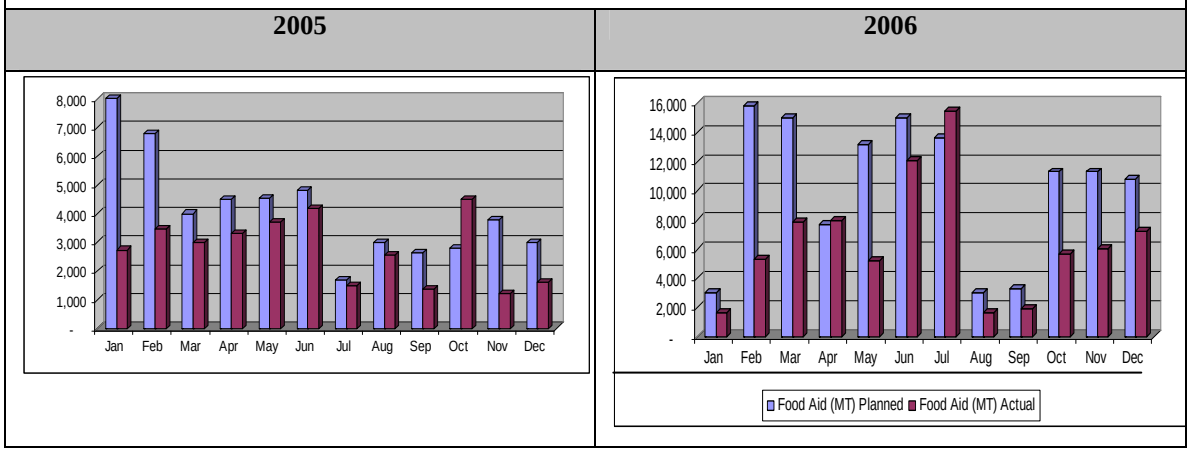
Anything less than blanket coverage would not be culturally acceptable (WFP 1999, Narbeth 2001). It was recommended that WFP should take care to target the smallest resource sharing unit, and that targeting within this should remain the responsibility of community leaders according to their own perceptions of vulnerability (Narbeth 2001). In the more settled communities, the smallest resource sharing unit was thought to be the village, or "community of residence". For the purpose of this study, it should be noted that the food aid operation in 2000, was much smaller than in 2007/08. In 2000, the total tonnage of the operation was about 20,000 MT/year, whereas now more than this is distributed on a monthly basis.

Other agencies distributing food aid in the late 90's took slightly different approaches to WFP. For example, ICRC did its distribution mainly with the clan elders. If there were IDP populations amongst the target populations, distribution was through elders where resident and displaced populations belonged to the same clan, but if IDPs were from a different clan, then separate distributions were organized for this group. CARE at this time targeted on the basis of clearly identifiable or objective criteria, such as the malnourished, displaced in camps, the elderly and disabled (Jaspars 2000).

Timing of food aid delivery

Figure 1 depicts the timing of food aid deliveries in 2005 and 2006 (comparable data for 2007 could not be provided).

Figure 1. Food Aid to Somalia(Metric Tons/Month)



As will be noted there are large shortfalls in actual assistance compared to need, particularly during the long dry season (December – March). This was particularly pronounced during the major drought crisis in early 2006. There are also occasional incidents of over-delivery in a month, but no clear pattern of this. The shortfalls in delivery in the first several months of the year, the period of greatest need, does affect targeting, but it is not clear from the limited data that were available whether this constitutes a significant and recurrent problem, or if this was a coincidence in these two years.

Section 2. Operational Aspects of Targeting

Introduction

WFP targets general rations broadly in three different groups: the rural food insecure; IDPs; and families with malnourished children For the rural food insecure, targeting is done first by geographical area to certain districts and livelihood groups, based on food security information collected by FSAU (described in the next section).

General Food Distribution for IDPs is for those living in camps, rather than dispersed amongst the resident population. If amongst the rural population, IDPs would be expected to receive part of the allocation of the particular village targeted although in some cases IDPs are targeted separately. If IDPs are living amongst the resident population in urban areas, they are generally not targeted, as the urban population in general is not included in the distribution. WFP also targets general rations to families of malnourished children, registered for supplementary feeding. At the time of the study, this is mainly done in Bay and Bakool. WFP is planning to expand this form of targeting as it is thought to be the best way to make sure that food aid goes to specific households based on objective criteria of need, and thus provide a more accountable form of targeting. There are currently 65 feeding or MCH centers in South/Central through which GFD is distributed, and WFP is planning to add more.

A number of forms of self-targeting are used; including FFW and wet feeding, or soup kitchens. FFW was generally not used in the south/central areas of Somalia, with the exception of Mogadishu. Wet feeding programs, or soup kitchens, have also recently been started in Mogadishu. The reason for setting up wet feeding in Mogadishu was because dry general food distribution was associated with violence. In the highly insecure and politicized environment of Mogadishu, wet feeding was felt to be the best way of reaching the most vulnerable groups in Mogadishu.

This section presents findings of several issues related to targeting. This begins with a stakeholder analysis and a review of the unique operational constraints in the Somalia context. This is followed by a review of the information system and the analysis on which targeting practices are based. Then targeting practices are discussed, both geographic targeting and targeting within communities. The section ends with a discussion of monitoring and evaluation, and an assessment of the effectiveness of targeting. This section focuses mainly on WFP practices. A summary of targeting and distribution methods of some of WFP's implementing partners and other agencies is shown in Table 2. Table 2 is not intended to be an exhaustive listing of partners and practices – it represents the practices of organizations that the field team was able to interview.

Table 2. Targeting and Distribution Methods used by Different Agencies in Somalia							
Agency	Relief committee	Other community reps involved	Targeting	Registration/ ration cards	Info on entitlement	Complaints mechanism	PDM
WFP implementing partners							
WVI (middle Juba**)**	Yes, for each FDP. Consist of traditional leaders. Main role to assist in distribution	Elders, Igas,	Criteria set by WVI?	Registration but no cards.			
NCA (Gedo)	Yes. For each FDP. Main role to assist in distribution	Elders. To ensure security, identify households who are absent, and how food aid is actually distributed	NCA explains targeting criteria to elders, but elders mostly distribute to everyone	No	No		Get feedback from the RC
IDIL (Bakool**)**	No	Committee, traditional leaders	IDIL discusses criteria with committee/leaders, but final decision made by community	Committee prepares list verified by IDIL	No	Excluded people complain to IDIL	No
SAACID (Afgoye, Mogadishu, Jowhar, Maahadi**)**	No	District commissioner, women's groups, and traditional elders. Mainly committee in rural populations in Jowhar	Vulnerable registered by SAACID in Afgoye, List prepared by committee in Jowhar, but food will be shared later.	Yes, both.	Yes	Phone number on ration cards to call if complains	No
CED (Afgoye**)**	No, but IDP committee who in theory represents IDPs	Elders and religious leaders help ensure security during distribution	Committee prepares list of beneficiaries, together with CED	Committee prepares list	No	Only through powerful owner of site	Only of new IDPs arriving at camp
New ways (Merka**)**	No	Elders, *Gudis*	Discuss vulnerability at village meeting				
Other agencies distributing food aid							
ICRC	No	Elders, religious leaders, local authorities, women. Diaspora, businessmen, MP	Based on local perceptions within this. Only if at least 80% of population in need	No	Yes, by village		Random sample surveys
CARE/ local partner	No	Elders	Local partner, elders determine criteria. Local partner prepares list. IDP is separate category	Yes, both. CARE staff, verifies the registration	Yes		Some random checks

Stakeholder analysis

There are a number of different stakeholders, who are either directly involved in targeting, who influence targeting and who are influenced by targeting practices. These are summarized in table 3 below. This analysis was done with the research team (Tufts and WFP members) at the start of the work in order to identify key stakeholders to be interviewed. It was then checked and modified by the same team at the end of field work.

Table 3. Stakeholder in Targeting Practices in Somalia

Directly involved in targeting	Influence targeting	Influenced by targeting
WFP FSAU Implementing partners Other operational agencies Local authorities/ committees (*Gudi*) Traditional leaders Women's groups IDP committees Other agencies: UNICEF TFG institutions (e.g. MoA) Recipients (through sharing)	Transporters Contractors Militias Businessmen Donors Clans Religious leaders	Local authorities Clans Recipients • villages • households • marginalized groups Non-recipients

Different stakeholders are involved in targeting at different levels (geographic, community, household). The Food Security Assessment Unit (FSAU) of FAO has the largest role in geographical targeting, as their food security information system is used by WFP and CARE as the basis for making food allocations to districts and livelihood zones, and donors use this as the basis for determining their funding levels. Government institutions, such as the Ministry of Agriculture, might participate in assessments where they exist, but has little role otherwise. Similarly, District or Regional Authorities play no direct role. WFP determines the villages to be targeted within these districts or livelihood zones, with little or no involvement from other stakeholders, thus WFP has the biggest influence on which villages are targeted and the number of beneficiaries for each village. Within villages or clans, most people and agencies interviewed felt that the local authorities, or village committee or *Gudi*,[2] usually made up of representatives all the sub-clans living in a village, had the main responsibility for how beneficiaries were selected and/or how food aid was distributed. The implementing partner has the role of informing communities of distribution date, and quantity of food aid to be distributed, and might in some cases give

[2] The *Gudi* is a village governance committee, usually appointed by clan or sub-clan elders, to mind the affairs of the local community. As such, it is an institution found in most of the communities visited by the research team, and usually had primary responsibility for the formal aspects of food aid targeting, as well as many other aspects of local governance. There functions are explained at greater length in various places in this report..

suggestions for targeting or even register targeted households, but in all non-IDP cases, it is usually the *Gudi* that determines who eventually gets food aid. This might be through doing the initial selection of beneficiaries, through making arrangements on how food will be shared with those not on the list, or through organizing re-distribution following the "official" WFP and CP sanctioned distribution. In some rural areas, the traditional sub-clan leaders (the *Nabaddoon*) have an oversight role in this process, in particular where the *Gudi* is appointed by the sub-clan leaders. In this role, they might advise on selection criteria, challenge some inclusions or exclusions from the list of selected beneficiaries, and people might also go to them if they feel wrongly excluded. Traditional leaders also have an indirect influence on the choice of implementing partner, as the implementing partner has to be from the same clan in order to be able to operate in the area. Where separate women's groups exist, these might also have an advisory role on which the neediest households are within the community.

Traditional leaders, the *Gudi,* and women's groups can overlap to some extent. The degree of this varies between locations and clans. In some locations, these forms of governance are separate in terms of the people within these different institutions, but their roles are complementary. In others, traditional leaders and/or women's group representatives may be part of the *Gudi*, or of a committee particularly established for the purpose of selecting beneficiaries for food aid. The findings of this study indicate that there tends to be only a single form of governance, or committee, when "communities" have only been established fairly recently (for example through displacement, whether in the 90's or now) or in minority or marginalized clans. In this case, the committee is the only decision maker at community level on who gets food aid, without the oversight or advisory roles of other forms of governance. The most extreme cases of this were the IDP camp committees in Afgoye, who appeared to be largely self-appointed, with little or no involvement from other institutions within the camp or of camp residents themselves.

In the targeting of families of malnourished children, the key actors are WFP, UNICEF and the agencies implementing the feeding programs. UNICEF and implementing partners screen children for inclusion in the feeding programme and monitor their progress.

In most targeting systems, ordinary villagers or camp residents have little or no role in determining who is selected to receive food aid, or in determining how the distribution is done. Generally, they are just informed by the committee when distribution will take place, and how they are expected to share the food aid. In some cases, they may have a role in determining how much food aid to share and who to share with.

The targeting process is also influenced by a number of stakeholders external to the targeting process itself. Donors have a key influence as they fund WFP's operations, and the rising cost of food aid will make targeting the most needy even more important. Donor representatives may also have particular views on how targeting should be done, for example DFID is very much in favor of targeting families of malnourished children as one of the few methods that effectively target those most in need.

There are also a number of external stakeholders who have no direct or official role in the targeting process itself, but exert considerable influence. An issue that repeatedly came up in interviews was the link between businessmen or traders, implementing partners, local authorities, and militia. In its simplest form, traders or businessmen send their representatives to villages or camps where distribution is taking place to buy up food sold by beneficiaries, or by the committee/local authorities (who usually take a share). Traders may also buy up food stolen by militia and may in this way may encourage the looting of food aid for financial gain. Transport contractors influence the targeting process as they may not want to go to unsafe areas.

In some cases, there was reported not only to be a link but an overlap between these roles, i.e. the implementing partner are also businessmen, perhaps have members or relatives on the local authorities (committees) and almost always have their own militia. Clan leaders, or members of the committee, in some cases may also be militia commanders. This blurring of roles makes effective and accountable distribution extremely difficult. Militias clearly play differing roles that influence targeting

The notion of "gate keepers" also came up repeatedly in interviews. These are described as "leaders" who imposed themselves on vulnerable communities or minority groups and who control access, information and resources in those communities, but who are not of that group and who have their own agenda, which usually does not prioritize the welfare of the community. They are called "black cats", or "*mukulel mathow*", because in Somali mythology, a black cat is something to be feared. This was reported to be an issue in IDP camps, or in villages inhabited primarily by minorities (Bantu groups), but where the chief of the village is from a more powerful clan. In more settled or homogeneous communities (in terms of power), religious leaders are the final authority to be consulted in case of disputes, including disputes over resource allocation.

The targeting and distribution also influences different stakeholders in different ways. Most obviously, it influences those who receive food aid as they will have a source of food and income, even if only for a limited time. If food aid is targeted within communities, this influences recipients as they will most likely have to share the food aid they receive with others. The selection of some and not others to receive food aid, whether communities or households, also has security implications. This may result in, or exacerbate, conflict between groups or households, and in some cases result in attack, looting and theft in particular where one clan is prioritized over another. Non-recipients from marginalized groups are less likely to take up arms, but instead will become more reliant on precarious coping strategies or exploitative labor relations. Not only does power increase access to food aid, but food aid also influences the power of local authorities. The more food aid a local authority is able to attract (by whatever means), the more power and authority it will have over the population it claims to represent.

Operational Constraints in the Somalia Context

Many aspects of food aid targeting and distribution, from delivery to distribution, are problematic in Somalia because of the political and security environment. Incidents of piracy and looting of trucks are common and affect the amount of food aid that is actually delivered. Since 2005, there have been at least three incidents of piracy of WFP food shipments into Somalia. Transporting food by road is not much safer, and looting of such consignments has been common. This risk is managed by the transport contractors and the cost of this is incorporated in the contracts. Transporters have to post a bond equal to the value of the food they are transporting, which is repaid upon the delivery of all the food. This transfers the risk of losses to the transporter, but it makes transportation expensive. Roadblocks have posed a serious and increasing obstacle to humanitarian access since 2007. In mid-year, a high number of roadblocks (238) were reported all over South/Central regions with most of them imposing taxation on humanitarian commodities creating huge impediments on aid delivery. Charges per truck at some checkpoints reportedly increased from $125 to $520 (OCHA 2007).

The highly insecure situation also means it is unsafe to store food at Extended Distribution Points in most areas of Somalia. Food aid therefore often has to be delivered by large long-haul transport movements directly from ports of entry to Final Distribution Points. This limits the flexibility of staff to adjust to a fluid situation on the ground, heightens security concerns, and limits the potential for participatory approaches in planning and managing distributions.

Violence during distributions itself is common, which can include incidents of looting during distributions, or theft following distributions, and on occasion people have been killed. In 2007, WFP reported 15 major security incidents at food distributions, in which 10 militia were killed, 10 civilians were killed, and 350 metric tons of food remain unrecovered from looting. Smaller incidents are widespread. Security before and during distribution is therefore the over-riding concern for WFP Somalia and trying to ensure security is the main role of WFP food monitors, which takes time away from monitoring activities. Investigating food distribution related security incidents is a major task of WFP security officers (WFP 2007).

Humanitarian access is constrained by a number of other factors, but most importantly by security. Killing and kidnapping agency staff, including international staff, are increasingly common, reducing the presence and thus access of in particular international staff to conflict affected populations. For this same reason, WFP has had difficulty in recruiting sufficient and experienced staff for its programme. At the time of the study, there were 87 posts within the Somalia programme that WFP has been unable to fill. The shortage of staff exacerbates the difficulties that WFP staff face in carrying out any task other than ensuring security during distribution.

Since the withdrawal of UNOSOM in 1995, virtually all international humanitarian agencies are based in Nairobi. These agencies work mostly with national staff in Somalia,

or work with national partners. This has created in some ways two parallel "realities"; one amongst like-minded expatriates in Nairobi, another for people on the ground in Somalia. This can result in very different understandings of context and program. During the course of the study, a number of discrepancies arose in information between program descriptions of Nairobi-based staff and how field staff in Somalia were actually implementing programs.

While working with local partners has many benefits, in the politically charged environment of Somalia there are serious potential risks for the impartiality of assistance provided when working with local partners. The links and possible overlaps between local authorities, businessmen, militia and local partners have already been mentioned in the section above. Such close links between implementing partner, local authorities, businessmen and militia can only be achieved if they belong to same clan. Local partners have to belong to the same clan as the clan which dominates the agency's area of operation. This means that food aid becomes not only highly profitable but also a major political issue. Addressing issues of inequitable distribution and diversion therefore becomes a dangerous task with significant security implications for the staff involved. Even if local partners (or even WFP national staff) genuinely want to assist those most in need, rather than follow their own political agenda, they are likely to come under pressure from powerful clans or the local administration to favor certain groups or to divert food aid. This is difficult to prevent without additional international staff presence, and the constraints to this have already been mentioned.

In the absence of a functioning government, NGOs are often the only service providers and have to interact directly with clan leaders and local authorities. The complexities of the clan structure, and frequent changes in authority structures (or control over a particular area), make it is difficult to enter into agreements which will hold over time. Changes in local power structure and in clan affiliations can also create volatile situations with regard to allocation of resources (IDMC, 2006). At the same time, the application of humanitarian principles requires in depth knowledge of the political and clan affiliations of the local authorities and partners that an agency works with, and how these can be managed to ensure a neutral and impartial response.

Information Systems and Assessment

The information system for WFP's program in Somalia is based on the work of FAO's Food Security Assessment Unit (FSAU), based in Nairobi. The analysis uses an Integrated Food Security Phase Classification system (IPC), which has five phases to classify food security status in Somalia: generally food secure, generally food insecure, acute food and livelihood crisis (AFLC), humanitarian emergency (HE) and famine/humanitarian catastrophe. Since the advent of IPC analysis in 2004, there has not been an incidence of outright famine, so the two classifications that have required WFP food assistance are acute food and livelihood crisis (AFLC), humanitarian emergency (HE). FSAU produces reports twice per year, following the two rainy seasons, giving their assessment of the food security situation, and they provide the number of people they believe fall into each of these categories (AFLC and HE) by district and livelihood zone. Nutritional status is monitored every six months by a

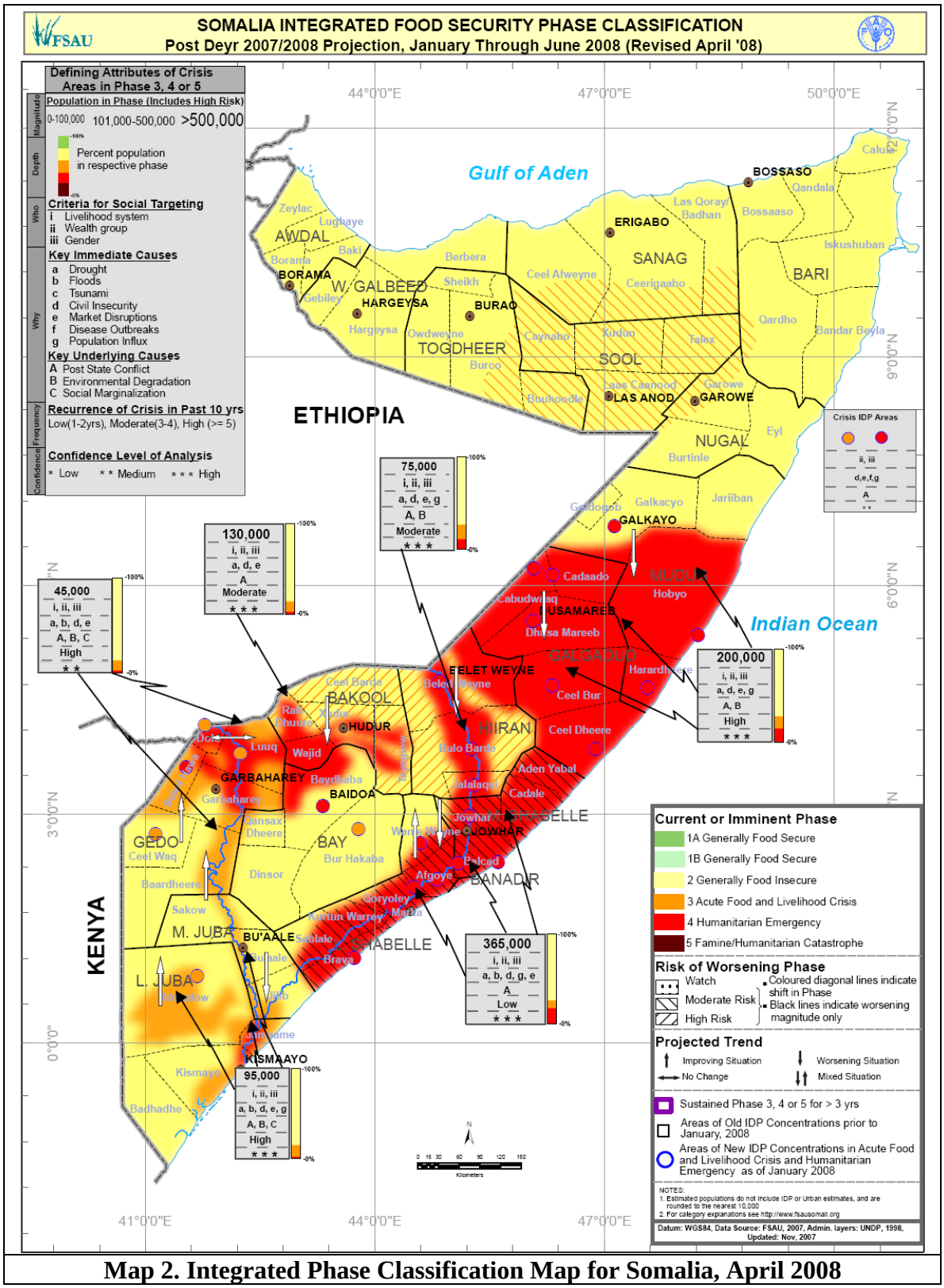
number of sentinel sites in each livelihood zone. There may also be ad hoc assessments, such as nutritional surveys in IDP camps or urban assessments.

A number of different indicators are assessed, such as nutritional status, mortality, disease, food access/availability, dietary diversity, coping strategies, access to water, physical insecurity, displacement, livelihood assets, etc, each with specific reference outcomes to determine the food security phase (for example the ability or inability to access 2100 kcals/day, prevalence of acute malnutrition above a certain threshold, use of insurance, crisis, distress coping strategies, etc). To calculate the proportion of the population in need of assistance, the analysis considers the impact of the changes in food security indicators on different livelihood groups, which is then compared to a livelihoods baseline. As the baseline used the household economy approach, the proportion is often the proportion of households in the poor or middle group in the baseline. This proportion or percentage figure is then applied to existing UNDP population estimates for both the administrative area (usually districts) and the livelihood zone. This generates an actual estimated figure for the number of people falling into both (AFLC and HE) categories. These numbers can then readily be translated into tonnages of food assistance needed (although FSAU recommends a range of interventions, and not necessarily always food aid)[3]. See Map 2 for the depiction of current vulnerability as of April 2008.

The IPC system has a number of strengths. The determination of food security phases is based on a number of indicators, and furthermore, the focus is on convergence of evidence which is discussed by a food security working group consisting of all key actors in food security in Somalia. This means that key stakeholders agree on both severity of food insecurity for different livelihood groups and the necessary responses. WFP, CARE and ICRC all use FSAU to inform their food allocation plans, and donors use the same information to allocate funding. This level of agreement and coordination on determining needs and making aid or funding allocations is almost unique.

There are also some acknowledged weaknesses in this information system. First, no one believes that the population estimates are accurate, but no one has any better data and no population census has been possible in the post-Siad Barre era (and none is likely in the foreseeable future). Second, the livelihood baselines in many cases are several years old – most were done in the early 2000s – and it isn't always possible to tell whether current conditions should be analyzed against baseline information that old. Again, funding and other constraints have prevented updating the baseline information. Third, although the map is updated from time to time, the major seasonal assessment tends to set donor priorities and WFP distribution plans for the coming six months, and this limits flexibility in dealing with rapidly changing situations. This has implications in particular in situations such as the present, where numbers of IDPs can change significantly over the course of six months.

[3] WFP allocates a full ration (2100 Kcal per person/day for a presumed HH of six persons) for both classifications (AFLC and HE). CARE, which runs the other main food aid operation in Somalia, provides 1400 Kcal for persons classified in AFLC and 1900 Kcal for persons classified in HE.



Map 2. Integrated Phase Classification Map for Somalia, April 2008

Source: FSAU Somalia

Fourth, and perhaps most significant in the current context, FSAU has focused its analysis on the livelihoods of vulnerable rural populations. FSAU has not traditionally analyzed the food security status of displaced people, or assessed numbers of displaced. Yet since early 2007, the rapidly numbers of internally displaced have grown more rapidly than those in vulnerable rural livelihood groups. UNHCR has begun an IDP population tracking project, to try to keep up with the number and movements of IDPs. FSAU informed the research team that they tried to do some IDP surveys, looking into the condition of the IDPs, the host condition IPC phase, access to income and remittances, and other livelihood-related information.. However, none of these were yet available during the period of the research. In addition, until recently urban populations were not included in FSAU's assessments but migration to urban areas or towns is significant, whether because of displacement due to conflict, drought or floods, or for economic reasons, but this is generally considered to be an increasingly vulnerable group. In March-April this year, FSAU carried out its first rapid urban emergency food security assessment to assess the impact of hyper-inflation on this group (FSAU 2008)

Fifth, vulnerability and power is linked to social and political status, FSAU analysis focuses mainly on economic vulnerability to natural disasters and economic shocks. Social and political vulnerability may be considered to some extent under "social capital" - for example the limited social networks of Bantu groups would be considered under this. FSAU monitors are clearly aware of issues of political vulnerability, and relations of power between different population groups (sometimes livelihood groups) such issues are to too sensitive for Somali FSAU monitors in the field to report. The implications are that targeting one group over another, as recommended by FSAU, may create security risks and that mechanisms for including the politically vulnerable in targeting strategies are not adequately considered.

Finally, there is a separate nutrition classification system, which classifies regions and livelihood zones according to the prevalence of acute malnutrition, and separate maps are produced for this. Nutrition data are collected by livelihood zone, and currently regional livelihood based surveys are carried out on a bi-annual basis, including in the south central regions. Ad hoc surveys are done in IDP camps or urban areas. The nutrition maps may tell a somewhat different story from the IPC, as malnutrition is not only caused by food insecurity. For example in January 2008, more areas (regions) were classified as *critical* (15-20% <-2 Z-scores or significant increase compared to previous surveys) in the nutrition maps than as humanitarian emergency using the IPC classification. Whereas nutritional data are analyzed by region and livelihood zone, the IPC classification is done by district as well. Food aid (particularly GFD) is allocated geographically using the IPC classification, rather than the malnutrition maps. This is appropriate as the IPC classification is determined by analyzing the convergence of a range of indicators, including malnutrition data.

Geographic Targeting in Practice

The proportion or number of people in AFLC or HE status forms the basis for geographic targeting by WFP, at the level of districts and livelihood zones (See Map 1). All the problems described above notwithstanding, in comparison with many other countries in which WFP works, the mechanism for geographic targeting of rural populations is reasonably good in Somalia, particularly to the level of districts and livelihood zones. FSAU figures are sometimes disputed by organizations working in those areas, but overall, the estimates are generally accepted, and the estimates are updated regularly, making not only the required amounts of food assistance easier to predict, but also the time when assistance is needed.

The more serious issues with geographic targeting begin when selecting the actual locations within districts and livelihood zones for the targeting of food assistance. Senior staff in WFP Nairobi and staff at FSAU reported that the most vulnerable villages are selected for assistance within the districts/livelihood zones, and then these communities are targeted for 100% coverage with food assistance. But in fact, no evidence was found in the field that this is how either geographic targeting at the local level or household targeting actually works in practice. It falls to the Vulnerability Assessment and Mapping (VAM) Unit – consisting currently of only three staff in Nairobi and a limited number of field staff, to do all the geographic targeting below the level of district and livelihood zone. There is often a general sense of which places are worse off and which places are better off, but with hundred of locations served by sub-offices with a program staff numbering less than five, both the targeting of villages, and the number of households to be targeted within those villages, often has to be done on the basis of very limited information about food security status. There is also insufficient information about the population of individual locations or villages to know accurately how to translate proportional figures into actual numbers of targeted households at the village level. This can result in either inclusion or exclusion, though the bulk of evidence seen by the field team indicates the latter is the bigger problem (for an example, see Case Study 1 below).

Local partners and authorities complain that they are not consulted on the selections of villages to be included in food distributions, or the number of households to be targeted within them. WFP staff worry that local organizations may be biased in favor of some villages and against others, so prefer to do the selection themselves, even if the absence of good information. The research team heard about a number of reports of violence or looting when some villages excluded for reasons that may not be self explanatory or understood by excluded communities.

The previous analysis shows that there are certain regions and livelihood zones which have a consistently higher prevalence of acute malnutrition and levels of acute food insecurity. These are the agro-pastoral population in Bay and Bakool and the riverine populations in the Juba and Shebelle valleys. This means that there may be a particular caseload for which food aid can be planned on a medium to long-term basis, rather than depending solely on the seasonal FSAU assessments – though the latter would still make for important adjustments.

Targeting Within Communities in Practice

Targeting the rural food insecure

In the case of food insecure rural communities, the number of households to be targeted and some general criteria of vulnerability are given to the *Gudi* or local authority by a Cooperating Partner. The evidence found by the field team suggests that generally, the *Gudi* decides who will be targeted for the WFP/CP distribution. When questioned, all the *Gudis* interviewed were well familiar with the targeting criteria that WFP uses, and most could name all the right criteria for selecting the intended beneficiaries. These include household demographics, asset ownership or recent asset loss, health and nutritional status, etc.

Given the long supply lines and the often limited amount of time for distribution, in all cases discussed with the field team, households are grouped together in units of ten households each, and each ten-house group is allocated a stack of commodities that includes complete bags or containers of all commodities to be distributed. The idea is that once the main distribution has been completed, these groups of ten households will share the food equally among themselves. Thus, targeted numbers for each recipient village or community is divisible by ten.

In practice however, this formal distribution led by a CP, and observed by a WFP field monitor, is often just a mechanism to transfer ownership of the food from the CP to the community. Once in the possession of the community, food assistance is almost invariably redistributed in some other way. No cases were found by the field team in which the food remained solely in the hands of the people to whom it was distributed by the CP. This redistribution is a complex and variable process. In some cases, it may be little more than an unsupervised free-for-all, which results in fighting and theft and often in the exclusion of some members of the community. In others, it is more organized and may well include *everyone* in the community, but may result in only tiny amounts of food going to people who actually need it the most. For instance, in Alemow village in Wajid District, satellite villages were informally told that a few households in the village had been targeted for food distribution at the Food Distribution Point in the central village, but that the food was intended by the *Gudi* to be for everyone. Everyone who wanted food was instructed to go to the neighboring village, where informal redistribution took place. Those who weren't informed, or were late, or couldn't get there, were left out. In other reported cases, households received as little as 1 kilogram of grain, or even nothing at all, even though the food was reportedly redistributed to all members of the village. Sometimes the redistribution is done according to sub-clans (or whatever the smallest clan unit in the community is) to ensure some degree of equity among groups, if not individuals. In other cases, it is done according to residential location in the village (the two are sometimes the same thing – i.e. place of residence is according to sub-clan). It is not clear whether "targeted recipients" in the WFP/CP-managed distribution are always aware that they are just a mechanism by which food is handed over food to village, or if they feel they are cheated by the process of "targeting" only to have food redistributed

Community leaders and community members alike repeatedly stressed to the field team that the perception of food aid is that it is for everyone, not just for a "targeted" few. This is in part because this is the nature of Somali culture, but it is also in part because leaving people out – especially leaving out a whole group or sub-clan – is likely to result in violence. But it makes any attempt at "targeting" at the community level – whether according to administrative or indicator-based criteria, or according to a community process – a bit of a charade. See Box 2.

Box 2. Food aid distribution, redistribution, sharing and looting in Lower Shabelle

Given the nature of food distribution, redistribution of food by community authorities, and the sharing of food by recipients, a field team went to Bulo Barow in the Lower Shabelle valley to see an actual distribution and redistribution. Bulo Barow is just off the main Shabelle River, northeast of Merka. There are commercial banana farms in the valley in this area but most of the irrigation canals are dry and silted in. Since the demise of the Siad Barre government, the irrigated land of the Shabelle valley has only intermittently been well-used. Bulo Barow is less than a mile from the river and actually below the level of the river so gravity-flow irrigation could bring water to the whole village, but it was a dust bowl, and the people were in an acute crisis. Most of the people in the village are agricultural laborers, and the large farms on which they work have not been functioning for the past several years. They have their own small plots, but with the failure of the rains for the past several seasons, the people were in a serious crisis.

The most recent FSAU assessment had classified half of the riverine livelihood group in Lower Shabelle in a crisis, and needing assistance. Nevertheless, the food aid that was allocated to this village was enough for 70 households, about 10% of the population of the village. According to WFP regulations, the food was to be stacked in allocations that were sufficient for groups of ten households. Each pile contained fifteen bags of sorghum, four bags of CSB, and nine tins of oil. These were to be given to women, in groups of ten, who were then expected to divide the food among themselves later. The *Gudi*, the village authority or committee were quite straight forward about what was *actually* going to happen with the food. The intent was to send the groups of ten to collect the food that had been allocated to this village, and take it a little distance away where they would redistribute it according to their own criteria. In other words, the business of selecting "recipients," issuing them with ration tokens, and having the food "allocated" to them, was just to satisfy WFP requirements that specified a number of vulnerable people be targeted. It was really just a mechanism to get the allocation for the village, after which the food would be distributed according to the wishes of the village authority or *Gudi*.

The chairman of the *Gudi* said there were over 600 households in his village – others said there were as many as a thousand. Seventy households had been

allocated full rations and the rest were given nothing. At first they indicated they would allocate the food only to the most vulnerable households in the village – about 300. It eventually became clear however that the real intent was to share the food across the entire village.

The *Gudi* lined up women in groups of ten. The women said they weren't sure exactly what was going to happen, but they thought they were going to be given food. When asked if they knew what their entitlement was, they said they didn't, but that they would "be happy with whatever the NGO gives us…" They had registration cards, but they couldn't explain what they were for. They said they had just been given them by the NGO staff. The women had to stand in the sun for over an hour the food was piled up, but were eventually called forward to receive their piles of food. Each of the women was given a tin of oil or a bag of CSB, and then the same young men who had been unloading the trucks, rushed forward to carry the sorghum away. The women took their oil and followed the men carrying the food. They only went about thirty meters –just behind the nearest house – and put all the food down and re-piled it there. Several of the women wee surprised by this; others seemed to know what was happening. The *Gudi* met around the side of the house, deciding how to re-allocate the food. There was evident nervousness about the food – there just wasn't that much food, and a lot of expectant people. Eventually the *Gudi* came back with their plan. They intended to divide up the food among the residential centers of the village, roughly according to the population of each. There was also an allocation for the porters, and the biggest single allocation was for the village militia.

The militia were fully visible, guarding the food, and tension was rising because no one knew what was going to happen. One member of the *Gudi* stood on the pile of sorghum bags with a bull horn reassuring the people that this was their food and they would get it shortly, they just had to be patient. An argument broke out, with some pushing and shoving and a lot of shouting. One of the militia released the safety latch on his AK-47 readying it to shoot – a loud and unmistakable sound – which brought the entire WFP security detail to their feet aiming their weapons at him and yelling at him not to fire. Other members of the *Gudi* grabbed the militiaman's gun, pointing it to the ground. Faced with overwhelming fire power, he re-latched the safety on his weapon.

The *Gudi* announced the division of food according to each settlement of the village, and the porters started carrying food off. But this meant that the food – which had been transported only thirty meters before and had been kept under the watchful eye of the village militia – was now being transported in six different directions. Suddenly a man grabbed a bag of food, put it on his back and began to run away. But he couldn't move quickly with 50 kilos on his shoulders, and he was rapidly caught. The community began verbally abusing the man and hitting him with sticks, but it quickly became apparent that he had only been a diversionary tactic, and the remaining food at the redistribution site was being looted by others. The

senior WFP official present ordered the security detail not to fire on people taking the food, and in the end, nobody actually fired their weapons – by that point it was clear that the only people taking food were villagers who were afraid they were going to end up getting nothing. The real looting had taken place everyone was running after the original "thief." In the space of less than a minute, all the remaining food was grabbed up and taken. (It should be noted that there would normally not have been any WFP staff at the redistribution – normally there would have been only one field monitor, who would have been minding the main distribution. It was only because of the study that other WFP staff were at the location).

The *Gudi* tried to recover the lost food, but the rumor going around was that the *Gudi* itself was behind the looting. In other settlements in the village – which had not had their food looted, it was quickly redistributed for the second time, and it was simply being divided equally among whoever was present. Those who were receiving the food said that some people were not there that day, but it wasn't safe to keep food for them – they would be accused of looting it if the food wasn't finished by the time they completed redistributing it to whoever was there. In the settlement where the looting had taken place, women sat in front of their houses with their children looking sullen and angry. "We waited all day in the sun and in the end, we got nothing!" Most of what had been looted was intended for this settlement, which was also where the chairman of the *Gudi* lived. He had tried unsuccessfully to get the militia – who had received the lion's share of the food – to recover the food that had been looted, but they had refused.

Postscript. Some people from the village reported the looting to the local Sheikhs or religious leaders. When investigating, they first preached about theft, and then asked those who had taken the food to return it for the good of the community. Most of the looted food was recovered.

The case study of Bulo Barow is by no means an isolated incident, but not all redistribution results in looting or violence either.

Targeting Internally Displaced People

In the case of IDP camps, the situation is somewhat different, and the processes observed by the field team were also different. The intent of WFP in IDP camp situations, unlike in rural communities, is to provide food assistance for everyone. However, WFP bases its estimates of IDP numbers of information about population movement from UNHCR, and sometimes this information is out of date. There also appears to be an uneven focus of the international community on IDPs, with IDPs in some locations receiving relatively more attention and assistance, others relatively less. There are rarely actual head counts to know exactly how many people there are in IDP camps – it is deemed too risky and too time-consuming to conduct them (some agencies reported successfully conducting head counts in some camp situations, the field team did not witness any). Thus the amount of food assistance provided might or might not match numbers of people in the camps to

which the food assistance is being delivered. But as described in greater detail in the following section, the camps are managed by some kind of "camp committee." The IDP committees were generally responsible for registering or selecting beneficiaries for food aid and helping at the distribution site.

These committees, perhaps sounding like a participatory mechanism, often function more like "gatekeepers" – controlling information from both inside the camps and outside the camps, controlling access to people in the camps, and crucially, controlling the flow of resources into the camp. The committees often claim knowledge of numbers of people in the camps because they live in the camps, but there is no independent way of verifying the numbers, and the committees are often connected with militias or other groups with greater power than the Cooperating Partners.

Without exception in the case of camps the field team was able to visit, the number of IDPs in the camp, as reported by the committee and CP, was greater than the planning figure that WFP had gotten from UNHCR. it may be true that in any given camp, particularly in the fluid situation pertaining in April 2008, that the number of people in the camp is more than the number given to WFP, it is also clearly to the advantage of the committees to report a higher number, because it inevitably means that no one in the camp will receive what they are told is their entitlement. But with the perception, as in rural villages, that food aid is for everyone, the committee will still see to it that everyone receives something. It is a system that virtually guarantees little accountability for what happens to food assistance: in the absence of a head count and a registration system, and with the committee overseeing the distribution, no one knows how many people actually receive assistance, and therefore it is impossible to tell if what people actually receive represents a fair sharing of assistance, even if the number of people is higher than the WFP estimate of people. This creates obvious opportunities for diversion of assistance, and there are numerous allegations of this, and some evidence of this was found by the research team.[4]

There was some evidence in camps visited of exclusion, but it appeared to be mainly newcomers or people who were for some other reason not known to the committee. Eventually, most people got on to the distribution lists, even though the lists were not public. There was also, of course, exclusion in camps due to the entire camp not being included on the distribution list, or for some other reason not receiving any assistance.

It should be noted that not all camp committees functioned in the way just described. Some of them, even if accurately described as "gatekeepers," did not seem to be diverting assistance, and some did include some checks and balances that provide for greater accountability (see following section).

[4] Interviewing a handful of recipients in one camp hardly constitutes a significant sample, the team found significant evidence of diversion simply by comparing the amount of food that WFP delivered to a camp, the number of people that the committee reported were in the camp, and the modal response of individuals in the camp regarding the amount of food actually received. Some of the recipients had also figured out that the numbers didn't add up, and complained to the land owner, who forced the committee to compensate these households, but the land owner reported only a very small fraction of people who complained (see Box 3).

Targeting families with malnourished children

The only indicator-based targeting done in practice is that of families of malnourished children, and there is very little community participation in this. Assessments are done by FSAU and the targeting criteria have been determined by WFP. Community members may be involved in screening activities as community health workers, but in some cases this is actually as NGO staff. There appears to be no information on the perceptions of community members on this way of targeting, although the limited information collected by the research team indicates that people knew and understood the targeting criteria and had information on where to go for screening. The ration received by families of malnourished children may be shared, but the research team was told that this was on a voluntary basis, rather than being organized by the *Gudi*. Families of malnourished children thus have a greater choice as to whether to share their ration with others. This form of targeting is subject to less ration dilution by the local *Gudi* under circumstances where the latter has access to food via general distributions. Whether this form of targeting would work as well in the absence of general distribution is not clear.

During the course of this study, a number of agencies expressed concerns about this form of targeting. The first is that this might be seen as forcing families to keep children malnourished as an extreme coping strategy to access general food rations. WFP staff noted that no one would willingly starve their child, and that the WFP program aims to address this by automatic discharge from the feeding programme after three months, if the child is not ill. A second concern is that lack of food is not the only underlying cause of malnutrition, and other underlying causes are not addressed. A third is the anecdotal information that families will share malnourished children to access general rations. Fourth, the coverage of feeding programs in dispersed rural populations is notoriously low, so ensuring that all households with malnourished children are reached will require much more capacity than either WFP or other agencies currently have. This form of targeting cannot target households without children under the age of five. The Nutrition Cluster in Somalia is planning a new selective feeding protocol based on new standards that will target substantially higher numbers of children than those currently classified as moderately malnourished. This program will have significant implications for any attempt to target on the basis of nutritional status.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Although the PRRO document makes reference to a monitoring and evaluation system for Somalia, the limits in staffing and the capacity of the CPs mean that little actual monitoring and evaluation is carried out – in terms of either food basket monitoring of individual recipients at the point of distribution or post-distribution monitoring. Food basket monitoring, unless it took place after secondary redistributions, would be meaningless anyway. And there was no impact evaluation that the study team was able to find. This is for several reasons. The main reason is very limited staff time and access. In theory, it is the task of Cooperating Partners to conduct a visit to the distribution site approximately two weeks after a distribution, for the purpose of "follow up." None of the CPs interviewed could describe exactly what it was they were expected to do, and none had any reports they could share. No monitoring reports could be found in Nairobi either. Most

CPs reported having had a discussion with the village *Gudi* after the distribution, but no specific monitoring format seems to be used, and the team found no evidence of action take as a result of monitoring. Likewise, receipt of food aid is only rarely included as a questions in nutrition surveys, which limits this regular form of information gathering as a means of assessing food aid impact

Another critical area for monitoring is keeping track of the way in targeting recommendations might need to change. In theory, at least down to the District and Livelihood Zone level, this is FSAU's job, and FSAU does from time to time issue new recommendations even in between major assessments (one such recommendations was updated in Aril 2008). However, at the local level, distribution plans often can't accommodate changes that quickly – and in fact there is no routine monitoring or other source of information that would cause targeting recommendations to be reconsidered.

No formal complaints mechanisms were reported. However, in some cases, informal complaints mechanisms have emerged. More information on this is given in the following section.

Targeting effectiveness and impact

Based on the evidence from the communities visited by the field team, several conclusions can be drawn about the effectiveness and impact of the current targeting and distribution system.

Given the focus of FSAU on rural areas, and the difficulties of linking assessment information to selection of villages and determining the proportion to be targeted in each, it is highly likely that there are significant inclusion and exclusion errors in the current system of geographical targeting. This may include urban populations and some IDPs. The need to determine food distribution plans for a period of 6 months can also lead to exclusion error for displaced populations. For geographical targeting of villages within rural areas, the lack of a clear rationale for selecting rural villages to be included for food distribution, is also likely to incur both inclusion and exclusion errors.

Within rural communities, the real "targeting" of the general food distribution took place *after* food aid is "transferred" from the CP to the community, not *during* the transfer. Once in the hands of the community, food is re-distributed, usually by residential division or by sub-clan. Then there is a secondary re-distribution to households. The redistribution process is often chaotically managed, or not managed at all, is susceptible to looting and theft, particularly when the amount of resources to be distributed is relatively small compared to the size of the recipient population. It often causes localized fighting to break out, and is thus associated with serious risks to the personal safety of community members. WFP and partners are aware of this, and have devoted some efforts to improving safety at distributions (WFP 2007).

There remains some exclusion from re-distribution in rural areas, but it was not possible for the team to determine whether these were exclusion errors (i.e. households who would

have been considered vulnerable). However, the randomness of the re-distribution process makes this highly likely, with the risk of marginalized clans being excluded being the greatest, particularly if not represented on the *Gudi* (this is discussed in more detail below). Under the system of "redistribution" virtually everyone in the community has the expectation of accessing some of the food, even if only a small amount. This also means that there are likely to be considerable inclusion errors from WFP's point of view. Exclusion errors in the IDP camps appeared to be mainly, but not exclusively, new arrivals.

In addition, no one has any idea of what amount they can expect. It isn't clear whether the "targeted recipients" in the WFP/CP distribution are aware that they are just a mechanism for transferring control of the food to the community. In the absence of knowing the number of people among whom the food is to be shared, there is no rational way to inform people transparently about their "entitlement," and no way that WFP or the CP are able to ensure that people receive their entitlement.

Virtually all stakeholders reported and defended the sharing of food assistance. It is not just a practice of leaders or of certain groups. The sharing food assistance no doubt waters down impact in terms of nutritional or food security status, but it also provides a safety net in the context of constantly moving people and shifting needs. There is a strong link between the sharing of food assistance and the prevention of violence, and the *Gudi* and village elders usually said that the main reason for sharing was for security reasons – in a sense pitting a security and protection objective against a nutritional objective. However, a general ethic of sharing tends to limit exclusion, although exclusion does continue to occur. "Sharing", however, doesn't necessarily mean an equal or equitable distribution of resources among all the people present. The virtual absence of monitoring makes it difficult to draw firm conclusions about how equitable the re-distribution is.

Sharing of general rations provided to families of malnourished children is different from the sharing of the general distribution, as families do generally keep hold of their rations. If any sharing takes place, this is the decision of the household who receives food aid themselves. In other words, these families are not expected to share. This means that WFP's assumption that this is a more effective way of targeting within communities is correct. However, there are other weaknesses in this method of targeting that mean that exclusion errors will occur, for example vulnerable households without children under five. Targeting through SFP may also create protection risks for targeted families, if this is the only way in which food aid is provided, as it may create situations of theft or forced sharing. Targeting families of malnourished children may therefore be effective, but should not be the only form of targeting within a particular area or livelihood group.

In the presence of "gatekeepers" who control information, access and resources, the practice of sharing creates significant opportunities for diversion. The allocation of a proportion of the food allocation to porters, to militia, and often to the *Gudi*, also reduced the overall amount of food available for distribution. Diversion, taxation, sharing of remaining food aid, and possible exclusion or marginalization of some groups from

distribution, means that large numbers of people have to find ways of supplementing their food needs.

This sometimes has immediate implications for the personal security of IDPs or community members. For example, because the food ration IDPs actually receive in the Afgoye camps is insufficient to last the whole month, they have to leave Afgoye to find work in Mogadishu or to join food kitchens. Thus they are forced to go back into a war zone, with considerable risks to personal safety, to earn income or find food. Similarly in Jowhar, the food aid received by IDPs was much less than in the Afgoye camps, and they were forced to collect grass for sale under unsafe conditions. People were beaten, or robbed when collecting grass, but had to continue to do this because they had no alternative way of getting food or income. From a "food security" point of view therefore, IDPs receiving insufficient food aid may appear to be "coping", but from a "protection" point of view, they are being forced into dangerous situations to be able to meet their basic food needs.

Many factors make it very difficult to judge the impact of targeting, or indeed the impact of the food aid program generally, whether in terms of food security, nutrition or protection. The relative lack of information on food aid end usage, the impact of diversion of food aid, and of widespread sharing, it is clear that the attempts to target food aid in Somalia are fraught with difficulty. The current means of targeting is serving only as a means of transfer of the resources from the Cooperating Partner to the community, and despite some appearances, serves no useful purpose in household targeting.

Section 3. Participatory Elements of Targeting

Participation

The concepts of "community" and "participation" are difficult to define even in an abstract sense, much less in an operational sense. Even with the emergence of rights-based and community-based approaches to assistance, these terms are seldom defined. One definition of communities is "primary groups" – indigenous institutions that are identity-based, including kinship ties, traditional political institutions and authority structures and territorial networks around the community or village; and "secondary groups" that include social and economic organizations that often involve voluntary membership (Chazan 1992). It is easy for outsiders to oversimplify local community structures when using the term – overlooking local leadership structures, processes, capacities, resourcefulness and culture. This can be further complicated in the context of a complex emergency. Many conceptions overplay either the "moral economy" aspects of community, or the tendency towards "elite capture" of good and services in a community – emphasizing that perceptions of community may be more informed by the biases of the observer than the actual tendencies of a given community.

Community-based or participatory approaches may have several objectives. One of these is essentially an instrumental means to an end: to save costs; to improve program performance through better in-depth knowledge of the members of the community; or to improve accessibility. On the other hand, these approaches may be an end in themselves: empowering communities; recognizing the right of communities to have a say in decisions that affect their future and well-being; rebuilding social networks that may be been eroded by conflict or crisis.

The WFP policy on participation states that its "assistance programs are designed and implemented on the basis of broad-based participation in order to ensure that programme participants (including beneficiaries, national and local governments, civil-society organizations and other partners) contribute their knowledge, skills and resources to processes that influence their lives. WFP will use participatory approaches to bring the poorest and marginalized people into its assistance programs, strengthen their representation in community structures and overcome gender inequalities by creating opportunities for both women's and men's voices to be heard. It will do all this maintaining sufficient flexibility to ensure its programs' suitability to local situations and capacities."[5] Hence WFP's definition tends to include both of the different categories of objectives for participatory approaches. The policy on community-based targeting (see next section) doesn't specify a view on the nature "community" as outlined above. Hence this study sought the broadest interpretation of both terms.

[5] This is taken from p.15 of the WFP (2003). "Consolidated Framework of WFP Policies. An Updated Version." Executive Board Third Regular Session Rome, 20–24 October 2003.

Forms of Governance Relevant to the Question of Targeting

There are a number of different governance systems in south-central Somalia today. Building on study by CRD study for the World Bank in 2005 (CRD 2005), these can be described as:

- Regional and District Councils. These were initially established by UNOSOM II in the early 1990's, remnants of which remained until the new Somali governments were established. The TFG, where present, has also formed District and Regional Councils.
- Various political and military factions established a number of administrative structures immediately after the civil wars subsided. This includes administrations in Middle and Lower Shabelle. These same administrations formed the basis of TFG administrative structures.
- Islamic courts, or Islamist factions, hold a degree of control in some localities within south central Somalia.
- Governance structures established by traditional and religious leaders. These are called the "*Gudi*" or village committees with links both to District Authorities and the community.
- Traditional leaders using the traditional governance system, or customary law, to keep peaceful relations between and within many communities.

In addition, in camp situations there are usually IDP committees, who are either self-appointed or selected with some measure of community participation. IDP committees are the inter-face between the NGO and the IDP community, and many are considered "gatekeepers". In this study, only areas with TFG presence were visited, and IDP camps. Two main forms of governance were therefore examined in this study; that of the *Gudi* and traditional elders in rural populations, and the IDP committees in camp populations. Unfortunately, areas where new systems of governance were formed for the purpose of relief distribution, relief committees, could not be visited for security reasons.

Another key feature of governance in Somalia today is the extent of Somali civil society. The early years of the conflict provided the first opportunity for Somalis to establish independent organizations. Many relief associations were established, often by energetic and charismatic individuals (De Waal 1997). Many Islamic charities continue to operate to this day. The civil war, and the international response, also led to the formation of numerous women's groups, including at village level. These groups have become a key part of governance at village level, in particular in the interface between villagers and the international aid community in terms of expressing the concerns and needs of the community. Somali civil society also plays a significant role because of the relative absence of international actors.

Governance and Participation

Traditional governance

The traditional governance system has been remarkably resilient, both during the period of centralized government and more recently during the civil war. This is thought to be for a number of reasons (CRD 2005):

- The mechanisms embedded in customary law, or *Xeer,* are indigenous and every Somali can claim its ownership. It is an integral part in the pride of any Somali clan.
- Alternative governance mechanisms never reached the majority of Somali society, in particular in rural areas
- Islamic values embedded in Somali traditional structures strengthened the application of traditional governance.

Historically, traditional governance handled all societal relations between communities, conflicts, resource sharing, and the provision of rule of law. It consists of a set of contractual agreements (*Xeer*), which defined the rights and responsibilities of the individual within a group bound by ties of kinship, and of a similar set of agreements which regulates the group's relations with other neighboring groups. With the advent of Islam, Sharia law merged with customary law. Where there were inconsistencies between customary law and Sharia law, Sharia overruled (CRD 2005).

Conflicts were traditionally managed through customary law, including the tradition of blood payment (*diya*). In interviews for this study, ensuring security and conflict resolution was always given as a key role for traditional leaders. Resource sharing, and identifying vulnerable households in need of assistance, also remains an important role for traditional leaders. This might include the sharing of pasture and water, but also a system of community reserves for re-distribution to the poorest or to be used during times of stress; *qaraan.* In farming communities, contributions of grain or cash were sought by the village chief. Community consensus was required for withdrawals, but the final decisions lay with the chief and sheikh. The sheikh guaranteed that the process was transparent and accountable and guarded against any accusations of wrong doing by the chief (Narbeth 2001). In pastoral communities, *qaraan* (also described as a social safety net), was the mandatory collection of money and valuables for and from every member of the clan. In the communities visited for this study, the system of *qaraan* was said to continue. Findings of this study also show that the sheikh continues to play a role in settling disputes over resource allocation, and can be the final arbiter that people would go to in such cases.

Zakat, an Islamic obligation, is another form of re-distribution of resources within communities. According to the Koran, this is an obligatory tax to be paid by the wealthier members of society to the poor, destitute and to travelers. It is not collected, but it is the responsibility of wealthier households to identify relatives or neighbors who are in need of assistance; i.e. those who are relatively worse off than the producer (Narbeth 2001). Again, this form of assistance was reported to continue in Somalia today.

Decision-making within the traditional governance system has elements of community participation. The chief of the clan has the responsibility to represent clan interests, and takes final decisions on behalf of the clan, but he consults with the sub-clan leaders (the "*nabaddoon*"), who in turn convene males of age to discuss a particular issue. Such congresses could be convened in cases of unexpected conflict but also for matters related to resource sharing, accommodation of guests from other clans, or the necessity of exploring new grazing grounds. In general, the responsibilities of sub-clan heads were management and supervision of day to day clan business, including the arbitration of differences within the clan or negotiations with other clans (CRD 2005).

While clan leaders retain many of their traditional roles, there have been a number of changes in traditional governance since the start of the conflict. The clan system itself has been divisive when manipulated for economic and political ends. As mentioned previously, many of the more powerful clans have their own militia, and some clan leaders are now also militia leaders. In present day Somalia, being armed is important to represent clan interests and ensure the security of the clan. As a consequence of the collapse of the state, and increased fragmentation of society, there are now also many more sub-clan leaders, as even the smallest section within the clan needs representation, both for security reasons and for access to resources. This can have both positive and negative consequences; on the one hand, it means that people are represented at lower levels within the clan system, but on the other hand, it means that the potential for conflict over resources is increased. This is reflected in the changing nature of the conflict, which is increasingly between sub-sub clans, rather than between the major clan groupings. This can also mean that targeting some groups with food aid and not others is increasingly likely to lead to violence.

Local authorities/the *Gudi*

The District Council (DC) represents the different clans in the area under its control. Representatives are nominated by clan elders in most cases. Overall the Council is responsible for security, law and order, and local governance generally. Where the TFG is present, the DC is loosely affiliated with the TFG. Government institutions are normally responsible for providing basic services, the DC's interviewed had few specific programs although they might have secretaries for different elements of governance, for example; water, health, sanitation, etc. The DC also collects taxes, mainly from businessmen such as transporters, but when asked (for example in Jowhar and Wajid) were not prepared to talk about how these taxes were spent. Marginalized clans are less likely to be represented on the DC. For example, the Eyle community living near to Wajid town, made frequent visits to the DC to get assistance but unsuccessfully because, according to them, they have no representation on the Council.

In many rural communities, the *Gudi* is a committee appointed by the sub-clan leaders to represent the different sub-clans (or sub-sub-clans, etc.) in the village. The selection of the *Gudi* at village level is usually a consultative process among the elders of that sub-clan, but it is not an election. The chairman of the committee can be selected from amongst the committee members (for example in Gobato, Wajid), or appointed by the DC (as in Jowhar). Once selected or appointed to the *Gudi*, the term of the committee members is reported to

be indefinite. It can last as long as they continue to represent the interests of their sub-clan and they do not do anything to undermine the confidence of the sub-clan. In the rural resident communities visited, they were all men. Like the traditional leaders, they reported their role to be to protect the village from outside attack, make peace within the village (and with external forces when necessary), and resolve problems of people in the community. Others, for example in Golweyn (Merka) also reported a role in farming activities and land, education and health, and assistance from the outside. While the *Nabadoon* (sub-clan leaders) plays a general oversight role on issues of security, conflict resolution and resource sharing, the committees are appointed as their representatives to deal with day to day issues. When there are issues that the *Gudi* cannot resolve, they may go to the clan leaders for assistance, or to the Sheikh.

The representation of minority or marginalized groups on the *Gudi* varies from place to place. This depends on the power that minorities actually have (a minority is not necessarily a vulnerable group) and the proportion of people from marginalized or "socially inferior" clans within the particular community. For example, in Gobato, a small Eyle community was not represented on the committee, whereas the more powerful Hadama were also a minority but were represented. In Bula Askari, near Jowhar, the Eyle formed a more substantial proportion of the community, and were represented on the committee but only by one member. The majority of the population in some villages visited in rural Wajid was considered to belong to a low status clan of the Rahanwein (also called Bantu by the members of the team), but since they were the majority, they also formed the majority representation on the committee. This was different in some of the riverine communities (for example Golweyn in Lower Shebelle). In this case, the community, and *Gudi* was largely "Bantu", the chairman of the *Gudi* was not. The role of elders in riverine farming areas is complex, as in some cases, these are often the same people as "landowners" who benefited under the former regime. Land grabbing both before and during the conflict, undermined the system of elders in particular in Lower Juba and the Shebelle Valley. Many of the elders are not originally from the community, and may not represent their constituent's interests (African Rights 1993).

In peri-urban or urban areas, the *Gudi* can be more a mixture of clan leaders and others. For example, in Bula Askari (near Jowhar), a mixed peri-urban settlement of some pastoralists (Abgal) who had been displaced in the early 90's and of Eyle who were displaced later, a *Gudi* was selected to represent different sections or different areas where people settled. As this was a relatively new community, no difference was made between a system of clan leaders and *Gudi* members, but there was just the *Gudi.* Each section therefore has a representative, but there might be more than one clan living in each of the sections, although each clan is also represented. According to the committee, they had been elected by people living in the village. Food aid recipients in Golweyn, a riverine farming community in Lower Shebelle, also commented that they would have preferred a distribution organized by section rather than centrally organized by clan. The peri-urban Eyle community near Wajid similarly had no separate system of traditional leadership and *Gudi,* but both were combined on the *Gudi.* This could be because the Eyle have received

less assistance in the past and because they are not armed, so there has been less need to organize themselves to distribute assistance and to organize the security of the group.

IDP committees

IDP committees varied in levels of representation and community participation. At one extreme was the IDP committee in one of the Afgoye camps, where the committee appeared to be largely self-appointed and not very accountable to the majority of the IDP population, and at the other extreme was a much smaller camp in Jowhar, where the committee appeared to have been genuinely elected from amongst the camp residents. The main roles of IDP committees were similar in all contexts – registration, settling new IDPs, security, settling disputes, distributing assistance.

In one camp visited by the field team in Afgoye of somewhere between 5000 and 8000 households, there are some 20 different settlements within the camp, and each has two representatives on an IDP camp committee. Virtually all the committee members were already established in the area prior to the current IDP crisis (some IDPs came in 1991) and imposed themselves as leaders on the new arrivals. None of the IDPs interviewed knew their representatives on the committee, or how the committee had been selected. They had no role or participation in the functions of the committee. As mentioned before, the camp committee in Afgoye seemed to have more the function of "gatekeepers," with significant amounts of assistance being diverted. In a similar camp in the Lower Shebelle valley of some 3000-6000 households, the IDP camp committee again seemed to be mainly comprised of IDPs who came earlier (but within the current crisis), and was selected on clan basis. Some IDPs knew committee members, but none knew how the committee was selected. These IDP committees generally decide who gets what with little accountability to the IDP population, or anyone else (including WFP and implementing partner).

In a smaller camp in Jowhar of some 400-500 households, the research team was told that the committee was selected by intellectuals (or wise men) within the camp, and that they were selected for their intelligence and participation in community activities. This was the only committee met by the research team which was mainly composed of women, the reason being that most of the camp population is women. In fact, they also developed an accountable system of three different committees, with different membership and roles. These included:

- A camp committee – prepares list of all the households in the camp. This is the committee that decides everything.
- An implementation committee – helps with the distribution relief items.
- A follow up committee – monitors and makes sure there were no mistakes.

Both recipients and non-recipients claimed to be happy with the committees. Even non-recipients were satisfied with the committee; they felt that if there was no committee, there would be looting and stealing amongst them and also that the committee had a useful role in resolving problems between families. They took part in selecting the committee.

Participatory Elements of Targeting

WFP defines community based targeting as: *"Households or beneficiaries are selected with the participation of community members such as traditional or religious leaders, specially constituted food committees equally composed of women and men, or local authorities, on the basis of criteria developed with the participation of the communities."*

Using this definition, the targeting and distribution practices in Somalia involve the participation of a number of different community members. Traditional leaders were almost always either directly or indirectly involved, and so were local authorities, in determining who gets food aid. NCA and WVI as WFP implementing partners both used relief committees as part of the targeting and distribution system. In camp situations, the IDP camp committees might, at first glance, appear to be similar to a relief committee, but probably represented some of the least participatory mechanisms that the field team witnessed. Participation can be reviewed in relation to different elements of the programme cycle, and in relation to the principles of community based targeting and distribution as developed for the relief committee system.

Participation in different elements of the project cycle

Using the project cycle, participation needs to be reviewed in relation to:

- Assessing food insecurity
- Setting targeting criteria
- Selection/registration of beneficiaries
- Implementing distribution
- Monitoring and feedback

In general, community members were not involved in assessing food insecurity and local authorities at the community, district, or regional level had only a limited role. Not only was there little participation in assessments, but the lack of transparency in how decisions were made on selection of villages for food distribution and the number of households to be targeted, led to many complaints. To community members and local authorities such decisions appeared to be made on a random basis, without any apparent rationale. They gave explanations such as "there are probably great needs all over the country" or "perhaps WFP is working with a very old plan", but in general community members didn't know the reasons for targeting at the village level. A particularly contentious issue was that distribution plans tend to remain fixed for six months, when needs may change during this period due to increased displacement, worsening impact of drought etc. In all areas visited, there had been an additional influx of displaced people from Mogadishu in the previous 6 months.

As the previous section describes, the only indicator-based targeting done in practice is that of families of malnourished children, and there is very little community participation in this. But information on the programme and selection criteria seems to be effectively disseminated, meaning that at some level, people are aware of their "entitlements" vis a vis access to services for malnourished children (and ensuring awareness of entitlements is

one crucial piece of the improving participation in targeting). For other general distributions, community leaders put on a show of targeting only selected households, after which food aid was re-distributed. Community leaders were therefore involved in selecting beneficiaries and in the implementation of distribution, and of course were the main decision makers with regard to redistribution, though as noted, this process is often very haphazard. In IDP camps too, IDP committees were generally responsible for registering or selecting beneficiaries for food aid and helping at the distribution site.

Working with relief committees

The establishment of Relief Committees, often a significant participatory approach to targeting food aid, is not very common in Somalia. Unfortunately, none of the operational areas of the agencies reported to be working with relief committees for food aid could be visited due to security constraints. However, in interviews with the agencies, the research team was informed that the Relief Committees generally had roles that were limited to assisting in distribution, in particular crowd control and security during the distribution. In addition, the RCs either consisted mainly of elders or clan leaders, or were elected by the elders, so their role might be similar to that in distributions directly organized with the clan leaders, the *Gudi,* or other local authorities.

However, Relief Committees have frequently been used in cash distributions, and these projects have tended to be extensively studied and evaluated. A recent cash distribution (both cash relief and cash for work) by a consortium of NGOs (Oxfam, Horn Relief, WASDA, Development Concern, AFREC) in southern Somalia used Village Relief Committees to help identify beneficiaries for the cash. The focus throughout the process was on transparency, in particular through public meetings. As described by the implementing agencies, public meetings were held to discuss the objectives project, the cash allocated to the villages, to elect the relief committee and to determine criteria for beneficiary selection. The final beneficiary list was also presented in public. Clan elders played a key role in identifying beneficiaries, as only people from the same clan can comment on beneficiaries selected within that clan. In reality, the village committees often first sub-divided by the cash allocations by sub-clan and then the elders identified the most vulnerable, based on the criteria determined in the public meeting. The whole process was closely monitored by agency staff, in particular to ensure that minority clans were included. The evaluation found this an effective way of working in Somalia, and that on the whole, the most vulnerable were selected to receive the cash (Majid, Hussein et al. 2007). There are a number of reasons why community based approaches to targeting might be easier for cash distributions than for food aid: first, cash distributions are generally much smaller scale than food aid, second, there are fewer logistical constraints to getting the right amount of cash to beneficiaries at the right time so there is likely to be more time for community mobilization and it is also possible to inform people of their entitlements, third, there may be a higher ratio of support staff to recipients.

Participation according to the principles of community based targeting

While the targeting and distribution mechanisms seen by the research team are not the "classical" community based targeting using relief committees, the existing systems can be

reviewed in relation to the basic principles of community based targeting and distribution. These have been adapted for the Somalia context in Table 4.

Table 4. Principles of CBTD (as applied to Somalia)	
Principles of CBTD	**Activities**
Transparency	**Circulate information about food entitlements for targeted households or communities** Distribute in a public place Publicly call out names of those eligible for food aid
Accountability	Community participation in assessment Assess and identify the socially and politically vulnerable and ensure they receive their entitlements **Community involvement in determining targeting criteria** **Representation of different social, ethnic, political groups on local committee or institutions responsibility for targeting and distribution** **Existence of complaints and feedback mechanism** to those responsible for making targeting decisions Possibility for community to change committee members in case of complaints Local committee receives food/countersigns waybill **Independent monitoring during and post-distribution**
Fairness (impartiality?)	Food allocations are based on an objective assessment of need Distribution according to household size **Monitor receipt of agreed rations to intended recipients**
Gender sensitivity	Women considered heads of households and recipients of relief **Gender balance** on local committees responsible for making targeting decisions Distribution does not interfere with women's other responsibilities

Adapted from: Jaspars et al. 1997; WFP food and nutrition handbook

The Somalia program is reviewed in particular in relation to the bolded lines in Table 4, as some of the key elements of a participatory approach. The activities necessary to apply principles of CBTD include community involvement in setting targeting criteria, the provision of information on entitlements, complaints mechanisms, and monitoring. These are usually not included in the formal targeting and distribution practices in Somalia. However, some elements of community participation were seen in the two main ways in which food aid is distributed in practice; the traditional leader/*Gudi* system and the IDP committee system. Within these two broad systems, different agency approaches to applying these principles are also discussed.

Participatory elements of the traditional leader/*Gudi* system

The roles of the traditional leaders and the *Gudi* are similar for food distribution as for other resources. In places where traditional leaders and *Gudi* are separate, the *Gudi* makes an initial decision on selection of beneficiaries, or how the distribution is done. The traditional leaders provide oversight, and women's groups can advise. The Sheikh may be

consulted in case of disputes. The point is that there is at least *some* division of labor and checks and balances built into the system.

Entitlements to food aid as an external resource are seen very differently from internal resource sharing networks such as *qaraan* and *zakat*. Traditional leaders could easily identify the most vulnerable within the community, as these were traditionally the recipients of *qaraan*, and the *Gudi* could often give a list of vulnerability criteria (e.g. those without livestock, without a harvest, families without able bodied men, elderly, orphans, etc), but in all cases everyone was considered equally entitled to food aid. This was also a security issue, as the exclusion of certain households or clans could lead to significant security risks. In reality therefore, traditional leaders and the *Gudi* are more important in determining targeting decisions than external agencies, even if their decision was usually to target everyone or to target as many households as possible.

In general, the *Gudi*'s decision making on food aid targeting and distribution had little or no participation from community members, or vulnerable households, themselves. In interviews, women would often say they were just told how the distribution was to be done. In other cases, women recipients appeared not aware that the food was to be re-distributed, or how.

There are some checks and controls, or complaints mechanisms, within the traditional system of governance, in particular if the traditional leaders and *Gudi* are separate. For example, if traditional leaders do not agree with the proposed beneficiary list or method of distribution, they can make changes. Again, the point is less about the beneficiary list, which in many cases is fairly meaningless, but about whether or not there are checks and balances in the system. In Gobato (Wajid), the women's group informed the research team that if people had a problem with the selection, they would go to the committee first, then to the traditional leaders, and if they were still not satisfied would go to the police, and if there was no resolution following this, they could go to the Sheikh as the final arbiter and who would refer to the Koran. In general, where the religious leaders are involved, there are more checks and balances, as was also demonstrated in Box 2. Where there is no separate system of traditional leaders and *Gudi,* one level of checks and controls is removed and thus the system may become less accountable.

Targeting and distribution done by traditional governance mechanisms and the *Gudi,* may also not give adequate representation to minority or marginalized groups, and thus the possibility of their exclusion from distribution becomes greater. Even if they are represented, their complaints may not necessarily be heard. For example, the Eyle in Bula Askari reported that they do not complain about the food distribution, as they believed their complaints would not be accepted. In all cases, the traditional leaders and the members of the *Gudi* were men, thus these leadership systems were clearly not gender balanced and the role of women in decision making was limited. Where relief committees have been established for cash programming, a key objective is to ensure adequate representation of minority groups and of women (Horn Relief 2007). The key point is about gender balance, which is one of the principles discussed in Table 4.

While working with the *Gudi* seemed to be the main mechanism for targeting and distributing food in rural populations, some agencies (e.g. ICRC, OCHA, SAACID, and Oxfam) emphasized the importance of involving all key stakeholders right at the start of project planning. This meant calling a meeting not only with the *Gudi*, but also traditional leaders (including from minority groups), religious leaders, women's groups, IDPs, landlords, and in some cases militia, businessmen, MPs etc. Community mobilization then involves explaining the objectives of the project (in this case food distribution), a discussion on who the most vulnerable are and possible targeting criteria, and how the distribution should be done. These activities were reported to the field team, not observed by it. But the point is, this ensures a transparent process from the beginning, which minimizes the risk of diversion of assistance or exclusion of certain groups. Once the whole process is known by everyone, it becomes more difficult for militia or businessmen to influence the process or for people who are not vulnerable to be included. This process was generally only applied to non-food aid programs, as WFP's implementing partners usually did not have enough time between being informed of where the FDPs were going to be, and the time of distribution (generally this was less than one week). Examples of this were given for cash distributions, re-integration programs for IDPs. The exception was ICRC's food distributions, as they handled assessments, community mobilization and distribution themselves, on a much smaller scale than WFP. All of these examples were reported to the field team, though the team did not have a chance to see these mechanisms in operation.

Beneficiaries rarely received information on entitlements prior to distribution, thus increasing the risk of diversion. In fact, none of the beneficiaries interviewed by the field team were aware of their entitlements. This situation is of course compounded by the tendency towards the sharing of food aid, and the haphazard manner in which sharing is usually carried out. One of the Cooperating Partners, SAACID, reported that the ration entitlement is given on their ration cards. Even though the food aid allocation is usually shared between all community members, at least this means that the entitlement by ration card is known. SAACID reported that this helped to reduce diversion, even if the event of sharing or redistribution ICRC reported that they inform beneficiaries of the entitlement by village, as another way of ensuring greater accountability towards community members. This issue is revisited in the recommendations section below.

Participatory elements of the IDP committee system

The previous section explained the different degrees of representation and community participation in decision making for the IDP committee systems. The least representative system, in a camp in Afgoye, showed no elements of community participation in the system of food distribution. As the committee was largely composed of IDPs who were there before the current IDP crisis, it cannot be said to represent the different social, ethnic or political groups within the IDP population.[6] All committee members were men. IDPs were not only

[6] It should be noted that in one sense, these IDP committees are "representative" of sub-clans, since people of the "wrong" sub-clan are not welcome in the camps. However, the leaders aren't representative of the people in the camps in the sense of having been selected by them.

unaware of how the committee was elected, or who their representative was, but no one was aware of their entitlements.

No formal complaints mechanism existed in any of the camps visited, and no post-distribution monitoring took place, leaving the system wide open to abuse, and as mentioned previously the research team found evidence of widespread diversion in one of the Afgoye camps. Some people interviewed in the camp suggested that WFP should distribute food aid directly, or that they should have ration cards which indicate their food aid entitlements as provided in some of the other Afgoye camps. In addition to the entitlement information, SAACID reported that they also a phone number to call in case there are any complaints. In one of the Afgoye camps, an informal complaints mechanism existed, where IDPs could complain to the land-owner who could hold the IDP committee to account. This is described in more detail in Box 3 below.

Box 3. An informal complaints/accountability mechanism in an IDP camp

In one of the main IDP camps at Afgoye, the owner of the land on which IDPs have camped has taken an interest in the condition of the IDPs. In private business in health care, the land owner has intervened several times to make the system of providing assistance to the IDPs more accountable. When it appeared that the number of IDPs was being inflated, the land owner sent private security guards to check the tukuls of IDPs in the middle of the night, and found some 600 tukuls unoccupied and with no signs of occupancy – implying that someone had hastily constructed the half-finished dwellings only to report an increased number of IDPs. Likewise, monitoring the food that flowed through the warehouses of the camp, and having a rough idea of the numbers of people in the camp, the landowner had a reasonable idea of how much food each IDP household should be receiving. When some individuals came to the land owner to complain about how little food they had received, the land owner forced the "camp committee" to compensate those households for what appeared to be the deficit between the amount they should have received (based on the amount of food and the number of IDPs – not based on WFP entitlements which presume 2100 Kcal / person/ day). Some 100 households were reported to have made this complaint, but the committee reported 8,800 households in the camp. So only about 1% of the recipient households realized the food they received was less than it should have been – or at least only 1% were willing to take the risk of complaining.

The case study in Box 3 implies that for complaints mechanisms to work, the institution or individual serving as the means for dealing with grievances has to have an independent power base, and has to have some independent concern for the welfare of the IDPs. This suggests that the camp committees cannot be that mechanism. It may be difficult to find this combination in other situations, but there may be other possibilities. The point is that in the Somalia context there is a high premium on flexibility and adaptability in recognizing what works in a given situation.

IDP camp committees seen by the research team are quite variable in the extent to which they meet any criteria for participation. All are in position to play a "gate keeping" function that could easily turn corrupt. Some committees appeared to be more honest and inclusive

than others, but there are few controls: There is much less assessment of the condition of the IDPS than there is of rural food insecurity, and no examples found of IDP involvement in assessment. While the UNHCR project to track IDP movement has improved information, at the level of individual camps, there is no head count to confirm how many people there are in the camp, and no mechanism for counting people coming in or leaving. The committee registers people and puts people into ten-house groups. Within the ten-house groups, where people know each other, there appears to be some accountability. But there is little accountability "upwards" from that group, or "downwards" to it. The Cooperating Partner is supposed to monitor the distribution, but there is no post-distribution monitoring. There are too few WFP staff to do any monitoring. IDPs are largely not aware of their entitlements and with a few exceptions, there is no complaints mechanism. The partner reports back to WFP on the distribution, but that is the extent of the reporting. As a result, there are clear incentives to camp committees not to be transparent – with beneficiaries, with WFP, with local partners or local authorities.

At two of the camps visited, the process of distribution was quite opaque, and the committee was not accountable to anyone - not to WFP, not to the CP, and not to the IDPs in the camp. The committee system in one of the Jowhar camps appeared to be a more accountable system, but the camp was much smaller than in Afgoye or Merka. Key participatory elements noted were that the committee consisted of both women and men; the committee was selected by respected members of the community and everyone knew the committee members; and there was a follow up committee which was separate from the committee that registers people, and the committee that distributed the food.

However, even in the Jowhar camp, where all IDPs interviewed appeared to be happy with the committee and appreciated the role they played in the camp, IDPs still preferred the distribution that was done by ICRC. ICRC simply counted all the huts and distributed food aid directly to households. Such an approach may not be possible in the larger Afgoye camps, especially with the limited number of WFP staff for this area of operation.

Effectiveness and impact of participatory elements of targeting

In most cases, the "community-based" elements of the targeting and distribution process were outside the specified WFP procedures. Where the community re-allocated food according to its own criteria, this might be considered "community based targeting" and it might actually *be* a legitimate form of community based targeting depending on the legitimacy of the village (or camp) leadership.

The introduction of basic participatory measures, such as informing people of their entitlements, making sure there is a complaints mechanism and some form of monitoring, would make the current system more accountable and less subject to abuse. Some lessons can be learnt on participatory measures include:

1. Redistribution is a fact of life for food assistance in Somalia. The question is whether the practice can be better managed and made to conform to some kind of community understanding about who should receive assistance (which tends to be everyone, though many people are still left out). So the question is whether the process of redistribution and

sharing can be made more participatory. This is taken up in the recommendations section. Where there are some checks and balances built into the system – for example where traditional leadership and the *Gudi* are separate – there is likely to be some measure of control and somewhere where people can go if they have complaints. Representation of marginalized groups (whether minority clans or IDPs) must be carefully assessed, however, as these might not be represented on village committees or may be under-represented.

1. In rural communities where there is no separate system of traditional leadership and *Gudi* the system is less likely to be accountable (depending on how they were selected), and additional measures must be introduced, such as informing more than one community institution of the community's food allocation and the purpose of food distribution, and closer monitoring particularly in relation to inclusion of marginalized groups in decision making.

2. Ideally, all stakeholders are involved at the stage of community mobilization. This should involve not only traditional leaders and the *Gudi*, but also religious leaders, women's groups, IDPs (if present), militia, businessmen, etc. If everyone is aware of how much food aid is provided for the village, and agrees on targeting criteria, a measure of social control is introduced and the scope for manipulation and diversion is reduced. The main constraint in doing this is that it requires time. On the one hand, such a participatory approach increases security risks to agency staff because of the time needed on the ground, but on the other hand it reduces security risks associated with the distribution itself. These risks must be carefully balanced.

3. People can be informed of their entitlements - either specifically of their individual entitlements or of the general community entitlement. This can be done through registration and providing ration cards which indicate the food entitlement per card. Even if the food aid is later re-distributed, this will minimize the risk of diversion. Alternatively, as many community representatives as possible can be informed of the total allocation for the village.

4. Some complaints and internal monitoring mechanisms were possible, even within the camps, and in some cases these did improve accountability in this way. Examples seen or heard about included putting phone numbers to call in case of complaints on the ration cards; by setting up a separate monitoring committee from within the camp; or relying on respected individuals who have some independent power. Similarly, in some rural communities the Sheikh appears to play this role as final arbiter in case of disputes or complaints.

5. The shorter the chain from WFP to beneficiary, the more possibilities there are for making the system accountable. Long chains make the system less transparent and give more potential for manipulation. In the Afgoye camp, the chain had four or five different individuals or organizations controlling food aid between WFP and the final recipient or consumer. This makes for many opportunities for diversion.

Section 4 – Conclusions and Recommendations

This study had four major objectives, the first three of which apply to individual country case studies (see Annex 1). The conclusions are presented in reference to the first three objectives.

Objective 1

Identify and describe success and failure factors associated with current WFP targeting and distribution approaches in complex emergencies, and what role community dynamics and levels of participation play in these approaches.

1. Since the start of the first PRRO in 1999, WFP has tried to target its food assistance to the most food insecure and malnourished population groups and households. Broadly speaking, the most recent PRRO attempts to target general food rations at three specific population groups; the rural food insecure, IDPs, and families of malnourished children. This is done by working with a large number of cooperating partners, some international and many national NGOs. Targeting is done at geographical level and is nominally attempted within rural communities.

2. Numerous other constraints hamper effective targeting, particularly insecurity, power imbalances within and between communities, limited access, piracy and looting. WFP has developed methods for coping with insecurity, including the requirement for transporters to post a bond, and focusing on making distributions safer. In part because of the insecurity, there is a shortage of skilled staff and reliable partners, which hampers operations, and in some cases has led to problems with partners having close links with local militias. Finally, because of insecurity, there is only a very limited network of Extended Distribution Points in Somalia, making coordination of long-distance transport with local distribution a necessity.

3. The potential for exclusion error at the local level depends on whether and how minority or marginalized groups are included in decision making on how to distribute available resources. This in turn depends in part on the proportion of marginalized groups within the targeted community and the power they have. Marginalized clans which are in the minority may be less likely to be included in distributions. In other areas, while in the majority, the traditional leaders or chairman of the committee may belong to other more powerful clans, thus reducing the role of marginalized groups in decision making. The representation of marginalized groups in local governance mechanisms must be carefully considered if the targeting and distribution of food aid is done by such local structures.

4. Targeting practices have a number of implications for protection in several areas. First, the potential for excluding marginalized clans or other groups is a worry, because the focus of FSAU's assessments tends to be on economic aspects of food insecurity, and is less focused on incorporating the more social and political elements of vulnerability. While issues of political vulnerability and power relations are difficult for Somali FSAU monitors to report on, these issues are important to consider in relation to the potential risks of targeting one clan over another and of the exclusion or exploitation of marginalized groups. Second, targeting within a community may create conflict if some people are left out – the field team witnessed numerous examples of fighting over the haphazard nature of redistribution. Third, targeting one community and not its neighbor, particularly when their status seems the same to the

excluded village, can lead to conflict and raiding. Finally, poor information at the local level can lead to violence and looting at distribution sites.

5. At another level, not providing adequate rations for IDPs sometimes forces people into dangerous coping strategies – IDPs in Afgoye having to return to Mogadishu to find casual labor or other means of earning income; or IDPs in rural areas being attacked by local residents for encroaching on natural resources as a means of coping. This is important to stress, because from a "food security" point of view, labor and natural resource strategies are usually considered acceptable forms of coping; in IDP situations they can be dangerous, and are the result of either not being targeted, or receiving inadequate rations.

6. The lack of population figures constrains targeting throughout the system, but is of particular concern where there is large-scale movement of IDPs. No one really knew the actual number of IDPs in camps, as no system of taking headcounts existed. While IDP committees in theory sound similar to relief committee, in practice these were usually not representative of the IDP population, and were not elected by them. Few knew their representatives on the committee. Most of the exclusion in IDP camps appeared to be of new arrivals, but in the absence of any monitoring this was difficult to confirm.

7. There was little or no post distribution monitoring, whether in rural villages or IDP camps. At most the cooperating partner would visit the village or camp after the distribution to get feedback from the committee, but no monitoring reports were found. This means there are fewer checks and balances on the system of targeting and distribution, leaving it open to abuse. Various allegations were made to the research team by key informants about "gate keepers" diverting food aid. The team saw some evidence of the diversion of food aid by IDP committees. Similarly, in other situations, the village committee, and militia would also often take a share of the food aid delivered to the village. WFP is aware of these issues, but given security conditions in Somalia, this is extremely difficult to address.

8. There were a number of reports of links between the elders, local administration, the cooperating partner, businessmen and militia. Cooperating partners have to be from the same clan as the main clan in the area in which they are operating, which also raises issues of the impartiality of the response, particularly vis a vis IDPs or minority groups.

Objective 2

Identify and analyze the linkage between assessment findings, specific programming objectives, targeting criteria and WFP's current targeting approaches in complex emergencies—with due consideration of the process and elements of CBTD—and how these can be strengthened.

1. The system of geographical targeting of the rural food insecure works reasonably well as generally the most food insecure districts and livelihood groups are identified by FAO's Food Security Assessment Unit. However, until recently IDPs and urban populations were not included in this information system and these are generally considered to be amongst those most vulnerable to food insecurity. Even for the targeting of rural food insecure populations, there are weaknesses in the information system: the baselines used to determine the proportion of the population in need is often out of date, and there are no

accurate population figures. More importantly, however, there appears to be no clear, evidence-based criteria for the selection of villages within particular Districts or livelihood groups, or for the determination of the beneficiary numbers by and the allocation of the number of households in each village. This is likely to lead to both inclusion and exclusion errors.

2. At the village level, food aid is in theory targeted at the most vulnerable. However, in the general ration distribution, food aid is shared amongst a much larger group of beneficiaries than those planned by WFP. The sharing is sometimes organized by the village committee (or Gudi) and traditional elders, or in other cases can be quite a haphazard process. The Gudi and traditional elders know who the most vulnerable are within the community, as they continue to provide assistance to the most vulnerable through traditional "social safety net" systems such as qaraan, but everyone is considered entitled to an external resource such as food aid. The reasons given for the sharing of food aid were twofold: first, this is the commonly-accepted Somali tradition for sharing food, and second, it helps to maintain security, as excluding some households could lead to violence. On the other hand, distribution to almost everyone in the community almost certainly means that there will be some inclusion error and dilution of impact from WFP's point of view.

3. The findings of this research therefore confirm the findings of Narbeth's research in 2000 (Narbeth 2001) on beneficiary participation in targeting emergency food aid. He also found that food aid was shared amongst all community members (sometimes at some distance from the actual village) for similar reasons. He concluded that targeting on the basis of externally determined socio-economic criteria was not possible, and recommended to work with the traditional leadership system as an effective system for ensuring that resources are distributed according to local perceptions of vulnerability. It should be noted, however, that Narbeth's work was done in rural populations in Bay and Bakool region, and not in an acute displacement crisis like the current crisis around Mogadishu.

4. Targeting general rations to families of malnourished children was the only way in which food aid was actually targeted at certain families within communities. Although this ration was usually also shared, the decision to share was left up to the families who received the food ration rather than being organized by the Gudi. However, there are a number of weaknesses in this system particularly if not combined with other forms of targeting or food distribution that combine to create other protection worries. For example, vulnerable households without children under five would be excluded. Furthermore, food insecurity is only one underlying cause of malnutrition and food aid alone will not address the problem of malnutrition. Most worryingly, some concerns were expressed regarding the incentives created by this system of targeting.

5. The perception of vulnerability is quite different between outside humanitarian agencies, and the view expressed by communities interviewed. And the perspectives of communities and outside agencies are very different on the question of who food aid is intended for. Virtually without exception, the perception is that food aid is for everyone. This means that the impact of general food distribution on food security and nutrition is likely to be lower than outside agencies plan, given the low proportion of the population targeted in most cases and widespread sharing. The impact of sharing itself is to prevent conflict and therefore from the perspective of local leaders has important protection

objectives. Given the dearth of PDM data, it is not possible to draw quantitatively backed conclusions about impact.

"Enabling" and "constraining" factors to participatory targeting

9. None of the targeting mechanisms seen by the research team could be described as "classic" community-based targeting using relief committees. The individual activities to apply the principles of CBTD also rarely formed part of either WFP's or other agencies' formal method.

10. With current WFP staff capacity, cooperating partner capacity, and prevailing security concerns, it probably isn't possible to do this "classic" community based targeting approach, and there is little evidence from the field work to suggest that such an approach would be feasible. However, some examples of participatory elements were found within the current targeting approaches and the lessons from this can be built on to develop more accountable systems. Several tentative conclusions can be offered:

11. Some measure of checks and balances in rural communities already exist where the traditional leaders are separate from the *Gudi* or village committee. These can be built upon in other ways, and can build in an improved accountability mechanism. The former could challenge decisions made by the *Gudi*. The village Sheikh or religious leader also plays an important role in case of disputes over resource allocation, including food aid. It is therefore important to know the types of traditional governance systems, and how they interact, before determining whether it is appropriate to target assistance through local governance structures. External agencies (WFP and especially CPs) can begin to encourage these kinds of checks and balances through dialogue with village leadership. Less chance of this exists in most IDP camps visited by the field team, but it could be explored.

12. Other measures for participation and accountability can also be introduced into the targeting system by better information sharing. Methods either seen by or reported to the field team include: informing all stakeholders of the purpose of the food aid; who it is for; the quantity to be delivered etc. Sometimes this is done through the *Gudi* if it judged to be reasonably accountable to the community; sometimes it could be done directly to the community in a public place; sometimes it is done through information provided on ration cards. However, in a context where it is a foregone conclusion that food is either shared or redistributed by the *Gudi,* there are limits on the extent to which information on ration cards reaches the entire population. Hence, informing the community or camp of the total allocation to that particular location is also necessary. The point is that for improved accountability in a situation where food is going to be shared or redistributed, the recipient community has to have the information about how much is available *to the entire recipient community or group,* not just to the individuals who are targeted by WFP.

13. A number of complaints or feedback mechanisms are also possible, even in the most constrained environments. Respected individuals, such as the Sheikh (or in the case described in Box 3, another powerful individual in the community) can form a powerful accountability mechanism by providing a channel for complaints and action. Others mentioned putting a phone number for the CP on ration cards, so that recipients can call in case of complaints. Another option was to have a monitoring or follow up committee in the camp, which was separate from the registration or distribution committee.

14. As will be noted, however, all of these observations are based on the assumption that external humanitarian agencies (WFP and others) can find a way to work with the perception that food aid is for everyone, and accept that sharing and redistribution are an inevitable outcome of food aid delivery in Somalia. The practice of sharing is formally accepted by WFP policy, and there is a general knowledge and acceptance at the senior management level in WFP Somalia that the practice of sharing and redistribution is pervasive and accepted by recipient communities.

15. The clan system can be both a constraint and an enabling factor. Within the lowest level of the clan system in a given location (sub-clan, etc.) the clan system is inclusive and can be counted upon to ensure inclusivity. Between clans, unequally shared resources can lead to conflict. It goes without saying that understanding the clan context is critical in Somalia.

Objective 3

Identify a range of pragmatic options for the implementation of participatory targeting and distribution approaches in complex emergencies that achieve programming objectives and are consistent with WFP targeting policy.

These observations lead to some recommendations about how targeting in general, and the participatory aspects of targeting in particular, can be improved.

Recommendations

With the current lack of controls within the targeting and distribution system, and the obvious potential for abuse, WFP is putting its credibility at stake. The introduction of some participatory measures to ensure transparency and accountability is essential if WFP is to gain the trust of the communities it aims to serve. This case study has shown that there is some potential for doing this. Some specific recommendations include:

1. It is essential that the system of geographical targeting is improved by including urban and IDP populations in the FSAU information system, and by developing more transparent means of selecting villages within geographical areas for receipt of food assistance. Some of this can be done with greater involvement of cooperating partners, as they currently have little if any role in this part of the targeting process.

2. Recognize that food aid will not be targeted according to externally determined socio-economic criteria. If it is recognized that food aid is shared amongst almost the entire community, the allocation must be sufficient to have a nutritional or food security impact. This also has implications for the way in which assessments are done and findings are analyzed in particular in terms of the proportion of the population facing a food deficit and to be targeted with food aid. Alternatively, targeting within communities may be possible if this is agreed by all stakeholders, but this will need much longer time spent with communities and greater capacity of WFP and Cooperating Partners.

3. Targeting general rations to families of malnourished children is one of the few ways that food aid can be targeted within communities, but this process should be combined with (not replace) other forms of general ration targeting, and WFP should monitor closely for other potential negative impacts.

4. Where there is reasonable accountability between community leaders and community members (as described above), working with these leaders is probably the best way to improve accountability and participation of the community in targeting, but it is necessary to know about representation of marginalized groups and work to ensure that the most vulnerable groups are included.

5. In all cases, but particularly where there is little accountability between leaders and community members (as in working with camps controlled by gatekeepers) there should be a focus on other forms of improving accountability and involving recipient groups in these mechanisms. These include making information publicly available, inventing or strengthening complaints mechanisms, and independent monitoring. It should be noted that this has implications for WFP staffing, and for Cooperating Partner capacity.

6. The situation in Somalia for the foreseeable future is fraught with danger and anyone trying to bring about changes in the targeting and distribution system may well risk their life. Therefore the recommendation is to bring about changes gradually and transparently, to make the system more accountable.

7. General recommendations also include continuously trying to improve the analysis of the context (in particular in relation to social and political vulnerability); continuously trying to identify and involve all stakeholders; continuously trying to improve the transparency and accountability of procedures including community entitlements and feedback mechanisms, and working with community perceptions on vulnerability. To be able to do these things well will require that WFP and its partners ensure adequate staff time and capacity.

Annexes

1. Research Objectives

The Somalia study is one case in a broader research project entitled "Targeting in Complex Emergencies." The objectives of this research are to:

1. Identify and describe success and failure factors associated with current WFP targeting and distribution approaches in complex emergencies, and what role community dynamics and levels of participation play in these approaches.

2. Identify and analyze the linkage between assessment findings, specific programming objectives, targeting criteria and WFP's current targeting approaches in complex emergencies—with due consideration of the process and elements of CBTD—and how these can be strengthened.

3. Identify a range of pragmatic options for the implementation of participatory targeting and distribution approaches in complex emergencies that achieve programming objectives and are consistent with WFP targeting policy.

4. Propose a framework for determining the suitability, feasibility and effectiveness of implementing participatory targeting methodologies across a range of complex emergency contexts and WFP programming interventions.

2. Research questions

The research questions of the study include:

1. How is targeting currently done in the context of complex emergency?

2. What role can CBTD play in ensuring that food assistance reaches those most in need of assistance in complex emergencies:

3. Can CBTD contribute to improved representation of poor, marginalized or excluded groups in a complex emergency?

4. How can a community-based approach to targeting in complex emergencies enhance the potential for protection, and conversely, how does it exacerbate the potential for conflict or fuel existing tensions and conflict?

5. What are the main lessons for general program guidance on the CBTD process in complex emergency situations, including how to match elements of CBTD to specific conditions on the ground?

3. Research Methodology

The research involved a combination of secondary and primary data collection following a protocol established for all the case studies in this project (Feinstein International Center 2007a).

The Research Team

The Somalia case study research team consisted of one Tufts researchers and one consultant. Upon arrival in Nairobi and in-country in Somalia, the Tufts team was joined by several others from the WFP Somalia office for various parts of the study, and for the full study by two senior staff. Translators were provided by WFP, as well as security.

Literature review and preparatory work

Part of the secondary data collection and analysis was carried out before arrival in country by the Tufts research team. Documentation was gathered on the nature and political economy of conflict in Somalia, the history of targeting issues, and food aid modalities. Country-specific secondary data for Somalia was requested from WFP in advance. Any reports actually used are listed in the Reference section. Also, in preparation for the study, WFP Country Office staff were consulted on the identification of organizations influencing or engaged in, or supporting, targeting of food assistance (or other) for interview. WFP Somalia staff were also consulted on the selection of study sites to visit according to the criteria in the study protocol in order to reflect as wide a variety as possible of different contexts. This process was begun two months prior to the study and reviewed upon arrival.

Data collection in country

An introductory meeting was held at the start of the visit. The study aims, the independent nature of the researchers and the voluntary and anonymous nature of the participation were communicated directly by the researchers with support from WFP staff allowing time for clarification questions from the community. Interviews were held with 36 key informants. These interviews relied on a semi-structured protocol, with the same initial questions for respondents, but with ample latitude for exploring in depth, issues arising in the course of the discussion. The key informants included WFP staff, local officials, partner and non-partner NGO officials, donors, other humanitarian actors, businessmen and traditional authorities. The groups interviewed included:

WFP Somalia country office staff

- Introductory meeting country office
- Meeting with Senior Management, VAM, Program, Security, Section coordinators
- Meetings with Sub-offices in Somalia

Interviews with Local Authorities

- District commissioners in two of four main locations
- Village authority of *Gudi*
- Camp committees in the case of IDP camps

Interviews with WFP Partners

- World Vision
- SAACID
- IDIL
- New Ways
- SAREDO
- Norwegian Church Aid

Interviews with Non-WFP Partners

- CARE
- Action Contre la Faim
- ICRC
- Oxfam
- Danish Refugee Council

Interviews with UN Agencies

- FAO (FSAU)
- UNICEF
- OCHA
- UNHCR

Interviews with Donors

- DFID

Focus Groups

Focus group discussions were held with 29 community groups comprised of traditional leaders, women, men and mixed men's and women's groups. The focus groups were organized to attempt to interview recipients and non-recipients separately, but given the amount of sharing of assistance, this was sometimes not possible. All interviews were semi-structured, lasting between one half hour to two hours, and involved as few as five people to as many as twenty or thirty people. Interviews were held in open spaces – usually under the shade of a tree since most interviews were conducted during the middle of the day due to transport and security constraints – and it was often impossible to restrict inclusion in these discussions.

In most cases, field visits had to be organized the same day as arrival of the research team. Security constraints and the high cost of traveling to outlying locations made it prohibitively expensive to send a special mission to inform communities about the field research.

Voluntary, informed consent for carrying out the research was obtained verbally during the introductory plenary meeting as laid out in the study protocol, and during each interview or focus group discussion. Great care was taken to ensure those present understood participation in the study would not affect their present entitlement to food assistance from WFP.

Participatory appraisal techniques were used to collect some of the data in the interview guides. The following main techniques were used in the communities to complement the semi-structured interview guide, including proportional piling, transect walks, and group as well as individual interviews. Examples of these are found in the narrative report.

Throughout the field study, security concerns constituted a constraint. In the end, security restrictions prevented the team from visiting one of the field sites altogether (Bu'alle), and severely constrained the amount of contact time with communities, and the number of communities the team was able to visit, at another site (Jowhar).

Limitations to the study

Several difficulties were encountered with the field research, which serve to limit the extent to which the findings of this case study can be presented as verified by adequate triangulation, or can be broadly generalized. These are outlined below. But it should be emphasized that the findings of the study should be accepted as tentative findings, because of the constraints encountered.

6. Somalia is a context that is awash in rumors. It was often hard to tell, particularly when interviewing key informants in Nairobi, whether the team was hearing rumors that had been passed around long enough to be accepted as the truth, or the actual experience of the informant. It was not uncommon, particularly in Nairobi, to be told one thing by a member of staff of an agency (including WFP), and then be told something completely different by another member of staff of the same agency. Unless such divergent information could be reconciled, it had to be dropped.

7. It should be noted however, that this phenomenon occurred less frequently in the field, and within the field team differences in view were openly discussed and debated. The field team didn't agree on the interpretation of all information, but differences were open and discussed.

8. Humanitarian agencies working in Somalia – particularly the Nairobi-based staff – rarely had anything good to say about any *other* agency. The research team was working under the auspices of WFP – the frequently-maligned behemoth of the humanitarian community. Only one or two other agencies interviewed offered any understanding of the constraints under which WFP operates – most were quick to criticize and pass on rumors about incompetence or corruption. WFP staff likewise were quick to criticize partners and non-partners alike. So for example, WFP staff are quick to criticize CARE; CARE staff are equally quick to criticize WFP. Implementing partners all suggest that they know how to target and manage distributions, but suggest that none of the other implementing partners know what they are doing. Etc. This implies a fairly low level of trust among the agencies, and casts some doubt on some of the

information that the field team gathered because information almost always tended to reflect well on the respondent or the respondent's agency, and reflected poorly on other actors. The report reflects when information is based on agency interviews only.

9. The team member from Rome who is responsible for the fifth study objective (the cost of targeting) was unable to join the team. He handed responsibility for that part of the study over to a colleague who at the last minute was also not able to join the team. The VAM officer in Nairobi collected some of the information requested, but information on this objective is not integrated into this report.

10. The selection of sites for the team to visit was constrained by security and logistical considerations. One intended field site (Bu'alle) had to be completely dropped because of a kidnapping of international staff in the area the week prior to the planned visit of the field team. In another site (Jowhar) the brief entry and exit occupation of the town by ICU forces, and departure of TFG, leaving the town under no-one's control, kept the field team confined to the UNICEF compound for a day, and then forced their evacuation. Actual villages to be visited were usually determined by WFP field staff, based on proximity to the sub or field office and security considerations. In Jowhar, villages were selected together with the cooperating partner. The distance that the research team could walk within a particular location, was also limited for security reasons.

11. It often took quite some amount of discussion with community groups before they became convinced that the visit of the research team had nothing to do with an assessment and would not result in changes to food aid allocations. This was particularly because perhaps accentuated because the research team was accompanied by WFP staff. This no doubt colored the focus group discussions – particularly the first part of them. Data were treated accordingly.

12. As noted above, it was often impossible to restrict group size or participation to the originally intended respondents.

13. The field teams were accompanied by armed guards at all times, who were always nearby when interviews took place. This may have influenced what was said in interviews.

Selection of study sites

The selection was done to include as wide a variety of communities as possible including:

- Different kinds of aid targeting, in particular relief modalities and community based methods;
- Different "community" types, different clans, different livelihood groups, different kinds of displaced groups, and food insecurity caused by different shocks;
- Different forms of leadership, governance and targeting experience (such as traditional authorities and camp committees)

All of these, however, were subject to severe constraints in terms of security and access

Table 5 on following page provides a summary of sites and respondents interviewed in each.

Table 5. Targeting in Complex Emergencies—Somalia Study Overview								
Communities Visited by Research Team			**Interviews with Target Groups**					
Location	**Livelihood Groups**	**Food Aid Modality**	**District Authorities**	**Elders / *Gudi***	**Committee**	**Beneficiaries**	**Non - beneficiaries**	**Cooperating Partner (Name)**
Wajid								
Gobato	Agro-pastoral	GFD	X	X		X	X	X- IDIL
Alemow	Agro-pastoral	GFD	X	X		X	X	X- IDIL
Eyle Community and IDPs	Hunter Urban	SFP	X		X		X	X-World Vision
Afgoye								
Xawa Abdi Camp	IDPs	GFD			X	X	X	X- CED
Merka								
Golweyn	Riverine	GFD		X		X	X	X-New Ways
Shalambod IDP Camp	IDPs	GFD			X	X	X	X-New Ways
Bulo Barow	Riverine	GFD		X		X	X	X-New Ways
El Adow	Coastal	GFD		X		X	NA	X -SAREDO
Jowhar								
Bula Askari	Agro-pastoral/ IDP	GFD	X	X		X		X-SAACID
Kalegoya	IDP	GFD	X		X	X	X	X-SAACID

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