The GRAD Push-Pull Model for Food Security

CARE Ethiopia and our parnters have developed a push-pull model for food security programming. The model suggests implementing interventions that empower individuals and groups to build capacity, as well as engage other ecosystem actors outside of a program's target population. Based on experience in Ethiopia, this can result in a program that enables individuals and households to transition out of food insecurity into food secure conditions. Push strategies can be thought of as agency building efforts, while pull strategies include efforts to affect structural and relationship barriers. These push and pull interventions are coupled with cross-cutting or resilience strategies that are present at every level of the program. The push-pull approach allows for the sequencing of interventions to meet the constraints and opportunities that face target households and help them to move progressively out of food insecurity.

Rationale for Using Causal Models

The rationale behind using a causal model is to articulate the goal and purpose of a planned intervention and begin to visualize the linkages between project interventions and the effects that those interventions are expected to have. Proposed interventions, effects of intervention, and impacts of intervention may have vertical, horizontal or diagonal relationships, and a causal model allows for these non-linear relationships to be visualized. Assumptions are made about how the linkage between interventions work and will play out in practice. The model allows for the illustration of these assumptions. Causal models therefore help ensure that teams and stakeholders better understand each other, which is crucial for successful joint action.

The initial capacity built by implementing push and pull strategies enables groups to form and begin the process of saving or engaging in agricultural trainings. At the same time, relationships are built with market actors, government agencies and microfinance institutions. These relationships are important to cultivate early in order to work collaboratively on ways to improve services and strengthen linkages with food insecure households. This strategy ultimately allows CARE and our partners to exit from relationships between formerly food insecure households and other market and ecosystem actors, while knowing that they will continue to function and grow on their own.

Advice from the Experts

- ✓ This model is very helpful for people visualize the _interaction of different actors_ and how different _strategies and outcomes fit together_. However, if this is used as a stand-alone model there is the danger of neglecting the detailed ways of operationalizing and implementing the entire model.
- ✓ It is important to marry the changes and related data with what the program indicators for the causal model are at every level. Proper tracking along each level provides the room for _reflective learning_ on what could be done better and _check the assumptions_ that were made at the design.
- ✓ The _timeline movement_ from one level on the **push** side does not necessarily meet or is not exactly in synch with the **pull** side. Risks and assumptions around the movement from one level to another need to be well defined and managed. It is often easier to move faster on the **push** side than on the **pull** side, but ultimately this can cause

An Example of the Push-Pull Model for Food Security from Ethiopia

Graduation with Resilience to Achieve Sustainable Development (GRAD) Program

GRAD is a sustainable food security initiative that delivers an integrated package of interventions to support chronically food insecure households in graduating off of the national productive safety net program (PSNP). The goal of GRAD is to contribute to sustained food security for chronically food insecure households in rural Ethiopia. The strategic objective is to graduate at least 50,000 chronically food insecure households from PSNP support in 16 targeted *woredas* and increase each household's income by at least $365 per year. The diagram below illustrates GRAD's version of the push-pull model.

GRAD's Push-Pull Causal Model

Pull Strategies: Improve access to mainstream services, output markets, multi-stakeholder platform, private sector engagement, market information, post harvest technologies,

Asset Accumulation

Food Secure
FSP Graduation

Target beneficiaries are linked to main stream business, credit and other services; **Private sector engagement** with beneficiaries increases; **Enabling environment** is created

Food Sufficiency
PSNP Graduation

Targeted HHs' income increases, assets are accumulated and sources of income are diversified; **Family nutritional** status improves

Asset Stabilization

Chronically Food Insecure

Skills and productivity of farmers improves; **Women 's participation, decision** role, dignity and contribution improves

Ultra Poor

Solidarity improves, HH savings increase **Aspirations**, confidence, and motivation improves

Resiliency Strategies

Gender Equity I Climate Change Adaptation I Nutrition

Aspirations and Enablers for Graduation

Push Strategies: Strengthening producer groups, improve their skills and access to inputs (credit, technology, assets), extension services

PSNP Transfers (Consumption Support)