

# Forest Landscape Restoration Program - Amhara

ETH-21/0017  
2022-2025



## 2022 Progress/Technical Report

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May-December 2022

NFG/April 2023

## Table of Contents

<b>List of abbreviations</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>1. Introduction</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>2. Executive summary</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>3. Progress of the activities during 2022</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>3.1 Management, Administrative and Organizational issues</b>	<b>8</b>
• NFG agreement with the Royal Norwegian Embassy (RNE)	<b>8</b>
• NFG re-registration procedure at the Agency for Civil Society Organizations in Ethiopia (ACSO)	<b>8</b>
• Follow up measures	<b>8</b>
• NFG agreement with the Bureau of Finance (BoF)	<b>8</b>
• Launching and Lessons Learned Workshop	<b>08</b>
• Communication and cooperation with the local partners and stakeholders	<b>09</b>
• Experience sharing working session	<b>11</b>
• Annual Meeting with the Royal Norwegian Embassy in Addis Ababa (RNE)	<b>12</b>
• FLR Program Steering Committee (SC)	<b>12</b>
• FLR Program Local Staff	<b>13</b>
<b>3.2 Activities correlated with the program Work Packages (WP)</b>	<b>15</b>
• WP-1: Identification, planning and establishment of forest buffer zones and green corridors.	<b>15</b>
• WP-2: Participatory Exclosure Management (PEMP) in priorly established Exclosure areas.	<b>17</b>
• WP-3: Secure customary user rights.	<b>19</b>
• WP-4: Landscape restoration at village level.	<b>22</b>
• WP-5: Training and capacity building.	<b>27</b>
• WP-6: Communication and sharing of information.	<b>27</b>
<b>3.3 Achieved activities correlated to the Results Framework (RFW)</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>4. Conclusion</b>	<b>33</b>

## List of Abbreviations

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<b>AARI</b>	<b>Amhara Agriculture Research Institute</b>
<b>ADSWE</b>	<b>Amhara Design and Supervision Work Enterprise</b>
<b>ANR</b>	<b>Assisted Natural Regeneration</b>
<b>AWA</b>	<b>Amhara Women Association</b>
<b>BoA</b>	<b>Bureau of Agriculture</b>
<b>BoF</b>	<b>Bureau of Finance</b>
<b>BoL</b>	<b>Bureau of Land</b>
<b>ACSO</b>	<b>Agency for Civil Society Organizations</b>
<b>CAV</b>	<b>Climate Adapted Villages</b>
<b>CBOs</b>	<b>Community-Based Organizations</b>
<b>CSEE</b>	<b>Climate Smart Economic Empowerment</b>
<b>DAs</b>	<b>Development Agents</b>
<b>DF</b>	<b>Development Fund</b>
<b>EFA</b>	<b>Environment and Forest Authority</b>
<b>EFD</b>	<b>Environment and Forest Development</b>
<b>FBCA</b>	<b>Faith Based Climate Action</b>
<b>FLR</b>	<b>Forest Landscape Restoration</b>
<b>FLR Program</b>	<b>Forest Landscape Restoration Program</b>
<b>FTC</b>	<b>Farmer Training Centre</b>
<b>GV</b>	<b>Green Village</b>
<b>LUP</b>	<b>Land Use Plan</b>
<b>MFA</b>	<b>Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Norway)</b>
<b>MoU</b>	<b>Memorandum of Understanding</b>
<b>NCA</b>	<b>Norwegian Church Aid</b>
<b>NICFI</b>	<b>Norway's International Climate and Forest Initiative</b>
<b>Norad</b>	<b>Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation</b>
<b>OoA</b>	<b>Office of Agriculture</b>
<b>ORDA</b>	<b>Organization for Rehabilitation and Development in Amhara</b>
<b>PEMP</b>	<b>Participatory Exclosure Management Plan</b>
<b>PFM</b>	<b>Participatory Forest Management</b>
<b>RFW</b>	<b>Result Framework</b>
<b>RIP</b>	<b>REDD+ Investment Program</b>
<b>RNE</b>	<b>Royal Norwegian Embassy</b>
<b>SC</b>	<b>Steering Committee</b>
<b>SLMP</b>	<b>Sustainable Land Management Program</b>
<b>WATVET</b>	<b>Woreta Agricultural Technical Vocational Education and Training</b>
<b>WP</b>	<b>Work Packages</b>

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## 1. Introduction

The main objective of Forest Landscape Restoration Program-Phase 2 (FLR Program-Phase 2) is to achieve restoration and more sustainable and productive use of targeted forest landscapes in Amhara region by adopting and implementing a landscape-approach, considering the degraded areas from a multifunctional perspective and combining natural resource management with environmental and social well-being.

The FLR Program Phase 2 is developed to continue promoting the results achieved during the phase 1 and also to insure tangible impact and sustainability of the FLR activities. In this perspective, the following complementary Work Packages (WP) will be implemented in an integrated manner, i.e.:

- WP-1: Identification, planning and establishment of forest buffer zones and green corridors.
- WP-2: Participatory Exclosure Management in priorly established Exclosure areas.
- WP-3: Secure customary user rights.
- WP-4: Landscape restoration at village level.
- WP-5: Training and capacity building.
- WP-6: Communication and sharing of information.

The duration of the program is 3 years, i.e.: May 2022-April 2025. However, due to the delay of the disbursement of funding, the program has basically started four months later (in August 2022). This has implications for the program's achievement of the first year (2022).

During 2022, the main organizational, administrative and technical procedures and documents necessary for the planning and implementing process have been developed and/or reviewed. Key stakeholders and partners were contacted and their roles in the program were clarified. The program's Result Framework (RFW) has been assessed and adjusted with a view to refine the objectives, the activities and the related results. Preparatory works related to organizational and technical aspects of the working process have been realized.

## 2. Executive Summary

The present report describes the main activities and finding of the program from **May to December 2022**.

The report covers 2 main aspects:

**1. Organizational, management and administrative issues.** The main subjects developed in the present report are:

- NFG grant agreement signed with the Royal Norwegian Embassy (RNE) on July 18, 2022.
- NFG re-registration procedure at the Agency for Civil Society Organizations in Ethiopia (ACSO) as an indispensable formality allowing to NFG to act legally as an independent implementing organization in Ethiopia.
- Follow up measures with ACSO on work permit issues, annual reporting and discussions with our auditor in Norway how to comply to regulations both in Norway and Ethiopia. Furthermore, include these issues in NFG's revised Financial Management Manual.
- NFG agreement with the Bureau of Finance (BoF) as a prerequisite for launching the program working process in Amhara.
- Launching and Lessons Learned Workshop organized early September 2022 to present to the local stakeholders and partners the main achieved results and the lessons learned from the FLR Program phase 1, and also inform them about the objectives and the activities to be implemented during the phase 2.
- Communication and cooperation with the local partners and stakeholders which is based on consultations, informative meetings and signing of Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) and partnership agreements.
- Annual Meeting with the Royal Norwegian Embassy in Addis Ababa (RNE) to discuss different subjects related to FLR Program Phase 1 technical and financial reports (2021 and final reports); FLR Program-Phase 2 current status (administrative, technical and financial activities) and RFW adjustments (The RFW was approved by Norad 15<sup>th</sup> March,2023). NFG has been working on several follow up measures from the annual meeting such as a revised budget format for the program and a revised Financial Management Manual. A meeting with Norad and NCA on these issues has been conducted in Norway.

- Experience sharing meeting session held on November 10, 2022 at the Norwegian Church Aid (NCA) office in Addis Ababa, involving representatives from NFG, NCA, Development Fund (DF) and RNE to discuss similarities and differences between our “Green Village” concepts and share relevant experiences related to this relevant FLR Program practice.

## **2. Technical activities correlated with the Program’s Work Packages (WP) and Result Framework (RFW).**

The FLR Program Phase 2 technical activities developed in the report are correlated to the program’s WPs and to the RFW template. The main subjects highlighted in this section are:

- **WP-1: Identification, planning and establishment of forest buffer zones and green corridors.** The main tasks realized in this WP are:
  - Selection of the focus area where the activity will be piloted, i.e. Guangua Woreda, i.e. Luntsi-Degera and Ambki Kebeles, as well as in some other forest areas where Participatory Forest Management (PFM) has been developed in Guangua.
  - Development of a technical document outlining the substance of the work to be done.
  - Assignment of Amhara Design Supervision Work Enterprise (ADSWE) as the main co-implementing partner for the realization of the activity (identification and mapping of forest buffer zones and corridors).
- **WP-2: Participatory Exclosure Management (PEMP) in priorly established Exclosure areas.** The program has organized a sequence of technical briefings with the local stakeholders and partners (BoA, EFA, REDD+ Program, ORDA, CIFOR, etc.) to discuss and clarify the objectives related to this subject. As result, NFG has developed PEMP outlines which have been discussed and distributed to the concerned partners. The field works related to PEMP activity are planned for 2023.

- **WP-3: Secure customary user rights.** Several consultative meetings with Bureau of Land (BoL) are organized to clarify the status regarding the user rights and the land ownership in areas where the bylaws of exclosures are developed during FLR Program Phase 1. For this purpose, the program has signed an agreement with BoL to assess/analyze the status in a number of exclosures sites, in 5 Woredas (Ebinat, Mekatewa, Farta, Guna Begemedder and Libokemkem). The work is realized in close collaboration with ADSWE.
- **WP-4: Landscape restoration at village level.** In 2022, except the tree-based restoration activity, the program didn't implement any intervention in the Green Villages (GV). This is mainly due to the delay in launching the working process, caused by time consuming organizational and administrative procedures. In fact, the program has just time to assess the situation in the already established GVs. This allowed identifying complementary activities that should be implemented, and also selecting new GVs candidates.

The program has also launched in partnership with the Offices of Agriculture (OoA) in 5 Woredas (Ebinat, Quarit, Libokemkem, Farta and Mecha), the production of tree seedlings to secure the planting materials for 2023 planting season.

- **WP-5: Training and Capacity Building:** The activity is not prioritized in 2022.
- **WP-6: Communication and sharing of information.** In 2022, the process of cooperation and involvement of the local partners and stakeholders has started after the program's launching workshop and included several consultations, informative meetings, signing of MoUs and partnership agreements. The priority was given to partners and stakeholders who are/will be fully engaged in the working process, i.e. OoA and ORDA. The program has also established a basis for cooperation with partners and stakeholders who are/will be consulted and/or involved in specific joint actions (the case with BoL and CIFOR). Furthermore, NFG has participated in a meeting involving NCA, DF and RNE representatives aiming at promoting experience sharing among the different NICFI/RNE funded programs in Ethiopia.

### 3. Progress of the Activities During 2022

#### 3.1 Management, Administrative and Organizational Issues

In 2022, the FLR Program has covered the following administrative and organizational issues:

- **NFG agreement with the Royal Norwegian Embassy (RNE)**

The program started 1<sup>st</sup> May 2022, but the activities were running on a subsistent level until signing the grant agreement with RNE in July 18, 2022 and then receiving funding late August 2022. Only seedling production and planting activities were kept on-going to insure continuity between FLR Program phase 1 and phase 2.

- **NFG re-registration procedure at the Agency for Civil Society Organizations in Ethiopia (ACSO)**

This indispensable formality allowing to NFG to act legally as an independent implementing organization in Ethiopia was time consuming. NFG started the procedures during the FLR Program-Phase 1 (early 2021) and got its re-registration certificate on August 3, 2022.

- **Follow up measures** with ACSO on work permit issues, annual reporting and discussions with our auditor in Norway how to comply to regulations both in Norway and Ethiopia. Furthermore, include these issues in NFG's revised Financial Management Manual.

- **NFG agreement with the Bureau of Finance (BoF)**

The formalities for signing the agreement with BoF started right after getting the NFG re-registration at CSO. This process passed by a sequence of briefings to clarify the substance and the implementation strategy/approach of the program. NFG has developed and submitted a number of administrative, technical and financial documents requested by BoF. The Agreement with BoF was signed on August 29, 2022.

- **Launching and Lessons Learned Workshop**

NFG has invited different key stakeholders at different levels (national, regional and local) to participate in the workshop organized in Bahir Dar, on September 5, 2022.





The workshop was an opportunity to present the main achieved results and the lessons learned in FLR Program-Phase 1. Many subjects were discussed, i.e.:

- The resistance of the community to accept changes and the approach to reduce such resistance through targeted awareness and demonstration activities that could touch the mind of the rural people and change their behaviour.
- The lack of appropriate training materials for the farmers and the necessity for developing specific materials with specific and appropriate substance, form and format.
- The need to develop and integrate Participatory Exclosure Management Planning (PEMP) as a management tool and organisation of user groups into Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) to ensure sustainable management of exclosure-based FLR activities.
- Strengthening joint actions with the government institutions and other development programs operating in the region to promote relevant FLR approaches and practices.



- **Communication and cooperation with the local partners and stakeholders**

The program strategy is to continue promoting the diversification and the engagement of the local stakeholders and partners through their active participation in all the aspects of the program. The local partners and stakeholders will have different and sometimes complementary roles, at different stages of the FLR Program working process. The roles, the tasks and the level of involvement of the cooperating partners and stakeholders in the working process are defined by the program's objectives and activities.

In phase 2, the program will open constructive dialogue on practical issues related to Forest landscape restoration and work with all the key institutions at different levels (Federal, Regional), scientific organizations, development programs and other structures acting in the field of environment, forestry and land use sector. The process of cooperation and involvement of the local partners and stakeholders has included several consultations, informative meetings and signing of MoUs and partnership agreements. The priority was given to partners and stakeholders, who will be actively engaged in the implementation of the program's activities, deliver relevant results and contribute in their promotion at local level.

At this stage of the working process, we can notably refer to the agreements signed with OoA in 5 Woredas (Libokemkem, Farta, Quarit, Mecha and Ebinat) for the production of planting materialsto cover the program's planting activities for 2022 and 2023 planting seasons.

The program has also established a basis for cooperation with partners and stakeholders who are/will be consulted or asked for information, advises; and also who are/will be involved in specific joint actions, share of experiences and practices. Here, the Amhara National Regional State Bureau of Land (BoL) and CIFOR are among the relevant partners that will be engaged in important activities, i.e.:

- **BoL:** Advisory, supervision and also implementing role through its representations at local level, particularly for the provision of land ownership certificates for the farmers/communities concerned by the management of exclosure areas.
- **CIFOR:** Advisory and technical role, notably when it comes to the clarification and the promotion of approaches and practices related to FLR thematic and subjects matters. The objective of the program is to join action with this organization to develop FLR Guidelines for the highlands in Amhara.

To this end, the program has signed MoUs with BoL and CIFOR. The consultations with BoL were concluded with signing an agreement to clarify and check the land ownership status in the exclosures established by the FLR Program in phase 1. As to CIFOR, the negotiations are on-going to define the structure and the substance of the work related to the development of FLR Guidelines for the highlands in Amhara.

In the same course of action, the program has signed an agreement with the Organisation for Rehabilitation and Development in Ethiopia (ORDA). The signed agreement serves as a framework for ORDA to act as a co-implementing partner for the realization of specific activities (Exclosures Management Plans, Green Villages, demonstration sites, etc.) in FLR Program intervention areas located in South Gondar Zone (Ebinat, Farta and Libokemkem Woredas).

In terms of articles and regulations, the agreements signed with the partners specify and describe comprehensively all the services that will be delivered and activities to be implemented by the local stakeholders or co-implementing partners, in line with FLR Program WPs and RFW. The agreements also point out the obligation of acting in line with Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) and RNE Grant Management Regime, specified in grant agreement between RNE and NFG, i.e.: specific conditions, general conditions and procurement provisions.

- **Experience sharing workshop**

The workshop was held in November 10, 2022 at NCA office in Addis Ababa. Representatives from NFG, NCA, and RNE took part in this working session.

The workshop was an opportunity for NFG FLR Program to present the Green Village (GV) method introduced as a component of FLR in the highlands of Amhara. DF presented Climate Adapted Villages (CAV) approach in Ethiopia and NCA presented the Faith Based Climate Action (FBCA). NFG FLR Program expressed its particular interest for NCA forest green corridors and buffer zones methodology to link and rehabilitate fragmented landscapes. NFG will consider this methodology notably in terms of identification, establishment and interventions in forest buffer zones and corridors to be established in FLR Program intervention areas.

The conclusion made from the workshop is the similarity between GV, DF-CAV and NCA-FBCA approaches and the need to follow up more on the Green Village Concept, notably on the cost effectiveness aspect of such method and how to sustain it and scale it up as effective FLR component. This will be taken into consideration during the FLR Program Phase 2.

- **Annual Meeting and follow up measures with the Royal Norwegian Embassy (RNE)**

Annual Meeting with RNE was conducted 11. November 2022. The agenda included different subjects related to FLR Program Phase 1 technical and financial reports (2021 and final reports); FLR Program-Phase 2 current status (Administrative, technical and financial activities) and RFW adjustments (The RFW was approved by Norad 15<sup>th</sup> March, 2023). NFG has after the meeting worked on several follow up measures such as:

- A revised work plan and budget for the second half of year 1.
- A revised Result Framework.
- A new budget format for the entire program.
- A revised Financial Management Manual.
- A meeting with Norad and NCA on these issues has been conducted in Norway.

- **FLR Program Steering Committee (SC)**

The FLR Program SC is established to support a sound and effective implementation of the FLR Program-Phase 2. The SC will have an advisory role, accompany and guide the program's team in different stages of the working process.

The SC involves members from different local institutions and organizations that have direct or indirect stake in the program activities, objectives and impacts. To ensure strong coordination and synergy with regional flagship programs, the program has involved members from SLMP and RIP/REDD+. The gender issue is also well considered in the SC composition. A specialist from international scientific organization (CIFOR) is also included as a SC member.

The SC mandate developed in phase I will be used for phase II. This mandate illustrates the scope of work and specific tasks of the SC which are mainly related to the follow up of the program's progress, the guidance and advisory support towards efficient program's implementation.

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### The NFG-FLR Program-Phase 2 SC members

1. **Mr. Bitew Shibabaw**, Ethiopian Forest Development (EFD), Addis Ababa.
  2. **Mr. Habtemariam Kassa**, CIFOR, Addis Ababa.
  3. **Mr. Esmelalem Mihret**, Bureau of Agriculture (BoA), Amhara.
  4. **Mr. Tefera Akalu**, Environment and Forest Protection Authority (EFPA).
  5. **Mr. Takele Habte**, Bureau of Land (BoL).
  6. **Mr. Sintayehu Deresse**, Regional Coordinator REDD+, Amhara.
  7. **Ms. Titkesh Alemu**, Amhara Women Association.
  8. **Ms. Birke Tsega**, Office of Agriculture, Farta Woreda.
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- **FLR Program Local Staff**

The FLR Program has engaged local specialists and support staff. Totally 17 persons have been recruited by the program Management Unit (MU) on full time basis. Some of the staff is established at the Management Unit head office in Bahir Dar, and some of it is assigned to support the activities in the program’s intervention Woredas.

In addition, based on the agreement signed with ORDA (co-implementing partner), 4 technical staff are engaged on full time basis and 5 support staff on part time basis. Most of the engaged staff has been working in FLR Program-Phase 1. This is an advantage for the program because their integration in the working process is much more easy and effective. Depending on the program needs, the recruitment of local staff would continue in 2023 through engaging additional specialists and/or support staff.

#### Local staff engaged on full time basis

No.	Designation	Number	Assignment
1.	Local coordinator	1	MU
2.	Forest and Rural Development Specialist	1	MU
3.	Land Use Specialist	1	MU
6.	Community facilitators	6 (4 orda +2 MU)	Woreda
7.	HR Officer	1	MU
8.	Cashier	1	MU
9.	Driver/Purchaser	1	MU
10.	Cleaners	2	MU
11.	Guards	3	MU
<b>Total</b>		<b>17</b>	

The following table illustrates the correlation between the 2022 Work Plan and the progress made in terms of management, organizational and administrative issues, i.e.:

2022 Work Plan Activities (Period May-December 2022)	Progress made so far (by end December 2022)		Remarks
	Accomplished	Partly/Not Accomplished	
<b>Management, Organizational and Administrative issues</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Organizational, administrative and technical aspects related to the preparation and launch of FLR Program Phase 2.</li> </ul>	✓		Time consuming procedures
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NFG re-registration and other related procedures.</li> </ul>	✓		Time consuming procedures
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>FLR Program phase 2 Launching Workshop including Lesson Learned from Phase 1.</li> </ul>	✓		/
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Partnership agreements</b> (<i>Continuous process</i>) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Preparation and signing of agreements with the local partners/stakeholders to be involved in the FLR Program Phase 2 working process, i.e. BoL, ADSWE, CIFOR, OoA, etc.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	✓ (BoL, OoA & ORDA)	✓ (ADSWE, CIFOR)	Continuous process (Other partners/Stakeholders will be involved in the upcoming period)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Informative and instructive working sessions:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Organization of working sessions/meetings with the local stakeholders and partners to discuss specific issues and tasks related to the working process.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	✓		Continuous process. Other working sessions on deferent subject matters will be organized in the upcoming period
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Planning and implementation of baseline study on vegetation cover in enclosure areas.</li> </ul>		✓	Postponed to 2023
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Follow up of the 2022 planting activities in the program areas.</li> </ul>	✓		Continuous process
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assessment of the tree nurseries producing seedlings for the FLR Program.</li> </ul>		✓	Postponed to 2023
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Updating and improving communication structure of the FLR Program.</li> </ul>	✓		Continuous process
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promotion of environmental education materials and methodology at school level.</li> </ul>		✓	Postponed to 2023
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Training sessions for FLR Program Management Unit Staff on relevant management thematic including financial management.</li> </ul>		✓	Postponed to 2023

### 3.2 Activities correlated with the program Work Packages (WP)

In 2022, except the tree-based restoration activity (production of tree seedlings and planting activities), most of the technical activities/interventions have not been extensively launched at field level. This is mainly due to the late start of the program (four months) and the lack of disbursement, as well as the time consuming administrative and organizational procedures, such as NFG re-registration, signing of agreements with local stakeholders and co-implementing partners, organization of consultative meetings, the development and refining of technical documents necessary for efficient implementation of the program's activities, etc.

- **WP-1: Identification, planning and establishment of forest buffer zones and green corridors**

The following table illustrates the correlation between the 2022 Work Plan and the progress made so far (By end December 2022), i.e.:

2022 Work plan activities (Period May-December 2022)	Progress made so far (By end December 2022)		Remarks
	Accomplished	Partly/Not Accomplished	
<b>WP-1: Identification, planning and establishment of forest buffer zones and green corridors</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Identification and mapping:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Organize awareness raising meetings and working sessions with the local stakeholders in Guangua Woreda.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	✓		Continuous process
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Preparation and signing of agreement with Amhara Design and Supervision Works Enterprise (ADSWE) to launch the identification and mapping of appropriate areas for green corridors and buffer zones in the program areas.</li> </ul>		✓	Ongoing negotiations. Expected in early January 2023

Forest landscapes in Amhara region are isolated from each other by roads, farm lands and grazing areas. In phase 1, the NFG-FLR program has identified and mapped large enclosures for restoration. The identified areas are fragmented and dispersed across the landscape. To counteract such fragmentation, the establishment of interconnecting forest buffer zones and green corridors between enclosures and other restored areas is very practical and useful, notably to improve the biodiversity in the restored landscapes. During phase 2, such activity will be piloted by the program in some specific areas.

- **Selection of the focus area.** To identify the appropriate intervention area, the program has discussed this issue with the OoA in the Woredas where the program has already developed LUPs and/or identified/mapped enclosure areas. To get tangible results it is recommended to select pilot areas where the forest cover is still obvious. Among the program's intervention areas, only one Woreda meets this criterion, i.e. Guangua.



Accordingly, instructive meetings and field visits were organized in Guangua Woreda to inform the local OoA about the aim and the substance of such activity. As a result, it was agreed on the focus area where the activity will be implemented, i.e.: **Luntsi-Degera and Ambki Kebeles** [area where the FLR Program has developed the Land Use Plan]. In addition, other forest areas will be included, notably those where Participatory Forest Management Plans (PFM) have been developed in Guangua.



- **Substance of the work.** Several briefings were organized with the local specialists, OoA and ADSWE to agree on the substance of the work and describe its main components. As a result, a technical document was developed. The document illustrates the rationale behind the activity, the focus areas and the criteria for the selection of forest buffer zones and corridors, the specific activities and the volume of the work (planned target). The document also underlines the need to joint action with the Woreda's OoA, the local forest/land users and other stakeholders when identifying and developing plans for forest buffer zones and corridors.



- **Selection of the co-implementing partner.** The program got a good experience from cooperating with ADSWE in phase I (Identification, mapping and development of bylaws of exclosures). This was the driving factor to involve ADSWE as a co-implementing partner for the identification, mapping and development of activity plans of forest buffer zones and corridors in Guangua Woreda. The negotiations with this partner were constructive and fruitful. NFG and ADSWE agreed to sign an agreement and start the field works early 2023.

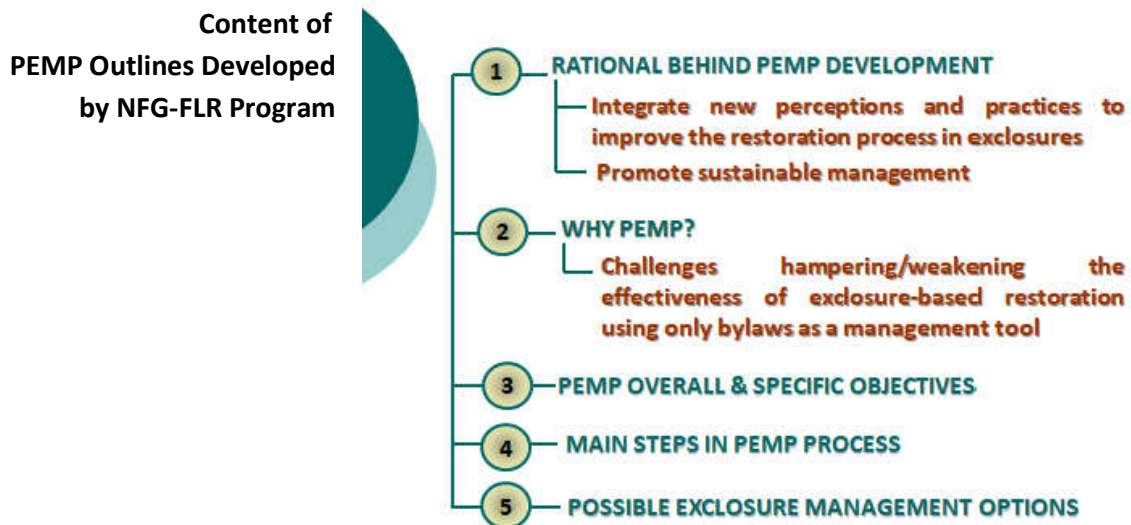
- **WP-2: Participatory Exclosure Management in priorly established Exclosure areas**

The following table illustrates the correlation between the 2022 Work Plan and the progress made so far (By end December 2022), i.e.:

2022 Work plan activities (Period May-December 2022)	Progress made so far (By end December 2022)		Remarks
	Accomplished	Partly/Not Accomplished	
<b>WP-2: Participatory Exclosure Management in priorly established exclosure areas</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Stakeholder consultation:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Organize awareness raising sessions and consultations with the local stakeholders at Regional, Woreda and village level (Bureau of Agriculture, Offices of Agriculture and local farmers/communities concerned by the management of the enclosures)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	✓		Continuous process
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Develop Exclosure Management Plans (EMP)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Preliminary analysis of the existing environmental and socioeconomic conditions as a basis to identify and structure the management objectives and technical activities in pilot/targeted enclosure (s)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>		✓	Postponed to 2023

Exclosure-Based Restoration has become a common practice in Ethiopia, notably in the highlands. It has gained acceptance as a method to restore degraded forest landscapes and proved to be effective particularly when the local communities play active roles in applying and respecting the management rules and also when there's a strict and a continuous monitoring/follow-up from the local stakeholders.

During phase 1, the NFG-FLR Program, in close cooperation with local stakeholders and partners, has identified and mapped a large area of exclosures (more than 160,000 ha) and developed a number of bylaws that serve as management plans for the exclosures (more than 1000 bylaws covering over 137,000 ha of exclosures). During phase 2, the NFG-FLR Program will keep working in the areas where bylaws are developed through developing, implementing and promoting a new planning and management tool to support the restoration process and promote sustainability in the identified exclosures, i.e.: Participatory Exclosure Management Plans (PEMP). To this end, the program has organized a sequence of technical briefings with the local stakeholders and partners (BoA, EFA, AFE, REDD+ Program, ORDA, CIFOR, etc.) to discuss and clarify the objectives related to this subject, get updated information, develop the substance and the elements of such activity and promote its implementation in different areas. The technical briefings are concluded with the development by NFG of “PEMP Outlines” explaining the rationale behind this activity and describing the need to develop such management tools, the overall and specific objectives, the main steps in PEMP process as well as some possible and alternative exclosure management options appropriated for the highland context in Amhara.



In November 2022, NFG has signed an agreement with ORDA as a co-implementing partner for some of the program’s activities in south Gondar zone (Libokemkem, Farta and Ebinat).

PEMP is among the activities allocated to ORDA. The program has organized additional instructive briefings with ORDA specialists and focal persons to further explain them the objectives and the substance of PEMP activity, using the developed outlines. Furthermore, NFG together with ORDA has developed the “structure” of what could be the content of PEMP document. The writing of PEMP document is the ultimate step in the PEMP process. All what were accomplished during field works (information, data, analysis, assessment, etc.) should be presented and described in a logical sequence, and in a clear and simple manner. Here, NFG underlined the importance to bear in mind that PEMP is a practical/field document that will be used by the farmers/communities and stakeholders concerned by the management of exclosures, and therefore it requires a simple style of presentation.

Regarding the field works, it was agreed to launch the activities early January 2023 because it is necessary to organize preparatory works such as formation of PEMP teams and awareness rising sessions with the local stakeholders. Before launching the PEMP activities in all the concerned intervention areas, it was decided to start by piloting the working procedures in some pilot areas in order to see how the process is progressing practically, and adjust/improve accordingly.

- **WP-3: Secure customary user rights**

The following table illustrates the correlation between the 2022 Work Plan and the progress made so far (By end December 2022), i.e.:

2022 Work plan activities (Period May-December 2022)	Progress made so far (By end December 2022)		Remarks
	Accomplished	Partly/Not Accomplished	
<b>WP-3: Secure customary user rights</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Preparation, information and meetings:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Organize informative and consultative meetings with the Land Bureau and other relevant/concerned stakeholders to clarify the regulations, the procedures and the status regarding the user rights/land ownership certificates (<i>the specific case of exclosure areas</i>).</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	✓		Continuous process

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Field works: Collection of coordinates, mapping:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Initiate preparatory field work in pilot areas</li> </ul> </li> </ul>		✓	Expected to launch in 2023 after clarifying the status of the user rights/land ownership in the concerned exclosures
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The lack of ownerships certificates for farmers and communities is definitely a limiting factor hampering efficiency, impact, productivity and sustainability of forest and land use activities. This fact can be even more perceptible when it comes to the restoration of degraded forest landscapes where the environmental and socioeconomic conditions are severely weakened.

To enhance the willingness and the commitment of the forest land users to participate, play active roles in forest landscape restoration and avoid land use and land ownership conflict situations, it is essential to provide them with proper land ownership/landholding certificates.

In the phase 1, the program has developed a number of bylaws covering a big area of exclosures. To promote efficient and sustainable management of the established exclosures, the program initiated a process aiming at providing the users who developed/approved the bylaws with land ownership certificates. These certificates would secure their user rights and make them more committed and responsible in managing and protecting the areas. This process has not been initiated before in Amhara. This activity will be an entry point to a new dimension towards sustainable forest landscape restoration.

In this perspective, the program has organized several consultative meetings with the main stakeholder who has the key role in this working process, i.e. Bureau of Land (BoL).



The aim is mainly to:

- Clarify the status regarding the user rights and the ownership of the lands where the bylaws of enclosures are signed.
- Define what will be the process/procedures if the status of the user rights/ownership is not yet elucidated.

For this purpose, the program has signed an agreement with BoL early October 2023. The work to be realized by BoL is to provide NFG-FLR Program with updated information about the status regarding the delivery of landholding certificates to the communities where NFG-FLR Program has identified, mapped and developed bylaws of enclosures areas. This is mainly an office work (assessment/analysis) prepared by BoL specialists in collaboration with ADSWE. It covers a total of 547 enclosures sites, distributed as follows:

- **121** enclosure sites located in Ebinat Woreda.
- **86** enclosure sites located in Mekatewa Woreda.
- **123** enclosure sites located in Farta Woreda.
- **185** enclosure sites located in Guna Begemeder Woreda.
- **32** enclosure sites located in Libokemkem Woreda.

As a result, BoL specialists have provided the program with information and data using the following template:

Enclosure Areas		Land Ownership			Status regarding the delivery/provision of landholding certificates to the communities			Relevant remarks regarding the need for cross-checking information/data at field level
Sites Name	Area (ha)	Communal	State	Other	Yes	No	Ongoing Process	Specify the reason!

The assessment made has clarified that the land holding certificates have already been issued in most of the Woredas concerned by the program interventions. In some Woredas, such as Ebinat, certificates still not issued but it is an ongoing process that will be finalized in 2023 (BoL information).

Regarding FLR Program enclosures, the analysis shows that some areas are overlapping with private holdings and others areas are shifting. Therefore, it was agreed with BoL to continue the crosschecking tasks (a field work) in collaboration with ADSWE and prepare a comprehensive report on the findings which would be submitted to NFG by April-May 2023. To share information with the local stakeholders, the program has invited many organizations and cooperating partners to participate in the consultative sessions organized with BoL, i.e. EFA, BoA, Regional REDD+ Coordination Unit, SLMP, ORDA, ADSWE, etc. Unfortunately, not all the invited organizations took part in these sessions. Nonetheless, the program will keep insisting to bring on board all the stakeholders and share information about the progress and the outcomes related to this important activity.

- **WP-4: Landscape restoration at village level**

The following table illustrates the correlation between the 2022 Work Plan and the progress made so far (By end December 2022), i.e.:

2022 Work plan activities (Period May-December 2022)	Progress made so far (By end December 2022)		Remarks
	Accomplished	Partly/Not Accomplished	
<b>WP-4: Landscape restoration at village level</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Tree based restoration:</b> - Organize user/beneficiary groups and distribute tree seedlings in the already established green villages and in the Rib Dam buffer zone area; and organize planting activities</li> </ul>	✓		/
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Demonstration activities and sites:</b> - Preparation and signing of agreement with ARARI for establishing demonstration sites in the program areas</li> </ul>		✓	Postponed to 2023
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Basic infrastructure (FTCs, schools, etc.):</b> - Organize awareness rising and consultation sessions to promote the green village concept and initiate/realize maintenance interventions on basic infrastructure in the already established Green Villages (<i>which need improvements</i>)</li> </ul>		✓	Only assessment made. Activities postponed for 2023



In Phase II, the FLR Program will keep promoting and implementing Green Village (GV) concept as a component of FLR in the highlands of Amhara. The program will keep implementing and introducing complimentary and new activities to improve the achieved results and ensure the sustainability in the GVs established during Phase I (8 Green Villages).

In 2022, the program will establish new GVs in Kebeles where FLR-Based LUPs were developed (9 Green Villages). To make this activity result and impact tangible, the selection of the new GVs will be made using the cluster/compact approach, i.e. the new GVs should be located in the same cluster as those established in phase 1.



In 2022, the program has just time to assess the situation in the already established GVs (phase 1) and define what kind of complementary activities should be implemented and also select new GVs candidates. The implementation of almost all the planned or newly defined FLR interventions at Green villages' level will be launched in 2023.



However, in 2022, the program has launched the tree-based restoration activity, i.e. seedling production and planting. Actually, during the bridging period



between phase 1 and phase 2, the program has managed to continue the restoration efforts through producing tree seedlings to cover the 2022 planting season.

Agreements have been signed with OoA tree nurseries in 3 Woredas (Farta, Quarit and Libokemkem).

The following table illustrates the tree species and the quantity produced.

**Tree seedlings produced during 2021/2022**

Woreda/nursery	Species	Quantity	Remark
<b>1. Quarit/Fengeta</b>	Acacia decurrens	139380	Exotic
	Hagenia abyssinica	23375	Indigenous
	Yushania alpine/Highland bamboo	6624	Indigenous
	Pinus patula	3240	Exotic
	Chamaesyctisus palmensis	68996	Exotic
	Chrysopogon zizanioides/vitiver grass	27702	Exotic
	Desho grass	38278	Exotic
<b>Total</b>		<b>307595</b>	
<b>2. Libokemkem/Birkute</b>	Entada abyssinica	55000	Indigenous
	Accacia abysinica	75000	Indigenous
	Accasia senegal	55000	Exotic
	Grevillea robusta	40000	Exotic
	Cordia africana	15000	Indigenous
	Rahmnus prinoides	2250	Indigenous
	Cupressus Lusitanica	10000	Exotic
<b>Total</b>		<b>252250</b>	
<b>3. Farta/Adiko</b>	Grevillea robusta	27704	Exotic
	Acacia decurrens	164800	Exotic
	Cordia africana	11586	Indigenous
<b>Total</b>		<b>204090</b>	
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>763935</b>	

The produced tree seedlings were planted as agroforestry, private woodlots, enrichment planting on degraded communal areas, and around homesteads, along roadsides and gullies. The emphasis was given to the GV sites.





The following table illustrates the number of seedlings produced by Woreda, the type of the planting activities and the number of hectares (ha) planted in 2022.

**Number of forest and fruit tree seedlings planted in the Green Villages and adjacent watersheds in 2022**

Woredas	Plantation type in the Green Villages								Plantation in adjacent watersheds		Total	
	Communal woodlot		Private woodlot		Agroforestry		Institutions (School/church/FTCs)					
	No. of seedlings	Area (ha)	No. of seedlings	Area (ha)	No. of seedlings	Area (ha)	No. of seedlings	Area (ha)	No. of seedlings	Area (ha)	No. of Seedlings	Area (ha)
Quarit	134,763	20	8,740	5	129,825	36	8,095	5	-	-	281,423	66
Libokemkem	62,270	25	5,400	2	65,050	65	31,300	21	54,000	29	218,020	142
Farta	79,717	11	60,403	22	66,702	28	1,960	1	10,205	4	218,987	66
Rib Dam Buffer area	40,000	10	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	40,000	10
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>316,750</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>74,543</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>261,577</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>41,355</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>64,205</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>758,430</b>	<b>284</b>

*Note: In Farta and Libokemkem, in addition to the tree seedlings produced by FLR Program; seedlings from other nurseries were included during the planting activities. For the Rib Dam buffer area, some of the tree seedlings were sourced from Libokemkem FLRProgram tree nursery.*

To prepare and secure the planting materials for the 2023 planting season, the program has signed new agreements with the tree nurseries belonging to the OoA in 5 Woredas, i.e. Mecha, Quarit, Libokemkem, Farta and Ebinat. The objective is to produce 1.5 million tree seedlings. The following table illustrates the Tree seedling species under production in FLR Program intervention Wordas, 2022/2023.

**Treeseedling species under production in FLP intervention wordas, 2022/2023**

Name of species	Woredas/Nurseries					Remark
	Quarit/Fengeta	Farta/Adiko	Libo/birkute	Ebinat/Bariawonz	S.Mecha/Barki	
Grevillea robusta	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Exotic
Acacia decurrens	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Exotic
Eucalyptus globulus		✓			✓	Exotic
Cordia Africana	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Indigenous
Acacia abyssinica		✓	✓			Indigenous
Jacaranda mimosifolia				✓		Exotic

<b>Croton machrostachys</b>		✓					<b>Indigenous</b>
<b>Olia Africana</b>					✓		<b>Indigenous</b>
<b>Hageniya abyssinica</b>	✓	✓					<b>Indigenous</b>
<b>Cupresus lusitanica</b>	✓	✓	✓		✓		<b>Exotic</b>
<b>Chamae sytisis palmensis</b>	✓						<b>Exotic</b>
<b>Meliaa zadirachta</b>					✓		<b>Exotic</b>
<b>Shinus mole</b>					✓		<b>Exotic</b>
<b>Juniperus procera</b>					✓		<b>Indigenous</b>
<b>Spathodea nilotica</b>					✓		<b>Exotic</b>
<b>Rahmnu sprinoides</b>	✓	✓	✓			✓	<b>Indigenous</b>

Various types of inputs (working tools and materials) necessary for the seedling production have been provided for the concerned nurseries. In the production process of the tree seedlings, women are the key workforce for filling pots with soil, sowing seeds, watering, weeding and transplanting.



In order to avoid any delay in the 2023 planting activities, the tree seedlings production process is regularly supervised by FLR Program staff. Also, the local FLR Program tree nursery specialist together with the focal persons at OoA level have already started the process of identifying, delineating and mapping potential sites suitable for the 2023 planting activities.



- **WP-5: Training and capacity building**

The following table illustrates the correlation between the 2022 Work Plan and the progress made so far (By end December 2022), i.e.:

2022 Work plan activities (Period May-December 2022)	Progress made so far (By end December 2022)		Remarks
	Accomplished	Partly/Not Accomplished	
<b>WP-5: Training and capacity building</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Technical support, development of training materials:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Preparation and signing of agreements with ATVET, AWA and other relevant stakeholders to launch the training activities, starting with developing training materials for different target groups.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>		✓	Postponed to 2023

Capacity building and training are cross cutting and complementary activities that will be undertaken in parallel with other work packages and should be planned and developed carefully and effectively to strengthen the skills and knowledge of the program's main target groups (local farmers and communities). Accordingly, WP5 has not been a priority in 2022 because the actual implementation of most of the WP activities will start 2023.

- **WP-6: Communication and sharing of information**

The following table illustrates the correlation between the 2022 Work Plan and the progress made so far (By end December 2022), i.e.:

2022 Work plan activities (Period May-December 2022)	Progress made so far (By end December 2022)		Remarks
	Accomplished	Partly/Not Accomplished	
<b>WP-6: Communication and sharing of information</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Development of guidelines</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Initiate work with Governmental bodies and CIFOR to discuss the process/procedures regarding the development of FLR Guidelines and their substance</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	✓		Ongoing process
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Meetings, knowledge sharing:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Organize "Green table" meeting on one relevant FLR thematic</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	✓		Green table on GV concept involving NFG, NCA and DF

In Phase 2, the FLR Program will continue improving and promoting the diversification and the engagement of the local stakeholders and partners in all the aspects of the program. In this perspective, the program will further strengthen its communication and cooperation routines.

In 2022, the priority was given to partners and stakeholders who will be consulted and engaged in specific activities related to the development of FLR Guidelines for the highlands in Amhara. In this course of action, the negotiations with CIFOR are ongoing. To boost this issue, the program has already established the draft-structure of the guidelines and shared it with CIFOR. This document will serve as a basis for identifying and agreeing on what could be the CIFOR task in the process of developing the guidelines.

Moreover, in November 2022, NFG has participated in a sharing experience meeting. In this meeting took part representatives from NCA, DF and RNE. Being aware that, there're many elements and specific objectives that make NFG, NCA and DF programs similar, RNE recommended promoting such working sessions among the different NICFI/RNE funded programs in Ethiopia. This will allow learning from each other, identifying, sharing and promoting relevant experiences and practices for the benefit of the local stakeholders. Such working sessions also enable to get more information about the activities, the similarities, the success stories and the challenges. The working session was an opportunity for NFG to present the Green Village (GV) approach implemented in the framework of FLR Program in Amhara. This was also an occasion for DF and NCA to present relatively similar experiences, i.e. Climate Adapted Villages (CAV), Faith Based Climate Action (FBCA) and Climate Smart Economic Empowerment (CSEE) strategic initiatives.

The conclusion from this meeting is that many aspects in the applied approaches have similarities, and there's a need for all the programs to address and emphasize the sustainability issues to maintain and secure the programs' achievements in the long-run. As to the organizational conclusion, the interlocutors have recommended promoting the tradition of such experience sharing meetings and supporting it with field visits in the future.

### 3.3 Achieved activities correlated to the Result Framework (RFW)

Results		Indicators	Base-lines	Targets 2022	Results achieved in 2022	Remarks
Outcome 1	Degraded forest landscapes are restored with local participation and involvement	- Number of people participating in Participatory Exclosure Management Planning (PEMP)	0	10 000	/	Agreement with co-implementing partner (ORDA) was signed end 2022. Just preparatory works have been done. The PEMP working process will be launched early 2023.
		- Number of Community-Based Organizations(CBOs) legally organized	0	50	/	
<b>Outputs</b>						
1.1	Forest buffer zones and green corridors based on LUPs developed in phase 1	- Number of hectares newly categorized as forest buffer zones and green corridors in new LUPs, by-laws and PEMPs.	0	50	/	Agreement with co-implementing partner (ADSWE) was not signed in 2022. Just consultations have been done. The agreement signing and the working process will be launched early 2023.
1.2	At least 30% of exclosure areas established in phase I (1000 exclosure areas) are managed jointly	- Number of hectares verified as jointly managed according to Exclosure Management Plans	0	10 000	/	PEMP will start in 2023.
1.3	Land holding certificates issued on at least 50% of exclosure areas established in phase I	- Number of hectares of exclosure areas with issued Land holding certificates	0	10 000	/	The agreement with BoL was signed. The process of clarification of the status of landholding certificates for the exclosure areas is on-going.
Outcome 2	The population of green villages experience improved socioeconomic and environmental benefits	- Number of Green Villages experience improved socioeconomic and environmental benefits	0	0	/	No target for 2022
		- Number of households getting socioeconomic benefits	0	0	/	
		- Green village concept adapted and adopted by the regional government as a component of FLR approach	0	0	/	

Outputs						
2.1	Seedlings planted by local farmers	- Number of seedlings (in millions)	0	1	0.76	/
2.2	Woodlots for firewood established	- Number of hectares of established woodlots	0	200	95	In addition, other types of plantings activities have been realized, i.e.: Agroforestry: 129 ha; institutions (FTCs, Schools, etc.): 27 ha; plantation in adjacent watersheds: 33 ha. Totaly 284 ha have been planted.
2.3	New Green Villages are established	- Number of new Green Villages established	0	3	/	The program has just time to assess the status of the already established Green Villages (Phase 1); select 3 new GV candidates to be developed in 2023 (1 in Guangua and 2 in Farta)

Results		Indicators	Base-lines	Targets 2022	Results achieved in 2022	Remark
2.4	New economic activities (NEA) are established and local value chains strengthened in Green Villages.	- Number of new economic activities established in Green Villages	0	20	/	The program's organizational and administrative procedures were time consuming. This hampered the launch of the activity. This will be boosted in 2023.
		- New economic activities with woman in head positions	0	5	/	
2.5	New demo-sites (DS) for climate smart agriculture, forestry and renewable-energy, developed in Green Villages	- Number of demo-sites within Green Villages	0	10	/	The timing for the establishment of the demonstration sites was not appropriate. This activity will be launched before, and during the rainy season (2023)
2.6	Farmers Training Centers are strengthened in 17 Green Villages	- Number of Farmers Training Centers strengthened	8	3	/	The program's organizational and administrative procedures were time consuming. This hampered the launch of the activity. This activity will be boosted in 2023.
Outcome 3	The capacity of stakeholders and farmers to sustain restoration efforts are strengthened	- Number of stakeholders strengthened	0	15	/	Training and capacity building activities will be started after signing agreements with ATVET, ARARI, AWE, etc. This will be boosted in 2023
		- Courses developed in FLR Program Phase I and II are included in the training program offered by the WoredaOoA.	0	-	/	No target for 2022
<b>Outputs</b>						
3.1	Courses conducted for farmers and development agents, with participation emphasizing on gender balance	- Number of courses	0	50	/	Training and capacity building activities will be started after signing agreements with ATVET, ARARI, AWE, etc. And after the development of appropriate training materials (in 2023)
		- Gender balance expressed as percentage of woman participation	N/A	15	/	

Results		Indicators	Base-lines	Targets 2022	Results achieved in 2022	Remark
3.2	Community meetings conducted on family planning, with participation emphasizing on gender balance	- Number of meetings	0	10	/	The activity will be launched in 2023 after signing the agreement with AWA
		- Gender balance expressed as percentage of woman participation	N/A	85	/	
3.3	Pupils trained in environmental education	- Number of pupils trained	0	5 000	0	This activity will be launched in 2023 after improving the developed environmental education materials by Skogkurs (Norway)
3.4	Green Table meetings on various thematic conducted to improve the coordination among organizations and authorities involved in landscape restoration in Amhara	- Number of green table meetings	0	3	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Meeting involving BoA, EFA,BoL, ADSWE, REDD+, etc. to clarify the landholding certificate.</li> <li>- Meeting to discuss PEMP procedures.</li> <li>- Working session with NCA and DF to discuss GV.</li> <li>- Meeting with CIFOR to discuss FLR Program Guidelines.</li> </ul>
3.5	A web-based information HUB on forest landscape restoration in Ethiopia is prepared for transfer to Ethiopian Forest Development	- Relevant documents is gathered and ready for transfer from a shared cloud-based platform	0	0	/	No target in 2022
3.6	The program archive, including datasets from activities in in the intervention area, is prepared for transfer to Ethiopian Forest Development	- Data structured and available on a shared cloud-based platform	0	0	/	No target in 2022



Results		Indicators	Base-lines	Targets 2022	Results achieved in 2022	Remark
3.7	Information sharing with Ethiopian Forest Development and other government institutions to promote and sustain restoration efforts in Ethiopia	- Number of meetings	0	2	0	The activity will be launched in 2023
3.8	A Guideline for sustainable restoration efforts in the highlands of Amhara is developed	- A guideline for sustainable restoration efforts in the highlands of Amhara is developed	0	0	/	No target in 2022
3.9	Guidelines/manual on FLR-model including Green villages is developed	- A guideline/manual is developed	0	0	/	No target in 2022

#### 4. Conclusion

In 2022, the FLR Program-Phase 2 has been characterized by a 4 months bridging period (May-August 2022) and time consuming organizational and administrative procedures that allowed NFG to act in line with the local rules and regulations; clarify, define and formalize the stakeholders' and partners roles in the working process. Moreover, this "inception period" was an opportunity to review, adjust and refine the objectives, the activities and the expected results.

The FLR Program Work Plan for 2023 will integrate the activities related to all the Work Packages, and will be extensively field-oriented. It's expected to fill the gaps encountered in 2022 and accomplish all the targets planned in the program's Result Framework.