



Forest Landscape Restoration Program - Amhara

Green Village: A Concept

The concept of a Green Village is used and described by several actors worldwide; having diverse objectives and using different definitions and approaches. The concept is mainly linked to sustainability and green growth. However, when it comes to define the objectives and develop practical interventions, the guiding rule for the concept is the adaptation to the specificities of each context.

The concept of using a **Village** as an entry point for landscape restoration is well known in Africa and Asia. It has been used in Ethiopia and Rwanda and in several countries in Asia.

Ethiopia has for several years been focusing on landscape restoration. A **landscape** is the visible features of an area of land, its landforms, and how they integrate with natural or man-made features. A landscape includes the physical elements of geophysically defined landforms such as mountains, hills, water bodies such as rivers, lakes, ponds and, living elements of land cover including indigenous vegetation, human elements including different forms of land use, buildings, and structures, and even elements such as weather conditions. The landscape concept differs from the traditional ecosystem concept in focusing on groups of ecosystems and the interactions among them.

An area as Amhara can be split in several big and small landscapes. There is no exact size of these landscapes. There are many variants of landscapes depending on the context. When working with landscape restoration in an area as Amhara with all its hills and mountains several landscapes with different sizes can be defined.

When working with landscape restoration in different Woredas as in Amhara it is important to select areas where to start the restoration process. NFG has chosen to focus on enclosure areas and small landscapes with a village as an entry point. **To illustrate that the village is the entry point for landscape restoration NFG chose to name the selected villages as a Green Village.**

- **NFG-FLR Program Definition of the Green Village**

As the concept of Green Village has a diversity of definitions, the NFG-FLR Program has adopted and adapted an approach for the highland context in the Amhara region.

In the framework of the NFG-FLR Program Green Villages are established to initiate landscape restoration and create model forest landscapes where the livelihood and the living environment of the local communities are improved through promoting environmentally sound practices, introducing and demonstrating relevant forest/land use practices and promoting “basic” and “affordable” socioeconomic opportunities and incentives.

- **Description of how the Green Village concept is used in the NFG-FLR Program**

Green Villages are established at village level in some of the FLR-Program intervention areas to inspire the local people as well as the neighboring communities in making their living environment greener and improve their livelihood. Thus, it is expected to be visually green spots in the forest landscapes where the Green Villages are established. Although they are spread in the landscape and only covering minor part of the area, it is expected that the ideas and practices with time will be further promoted and scaled up.

- **NFG-FLR Program Green Village Approach**

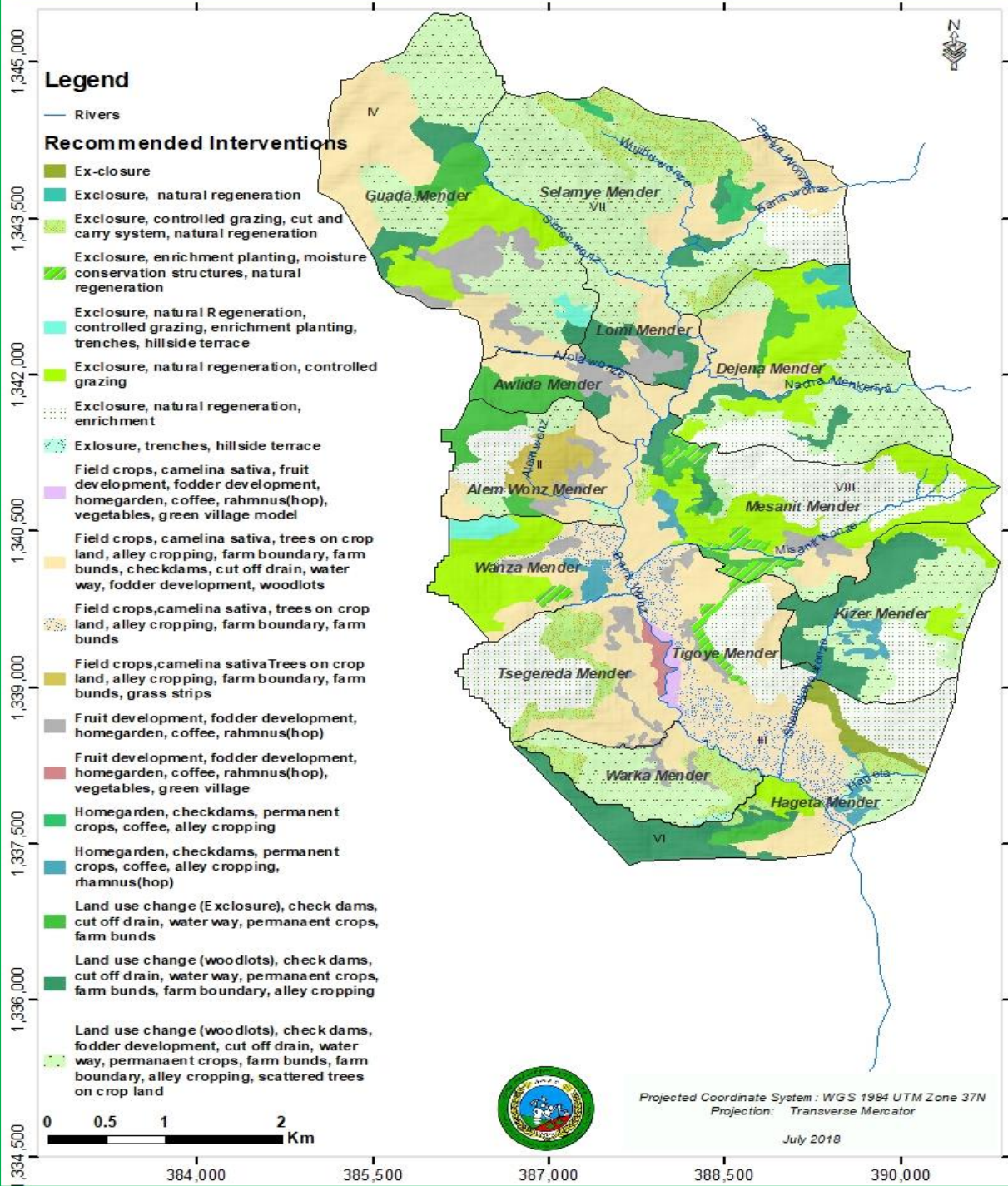
The basis for selecting and for defining appropriate interventions in Green Villages is FLR-Based Land Use Planning [FLR-Based LUP].

The FLR-Based LUP is a participatory planning process consisting of identifying degraded forest landscapes and addressing the degradation problems in a given forest landscape area, and allow the local stakeholders to propose and develop appropriate solutions to improve the situation.

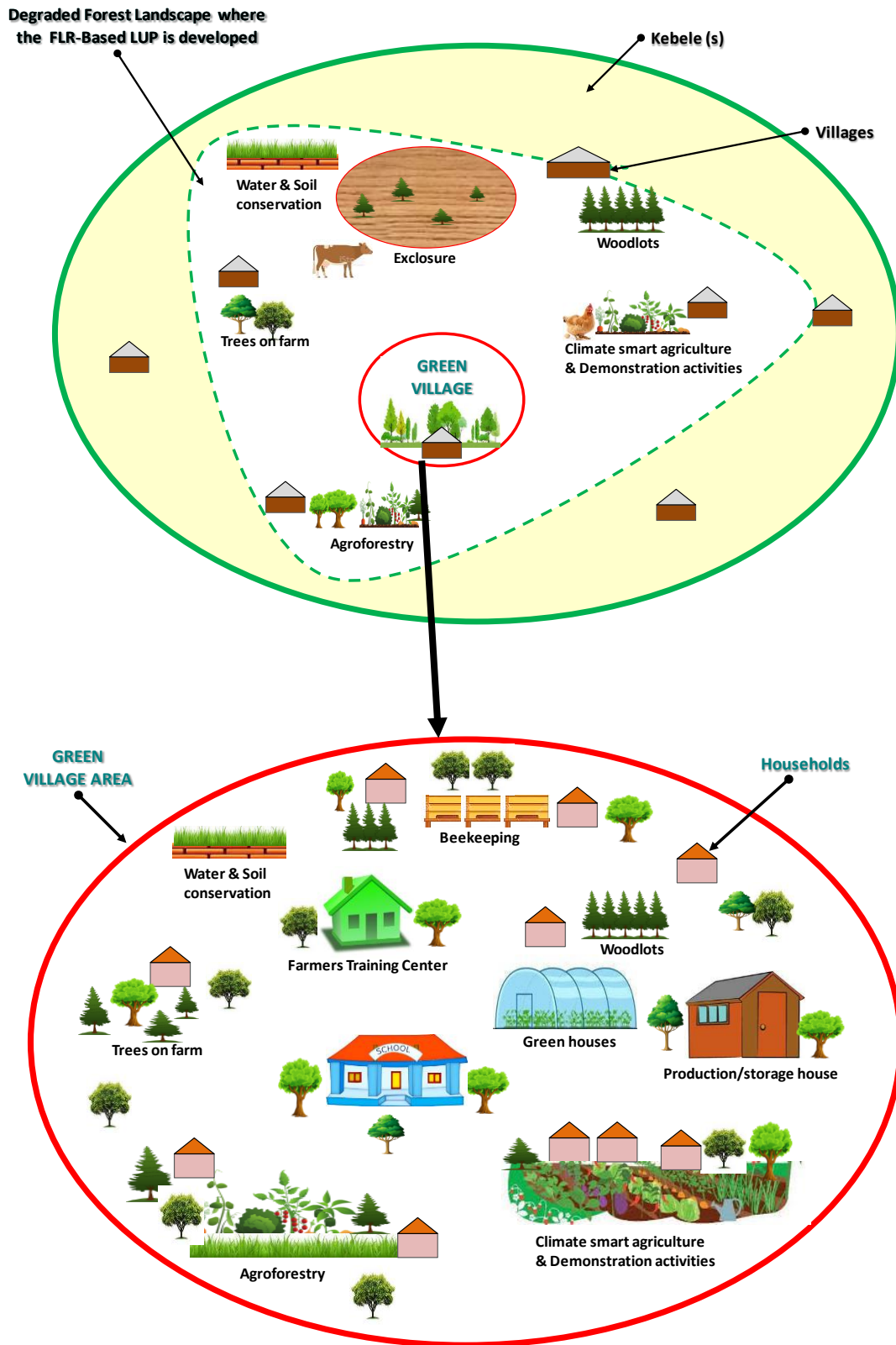
The “**Development Map**”, as exemplified for the Serawudi Kebele below, is a map showing the new land use plan proposed by the community and the local stakeholders to reduce the existing problems of forest landscape degradation. It is the key planning tool resulting from the FLR-Based LUP. It indicates both FLR-based and demand-driven interventions proposed by the local stakeholders to improve the situation in the targeted forest landscape.

To be cost efficient, the FLR Program cannot intervene in the whole area covered by the LUP. **Detailed plans** are developed for a **given area** by identifying and prioritizing the interventions within the planned forest landscape, i.e.: **What to do where?**

Development Map of Serawudi Kebele



NFG-FLR Program Green Village Approach



As shown in the above principal drawing, the interventions cover a wide range of activities, such as, i.e.:

- **Tree-based restoration:** Agroforestry, woodlots, trees on farm, etc.
- **Exclosure-based activities:** Controlled grazing, natural and assisted regeneration, enrichment plantations, cut and carry system, etc.
- **Improved land use practices and climate smart agriculture** [*through demonstration activities*].
- **Livelihood-based activities:** Demonstration and implementation of improved technologies and practices; socioeconomic incentives for organized user groups.
- **Support of soil and water conservation activities.**
- **Training and capacity building.**

To make the interventions “impact tangible” and create **model landscapes** that can be scaled up to larger areas [*in the neighboring territories, other villages, kebeles, Woredas*], and also to touch the minds of the local people/communities and promote their self-initiative; NFG has promoted the **Green Village** concept in some of the villages located in the degraded forest landscape where the FLR-based LUP is developed.

The objective is to demonstrate to the local people/communities how it is possible to improve the situation in their living environment and create opportunities for their livelihood just by organizing themselves, taking initiatives and implementing appropriate interventions that require basic and affordable means.

- **Activities implemented in FLR Program Green Villages**

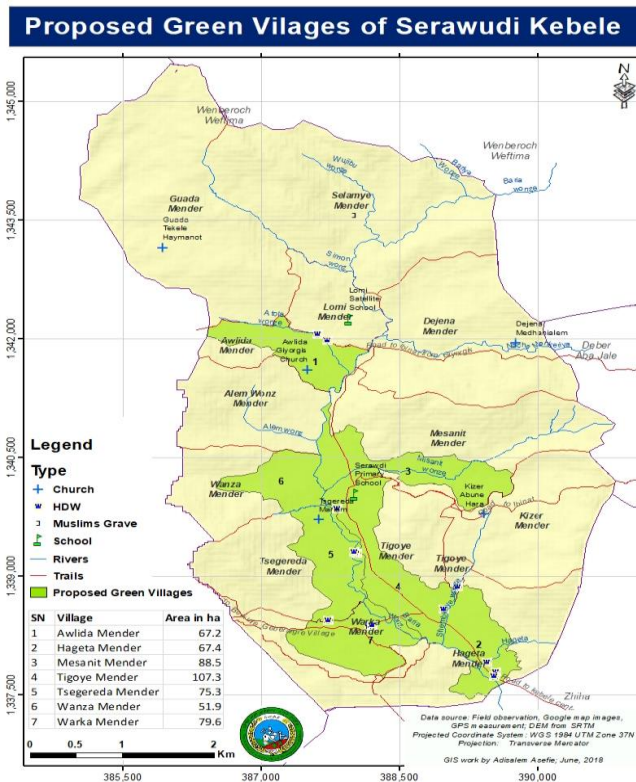
NFG-FLR Program has implemented a range of interventions in the established Green Villages. The interventions are adapted to the local context, needs and priorities, i.e.:

- **Sustainable Forest/Land Use/Agriculture Practices:** Demonstration Activities/ Innovative practices/ Equipment.
- **Access and Rational Use of Water:** Rain Water Harvesting/ Drip Irrigation/ Solar Water Pumps/ Reservoirs, etc.
- **Efficient/Clean Energy for Basic Needs:** Heating/ Cooking/ Lightening
- **Basic Infrastructure Construction/Maintenance:** Farmer Training Centers and Schools.
- **Livelihood Economic/Value Chain Opportunities:** Production and Storage Facilities/Production and processing tools, etc.
- **Basic Knowledge for the Local People/Community:** Awareness/ Capacity Building and Training/ Experience Sharing
- **On farm activities such as production of fuel saving stoves, bee keeping, etc.**

- The selection of the sites to be developed as Green Villages

The selection of the sites to be developed as Green Villages is also passing through a participatory process where the local stakeholders are proposing different “candidate villages”. [The map here attached illustrates the result of this process/the case of Serawudi Kebele/Ebinat Woreda].

Based on this map, the FLR Program is selecting one of the villages. The selection is based on some criteria such as the accessibility, the availability of basic infrastructure [school, Farmers training center, Church, etc.], diversity of land use, and of course the motivation/willingness of the local people/ community to participate in the activities.



A key element in the Green Village approach is initiating a collective management of community resources such as forests, water, energy, soil, plants and animal diversity. The local stakeholders must be engaged; they are the driving force for landscape restoration in their neighborhood.