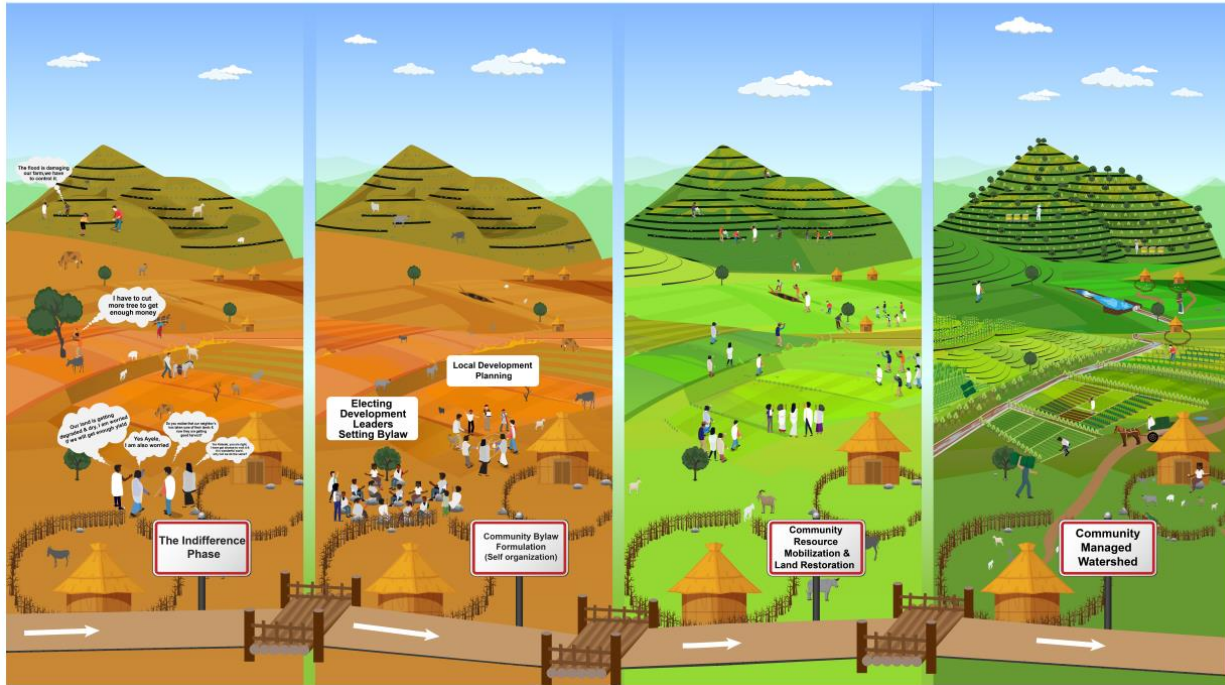


Pathways towards community managed sustainable land management

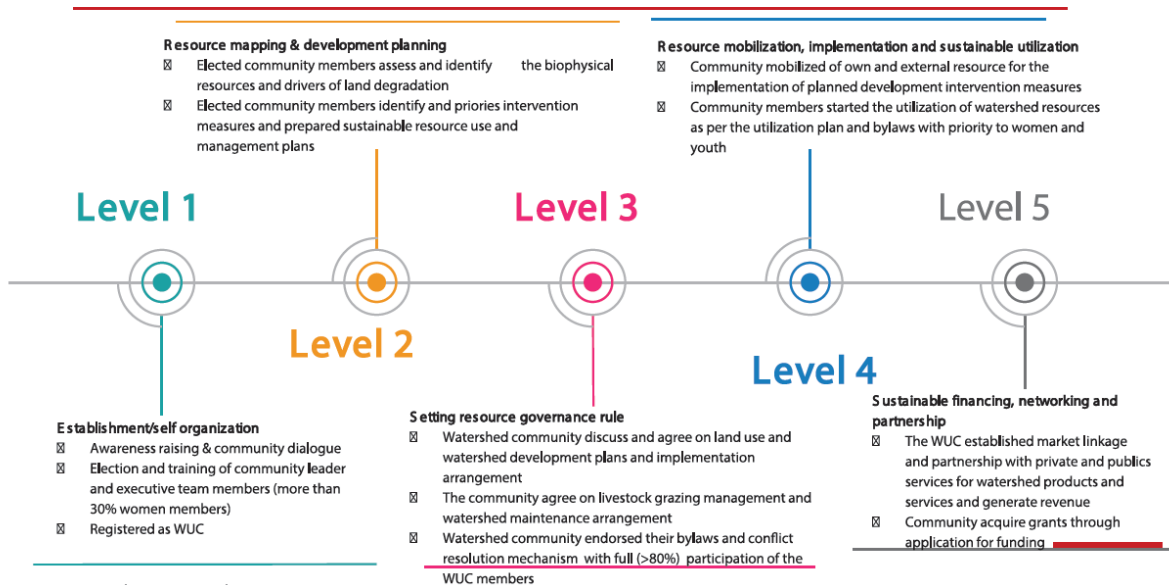
CLM project learnings

Pathways towards CBLM

Community Based Land Management



Community maturity assessment framework



Community empowerment for sustainable landscape management and rural livelihood development

A. Background and context

- Ethiopian envisages sustainable intensification of agricultural food production to meet the food, fuel, and fiber demands of the fast-growing population without compromising the multiple functions of the landscapes, reducing the siltation of water bodies, maintaining biodiversity, and enhancing carbon sequestration.
- Despite the positive progress in the restoration of degraded lands in the highlands through soil and water conservation and reforestation mass campaigns and land management programs, sustainable and productive use of the agricultural landscapes remains as the critical challenge. Land degradation is overwhelmingly deteriorating the productive capacity of landscapes and reduces the resilience to climate change, even to the existing levels of climate variability, of rural livelihoods. Currently, 80 percent of the country's land surface is prone to moderate to severe soil degradation. For the highland areas, estimates of erosion rates as measured by soil loss in tons per ha per year (t/ha/yr) vary considerably, with the literature indicating an average of 29.9 tons/ha/yr. The incursion into eco-regions, biosphere reserves, and fragile ecosystems for food, fuel wood, and livestock grazing is becoming a growing concern that threatens the biodiversity of the landscapes. Equally worrying is, the siltation of water bodies such as lakes and dams is increasing at an alarming rate. Abbaya and Horromaya lakes are recent examples that dried up due to siltation. Tana, Chamo, Zuway, and Hawassa lakes are on the same threats of extermination for the same reason unless timely addressed. This disorder will not only vanquish the biodiversity of the landscapes but also subdue the livelihood of hundreds of thousands who directly or indirectly rely on businesses related to fishing, eco-tourism, drinking water supply, and irrigation.
- Sustainable transformation of the agricultural landscape is a complex process that requires the mutual negotiated agreement between the community, the government, NGOs, and the private sector, who holds a stake in the development, management, and use of the landscape, to invest their own scarce resources and meet the diverse needs and accommodate the differences and navigate towards mutually acceptable future. However, earlier land management initiatives have overlooked the need for active engagement of the communities in the design and decision-making of land management measures. The participation of the community was limited to the implementation through mass campaigns and the paid labor by projects. As a result, the watershed management efforts predominantly focus on enhancing the productive capacity of the land resources, mainly top-down and expert-driven, through land restoration techniques and approaches. To this effect, the willingness and capacity to mobilize own resources for the maintenance and scaling up of success in land management remains low. The self-organization and decision-making capacity of the local leadership (collective and individual) remains reliant on the capacity of the government structures.

B. Entry (leverage)points for sustainable landscape management project support in community empowerment

- Realizing the sustainability challenges, the government has endorsed a national proclamation on community watershed management and utilization which provides the legal framework for communities to organize themselves as watershed users' cooperatives at the community level for the management and use of local resources. The proclamation provides for communities a collective use rights and tenure security on local resources (land, water, and forest). The provision could serve as a basis to empower community and community-based institutions to play their role in the sustainable and productive use of the agricultural landscape through participatory planning, implementation, and decision-making of the natural resources. Awareness raising on the specific rights and responsibilities of the various stakeholder through different forms of communication is required to create common understanding among the various stakeholders on the legalization procedure and the mandates and responsibility.
- The MoA conceived capacity building of extension workers in natural resources management planning and implementation as strategic intervention for sustainable development of the natural resources. To this effect, the ministry has given strong emphasis to the training of extension workers and model farmers in the Agricultural Technical and Vocational Education Training Colleges (ATVETCs) for them to train local farmers. The agriculture sectors is one of the largest extension service providers worldwide with more than 60,000 development agents deployed at kebele level throughout the country to train and advise to farmers and farmer cooperatives on agricultural development practices. Furthermore, MoA has recently developed strategy on pluralistic agricultural extension to mobilize the communities for necessary behavioral changes and create demands on the sustainable development and management of natural resources. The strategy emphasizes on the need for a rapid transfer and continued adoption of improved technologies and good practices through farmer-focused, innovation-led, market-driven, efficient, and sustainable information service delivery mechanisms to male, female, and youth smallholder farmers, agro-pastoralists, and pastoralists. The alignment of the land scape management project support with the extension strategy of the MoA on the delivery of quality and up to date training and training materials to the development agents and model farmers could speed up the adoption of sustainable land management by large number of smallholder farmers. The ATVETS and private training service providers could serve as a vehicle to deliver quality training on community facilitation, resource mobilization and communication for landscape management.
- The MoA is fostering the digitalization of the agricultural extension advisory delivery system. The ministry has already equipped thousands of extension workers with tablets and introduced a digital learning management platform with the virtual learning provider Moodle. This recent development could be considered as the strategic entry point for largescale and continues transfer of knowledge and information to communities and local level extension workers on sustainable landscape management.

C. Proposed support measures to realize sustainable landscape management by local communities.

- **Supporting the capacity development of collective and individual local leadership (creating landscape development champions):**

Sustainable transformation of landscapes requires the development of local-level change agents. The transformation can only be achieved when millions of smallholder farmers join hands and invest their own scarce resources to the development and sustainable management of their landscape resources. The creation of such a momentum requires the availability of charismatic and trusted community champions (collective or individual leaders) that facilitates the change processes. Well-trained external community facilitators could be required at the initial stage to train and coach the potential community champions. Later on (after six months hand on training support), the leadership role can be handed over to a trusted individual or group community movers within the community. The project would support the short-term assignment of community facilitators and targeted training of community movers (change agents) in resource mobilization and management, networking, community facilitation, and communication skills. Furthermore, technical support in the development and provision of decision support tools to local leaders in landscape management and utilization is required to enhance the effectiveness of community leaders.

- **Facilitate coordination, communication, and knowledge sharing among landscape actors (communities, the extension, policymakers, research, and the private sector)**

Sustainable management of landscapes and transformation of rural livelihood requires rigorous negotiations, consultation, and knowledge exchange among the various landscape actors to address the diverse demands, sometimes contradicting, from the landscape. The actors (policymakers, research, private sectors, and extension workers) need a platform to exchange their knowledge and experience in land management; advocate their values and negotiate their priorities on the development, use, and management of the landscapes. The support of the project would include:

- Facilitation of periodic consultations forums and dialogues among the landscape actors on the participatory and functional development, management, and use of the resource
 - Facilitation of farmer-to-farmer experience exchanges on a proven practices between districts and regions especially where language is not a barrier.
 - Organize field visits for sustainable land management advocators such as journalists, environmental activities, and renowned artists.
 - Launching radio programs, and make documentaries to show case successful and innovator farmers and their village (light house communities) as examples of how communities have adopted sustainable landscape management.
 - Organize study tours for policy makers and extension workers on local and regional experiences in functional landscape management.
 - Provide technical and managerial to the agricultural extension/cooperative offices in the establishment/strengthening of community watershed users' cooperatives, unions, and federations from kebele to the regional and national level is vital in empowering community-based institutions. Emphasis should be given to building on and strengthening existing ones. However, where these are lacking it will be necessary to invest in their development.
- **Provide funding opportunities!**

Communities and extension workers require financial supports to piloting innovative options/approaches to respond to the competing needs of the landscape actors

(increasing food and energy production, protection/ regulating erosion and siltation of water bodies, nutrient cycling, and maintaining biodiversity). Application-based funding of innovative approaches on landscape development, management and use of communities would stimulate positive competition among communities on efficient use of the scarce resources and promote the generation of mosaic solutions to address the complex challenges of sustainable landscape management.