

# ETHIOPIA

AMHARA

AUGUST 2019



WeForest

*Making Earth Cooler*



## It's in the hands of the local people

In the Amhara region, like in many areas of Africa, farmers mostly see forests as a resource for timber and fuel wood, resulting in high levels of deforestation and severe soil erosion. We work together with them, to improve their livelihoods with alternatives that do not destroy the forest. They then become our best local ambassadors to protect the forest in the long term.



## SCIENCE-BASED MEASUREMENTS AND VERIFICATION

Financial audit: April 2019

Forestry survey: May 2019

Socio-economic survey: May 2019

## Landscape transformation

**Trees funded:** 1 365 186 (since the beginning of project) and 463,458 quality seedlings are ready for planting in 12 sites (166.3 ha) in the six villages

**Hectares directly restored:** 549 ha (since the beginning of project) + 166.3 ha communal land plantation + 110.16 agroforestry/homestead plantation

**Total area positively impacted:** 46. 984 ha

## Methodologies used

Framework planting: the planting of species in ways that promote the natural succession of the forest.

### Agroforestry

Our target for agroforestry in households was to reach 800 of them which has been succeeded. A total of 100 ha will be covered using agroforestry practices with the collaboration of 965 (141 female-headed and 824 male-headed) households selected in 9 kebeles (villages) using a specific set of criteria (e.g.: participation in communal land plantation, land availability, access to water, and interest).

### Farmers Managed Natural Regeneration (planting on communal land)

The community has approved to allocate lands for ecological restoration and future sustainable utilization for 12 communal planting sites spread over 166.3 ha. To confirm this allocation, by-laws have been prepared and signed by all beneficiaries from each site. The community also put a fence around five new sites and post-management activities will be done.



Photo: WeForest



Photo: WeForest



*The Albezia gummifera tree.*

Photo: WeForest

## Biodiversity conservation

To date, a total of 16 tree species have been planted in this project, amongst which are the *Millettia ferruginea*, *Faidherbia albida*, *Albezia gummifera*, and *Rahumnes prinoids*. The last one is a local hop used to produce beer and in high demand as agroforestry shrub. In line with the project goal, the majority of the tree species are native. There were three exotic species, mainly used for fuelwood, timber and livestock fodder.

## Livelihoods

Alternative livelihood activities are in place, providing reliable and regular sources of subsistence and income. For the 2019 program, 967 households were selected to engage in agroforestry practice to diversify both agricultural products and local income sources.



Photo: WeForest



Photo: WeForest

## Capacity building and workshops

As the communities are the ones that drive the actual reforestation, training is essential. The project takes this into account and in three WeForest nurseries, for example, 21 workers (14 men and 7 women) were selected and provided with detailed nursery management training on topics such as seed treatment, day-to-day seedling management, hardening off, transplanting and care during transportation.

Furthermore, two consecutive workshops on environmental issues and natural resources management were organized. The first one was aimed at experts and development agents (52 participants, of which 11 female experts). The second workshop was organized for community representatives and community leaders (24 participants).



Photo: WeForest

## Having a team is key for success

WeForest employs 44 permanent staff members, working as forest experts, site facilitators, and nursery workers. On top of that, 142 casual workers are in charge of nursery support, planting and site maintenance in this reporting period (June 2019). 97 community members (of which 18 women) have received professional training, and 2,593 households have received awareness creation as well as planting and post-planting training for local farmers

Between December 2018 and June 2019, 1,153 individual farmers have already noticed an increase in their income.



Photo: WeForest

## Measuring our impact

Scientific approaches are used to measure the impact of this project and the resulting data is used to maximize the benefits and improve where necessary.

An overview of how we measure impact:

- In January and June, members from the WeForest HQ and the WeForest Ethiopia team visited the project site to observe the progress made, discuss future planning and give recommendations.

- On June 17-20, WeForest and The Hunger Project Ethiopia conducted a joint field visit to monitor the overall progress of the project in the Machakel district. For each of the 47 planting sites (2017-2019), monitoring plots were established according to WeForest protocol and will be used over time to measure vegetation cover and tree growth.
- An inventory was conducted to estimate the survival rate of the planted seedlings in 2017 and 2018. It found the average survival rate was 88% (94% on agroforestry sites and 81% on communal lands) that in 2017; and 87% (96% on agroforestry sites and 78% on communal lands) in 2018. These findings highly surpass our minimum target of 80%.
- A specific socioeconomic data collection tool was developed for WeForest intervention.
- Agroforestry beneficiaries coordinate data collected for 200 hectares (22% of the total project size).
- There are task forces on two different levels: a village level and at district level. Both levels have monthly meetings where experiences, challenges, and solutions are shared with each other.
- Forestry data for plots has been collected, cleaned and verified. Currently, the data entry is in process; and restoration is being monitored and photo-documented.

## It all starts with site selection and mapping

The first step to land restoration is identifying and mapping the area of interest ahead of time.

Our objective this year was afforesting 150 hectares of degraded communal lands in 9 villages within the Machakel district. Over the past 6 months, 38 restoration sites from 10 villages, with a total area of 478 ha, have been identified as potential restoration sites after which community discussions were held with the District Agricultural Office resulting in the confirmation and mapping of 13 restoration sites in 6 villages (166.3 ha) for the 2019 project intervention. This was done after a site feasibility assessment and community approval. A few other potential sites are still under negotiation with the local community.



Photo: WeForest

## Creation of a baseline

For Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) purpose, all 13 selected sites have been assessed and bio-physical data has been collected for the vegetation density and diversity measure for future progress. Based on the size of the restoration site the number of monitoring plots was determined, after which vegetation information such as species composition and density were collected. WeForest Ethiopia provided the data collection protocols that were used.

## Seedlings are grown in nurseries

Together, the “Love Nature” tree nurseries Kuskam, Keduse Yohannes and FTC have produced 463,458 quality seedlings for the 2019 planting program. However, the nurseries are doing more than that: they also strengthen government, communal forest and landscape restoration programs.

## Preparing the planting sites

Across the sites, planting pits are prepared using the recommended planting spaces (2×3 and 3×3 m) depending on the tree species and land-use type.

In June, the Goder and Yeseada restoration sites already started planting as the rainy season starts earlier there. On both sites, 151 (of which 55 are women) community members have been actively engaged in pitting and planting, with a total of 21,800 tree seedlings planted by the end of June.

## Soil and water conservation activities

A total of 5 gullies were restored this year to reduce water runoff and soil erosion, with one new active gully identified and maintenance performed in the old site of Sholamba. Furthermore, check dams are being built to slow down the water run-offs.



Photo: WeForest

## UPCOMING 6 MONTHS

- Completing the 2019 planting (total 163.3 ha)
- Silviculture management/ Farmer managed Natural Regeneration (weeding, mowing, fencing and protection)
- Capacitating nurseries for 2020 planting program seedling preparation
- Detailed activity planning for the 2020 project period
- Capacity building trainings on livelihood programs/income generating activities (Agroforestry and Apiculture)
- Providing microfinance orientation (Saving and credit) for project villages
- Providing Farmer entrepreneurship training
- Energy saving cook stove production trainings for rural communities
- Establish income generating activities, such as beekeeping
- Site selection and community mobilization for the 2020 planting program
- Experience sharing visits among the different villages
- Monitoring and Evaluation: seedling survival count of the in 2017, 2018 and 2019 planted seedlings
- Monitoring and Evaluation: socio-economic and forestry baseline information collection
- Capacity building for experts (GIS and forestry data collection and processing training)
- Documentation and extension materials preparation for stakeholders

WeForest is an international non-profit that specializes in mobilizing companies to restore the World's forests and embark their stakeholders into a long-term journey towards environmental sustainability.

In order to achieve the objectives of the Paris Climate Agreement, we need to start decreasing our global emissions by 2020 and achieve carbon neutrality by the second half of this century. While reducing carbon emissions is critical, research suggests that even if carbon dioxide emissions came to a sudden halt, the carbon dioxide already in the Earth's atmosphere could continue to warm our planet for hundreds of years. The challenge is to reduce future carbon emissions and actively remove the excess carbon from our atmosphere.

Forests are known as the best technology for that: they are an amazing carbon sink.

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THANK YOU

