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# Land Governance Learning Journey

## Part 1: Rapid Land Governance Appraisal

Cora van Oosten, Seblewengel D. Dagne, Assefa Tofu, Dereje Tilahun, Tewodros Berhanu, Tewaney Woldesilase, Dessalew Kassa, Belay Asnake, Berhane Tsegay, Gebrezgi Gebru, Elise van Tilborg, Dieuwke Klaver



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This research was funded by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Wageningen Centre for Development Innovation  
Wageningen, May 2021

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Report WCDI-21-158

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This Rapid Land Governance Appraisal in support of land dialogues is the first document in a series reflecting the Land Governance Learning Journey, organised by World Vision in Ethiopia and its Dry Lands Development Project (DryDev), in collaboration with Wageningen Centre for Development Innovation and IMARA.earth. The Land Governance learning Journey took place in 2020-2021, and aimed to prepare World Vision DryDev staff to initiate a land dialogue process in their project areas. The series contains a rapid land governance assessment (Part 1), a training report (Part 2), and this Toolbox (part 3). During the Land Governance Learning Journey, participants worked with tools based upon the collection of satellite data, land and landscape governance tools and a selection of those used in inclusive multi-stakeholder partnerships. This appraisal provides the outcomes of a small research exercise that was carried out prior to the training, and reflects an overview of the reality of land governance in DryDev's implementation areas. It provides a point of departure for the participants of the Journey, to build upon.

Keywords: landscape governance, land governance, land tenure, land dialogue, multi-stakeholder partnership

This report can be downloaded for free at <https://doi.org/10.18174/546634> or at [www.wur.eu/cdi](http://www.wur.eu/cdi) (under publications).



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Report WCDI-21-158

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# Preface

World Vision's development approach is greatly inspired by the Biblical mission of *taking care* of God's creation. This means that World Vision sees itself and its development partners as *caretakers* of the earth. This is clearly reflected in World Vision Ethiopia's Dryland Development Programme (abbreviated as DryDev) which is anchored in the principles of sustainable and inclusive landscape management. Landscape management aims to maintain, improve and restore land and other natural resources as well as the livelihoods of the people who belong there, following a participatory approach. In essence, a *caretaker* has been given the responsibility to maintain and protect someone else's property, and returns it to the owner in as good or better condition than it was received. This comes very close to the concept of environmental stewardship, which has driven DryDev staff to carry out their work.

Following this reasoning, land governance is about managing the environment in an integrated and holistic manner, and taking responsible spatial decisions. It is built on the respect for the ecosystem, and the services that it provides to its inhabitants. Land governance is people centred, which means that it puts a landscape's inhabitants, in particular its women and youth, in the centre. It strives for the fulfilment of their needs and aspirations, and for the protection of their rights. It allows for building local partnerships, with the aim to make poverty history.

Besides securing access to the land and the resources which people need to secure their quality of life, land governance is the basis for sustainable economic growth. It is a prerequisite for maintaining the fertility of land, its productive capacity, and its market value, allowing rural families to raise the income which is needed to enjoy quality of life. Land governance is therefore a precondition for local development, food and nutrition security, and overall livelihood security. Land governance however is also complicated, as it requires strong institutions, both formal institutions such as rules, regulations and laws; as well as informal institutions such as culture, tradition and human behaviour. Strong institutional performance depends on the capacities of governments, citizens and private companies, all being right holders and duty bearers in their own way.

It is this approach that has motivated World Vision, DryDev's management and staff, and Wageningen Centre for Development Innovation in the Netherlands, to jointly undertake a *rapid land governance appraisal* into land governance. The appraisal aims to inform DryDev staff on the current land governance situation in its intervention Woredas. It also aims at providing input for the design and implementation of a DryDev staff training, for DryDev staff to be even more capable of facilitating land governance dialogue on the ground. Originally, the training was planned to take place in Wageningen, but due to the global COVID-19 pandemic it was decided to have it online, and tailored to the specific needs and demands of DryDev staff.

Whereas this report covers the outcomes of the appraisal only, it is accompanied by a report of the training, as well as a Toolkit that was prepared after the training was completed. The Toolkit is meant to assist future World Vision Ethiopia activities. The triptych of the appraisal, the training report and the Toolkit is a reflection of our joint journey on land governance, aimed at enhancing staff capacities to master both the theory and the practice of 'good' landscape governance, and contribute to its advancement, for the benefit of all.





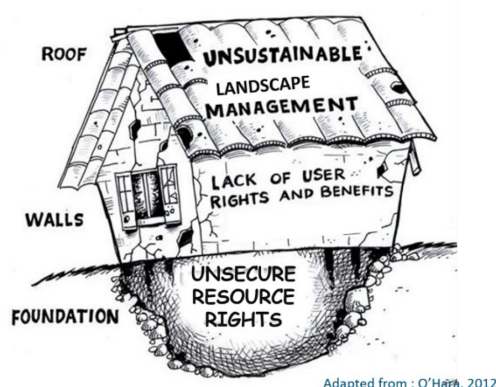
# 1 Background

## 1.1 What is land governance?

Land governance is about the rules, the processes and the structures through which land is used, managed and owned. The most generally used definition says that "*Land governance concerns the rules, processes and structures through which decisions are made about access to land and its use, the manner in which the decisions are implemented and enforced, the way that competing interests in land are managed. It encompasses statutory, customary and religious institutions. It includes state structures such as land agencies, courts and ministries responsible for land, as well as non-statutory actors such as traditional bodies and informal agents. It covers both the legal and the policy frameworks for land as well as traditional and informal practices that enjoy social legitimacy* (Palmer et al, 2009).

The above mentioned definition of land governance clearly acknowledges the existence of different mechanisms/systems that clarify the rights and interests over various categories of land and natural resources (private land, state land, communal land). *Land tenure* encompasses the nature of and the manner in which rights and interests over various categories of land are created or determined, allocated and enjoyed. The tenure rights of people over land and other natural resources may vary from the right to access and use land, to the right to use, buy or sell and own these, either formally, or informally. The land governance definition encompasses the different rights that relate to land and resources. This refers to the acknowledgement that there are many rights which may co-exist and overlap, something which UN Habitat refers to as the *continuum of land and natural resource rights* (UN Habitat). *Land policy* refers to the set of agreed principles that govern all rights related to the use, ownership and management of all types of lands, in order to enhance their productivity and contribution to social, economic, political and environmental development. *Land administration* refers to the structure and processes for the determination, archiving and delivery of land rights, and the systems through which general oversight on the performance of the land sector is managed. Finally, *land information systems* are administrative systems that are used for the management, collection, processing, storage and use of data on land ownership, usage, quality, location and change over time and the body of data sets prepared for use in decision-making on the basis of those principals.

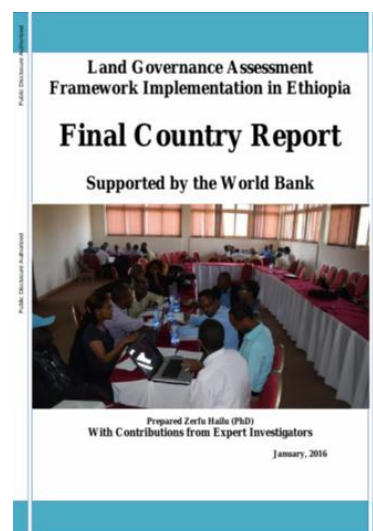
Within this broad spectrum of definitions and rights, it is important to create clarity for all stakeholders involved. After all, it is generally acknowledged that for sustainable land management practice, clear and inclusive land governance is key. According to Sayer, the rules and regulations regarding land, land use and land tenure need to be clear to and accepted by all stakeholders, to make sure that all land users are aware of their rights and their responsibilities for maintaining fertility of the land. Without clear tenure security, no proper land management systems can be designed, and no spatial plans can be drafted based on which decisions on development and investment are taken (Sayer et al., 2013). That means that peoples' right to land, their right to produce, and their right to take part in spatial decision making go hand-in-hand.



## 1.2 Land governance in Ethiopia

It was in 2016 that the World Bank carried out a land governance assessment in Ethiopia, with the aim to lay the foundation for a comprehensive, sustainable and inclusive land governance within the country. The assessment is positive about the progress of land governance in Ethiopia, as it is strongly anchored in the country's legal frameworks, and recognises three types of tenure (World Bank, 2016, 2017):

1. Private holding as rural land in the holding of peasants, semi-pastoralists and pastoralists and other bodies entitled by law to use rural land;
2. Communal holding as rural land which is given by the government to local residents for common grazing, forestry and other social services;
3. State holding as a rural land demarcated and those lands to be demarcated in the future at federal or regional states holdings; and includes forest lands, wildlife protected areas, state farms, mining lands, lakes, rivers, and other rural lands.



In Ethiopia it is the Federal Ministry of Agriculture that is mandated to oversee the rural land sector, with the Rural Land Administration & Use Directorate as implementing body. The responsibility to administer and to manage land however is given to the regional states, which have enacted regional land laws and established land administration and management institutions for rural lands following the federal pattern. The regional implementing institutions for rural land administration are varying between regional states. In some regions, such as Amhara and Oromia, land administration offices are extended to the Kebele level, others remain organised at Zonal or Woreda levels. In some regions, customary law is integrated into the formal mechanisms of settling land disputes. Locally established institutions to implement land administration systems are called Land Administration & Use Committees, which members are volunteers elected by land holders in each Kebele. The participation of landholders in matters of land administration is formally guaranteed through public hearings and meetings as well as through elected land administration committee members. Private investors that engage in agricultural development activities have the right to use rural land in accordance with the investment policies and laws at federal and regional levels, as long as there is no overlap with the rights of local residents (World Bank, 2016, 2017).

Over the last 50 years, the Government of Ethiopia has taken major steps to issue and improve its Federal and Regional land policies. It is currently embarking on a larger process to develop a national integrated land use policy, and legal frameworks to set a solid basis for all of Ethiopia's land related policies (USAID, 2020). The Land Governance Assessment of 2016 concludes that after completion of the first phase, 90% of the all rural households have received first level certified land use rights (World Bank, 2016). Nevertheless, despite the great effort made, tenure security was still hampered by the absence of plot-level mapping and insufficient boundary information, hampering the development of accurate cadastral maps and computerized land administrations (USAID, 2020). To solve this problem, the large-scale 'first level' land certification process was complemented by a 'second-level' land certification programme, which introduced parcel-level mapping and a computerized land registration system, among other activities (USAID, 2020). With this, considerable improvements were made, as the country witnessed a massive increase of tenure security, increased access to credit, a considerable increase in tenure security, and an increase in women's access to land (USAID, 2020). The only evidence that could not be found, is that of a reduction of the number of land disputes (USAID, 2020). Despite the large investments in enhancing land governance, land related conflicts pertain. Apparently, despite there is more to be done to mitigate land related conflicts, and more action in relation to raising land productivity, innovative land and water management, robust spatial planning, enhanced market performance, and intergenerational dialogue regarding inheritance of land (USAID, 2020).



The outcomes of the 2016 Land Governance Assessment and the additional studies quoted in the above highlight the need for the DryDev to address the issue of land governance. Not only as a means to strengthen DryDev's effort in land and water management, but also for DryDev to have lasting impact in the landscapes where it works. DryDev staff however also recognises that fundamental change in land governance does not happen overnight. It is part of larger political processes which need to be handled with care. It requires great sensitivity and active engagement in policy processes, something for which DryDev staff has not necessarily been trained. This recognition shaped the motivation for DryDev management and staff to carry out the current assessment, raise the land governance capacities of DryDev staff, and work with partners and beneficiaries on enhancing land governance to raise the sustainability of its work.



## 2 About the appraisal

### 2.1 The objectives and the methods used

Enhancing land governance is a long term process that requires many years of investment and process support. DryDev's current one-year extension phase will not be enough to launch, develop and finalise such a long term process. Nevertheless, the one-year extension will be enough to have it kick-started, by raising staff capacities and setting the tone for a future programme to be focused on this topic. In order to achieve maximum learning, the DryDev staff undertook this rapid land governance appraisal, in order to find out some facts on land governance, and interact with DryDev target groups and stakeholders to get an impression of the realities in which the beneficiaries operate. To this end, a two-step approach was developed, covering the collection of secondary data collection from government offices at the District level, complemented with a field work comprised of personal interviews and focus group discussions with partners and target groups. Together, the outcomes of the research aimed at the following:

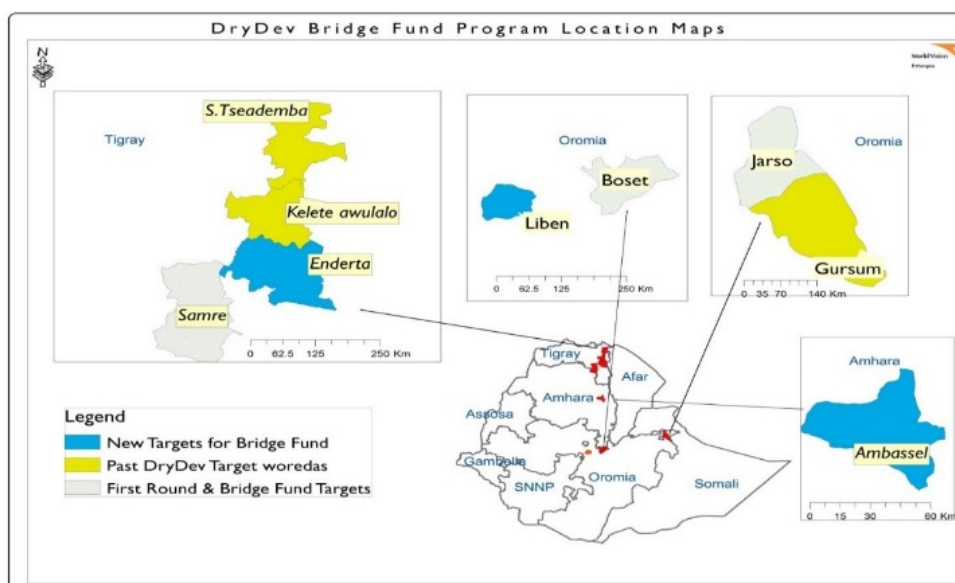
1. Raise the level of awareness of DryDev staff, and raise its capacities to contribute to the enhancement of land governance;
2. Set project targets for the enhancement of land governance, and enable DryDev staff to assess the level of success;
3. Lay the foundation for new programmes on land governance to be designed in future.

### 2.2 Geographic coverage

The rapid appraisal was carried out in the three regions where the DryDev programme is operational, including three Districts from the previous programme phase complemented with three new Districts to be added. These six Districts are (see map):

1. Oromia Region: Liben Chuqala, Jarso and Boset (Buta Bedaso and Buta Dalecha Geda) Woreda,
2. Amhara Region: Ambassel (Millie and Teremichig) Woreda and
3. Tigray Region: Enderta (Sub-watershed Golagul and Welelbeati) and Samra (Waza and Maytekli) Woreda.

The secondary data were collected in the six Districts where DryDev works. The interviews and focus group discussions took place in two Districts only, which are Ambasel in Amhara and Boset in Oromia. No field work was carried out in Tigray, due to political turmoil and conflict in Tigray during the training period.



**Figure 1** Map of DryDev's implementation areas.

## 2.3 Methodology used

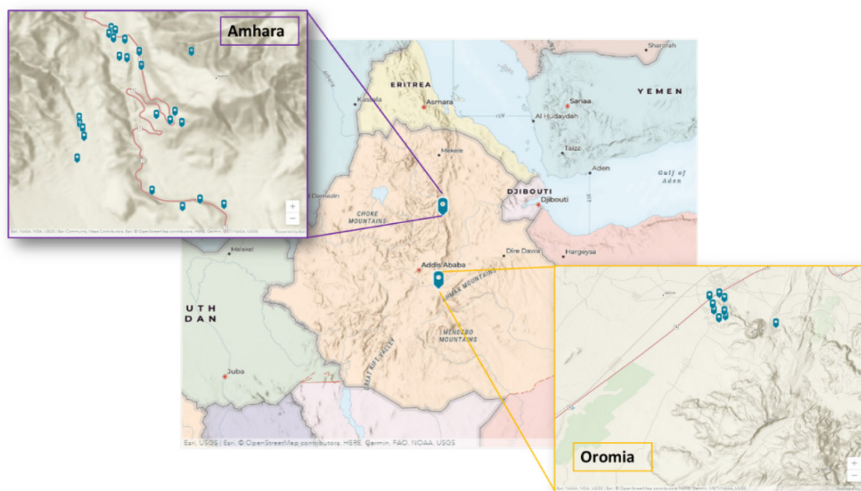
The aim of the appraisal was not to provide a complete and academically accurate overview of the current situation of land governance in Ethiopia, but to help DryDev staff to get a good insight of the current situation regarding land governance in the areas where they work. With this insight DryDev staff would be capable of securing sustainability of its current programme activities, and contribute to the design of new programme activities in future. To this end, a simple two-phase approach was developed, focusing on the following:

- Quantitative data: The data for the baseline were collected by DryDev staff, consulting with the responsible officer from the Agricultural and Rural Land Administration office.
- Qualitative data: During the land governance training in 2020-2021 field work was organised to collect real life stories, through interviews and focus group discussions with the programme's partners and beneficiaries, and illustrated with photos taken in the field.

Regarding the field work, *Polarsteps* was used as a simple tool for participatory data collection.

Polarsteps is an open online application that automatically tracks travellers' journeys:

<https://www.polarsteps.com>. The journeys are displayed on an interactive map showing the traveller's routes, key locations and photos. During the land governance training (December 2020-March 2021) two journeys were created, one to Ambasel in Amhara and one to Boset in Oromia. Through the application, pictures were taken of fields, plots and wider areas, as well as stakeholders, illustrating their opinions and views on landscape governance



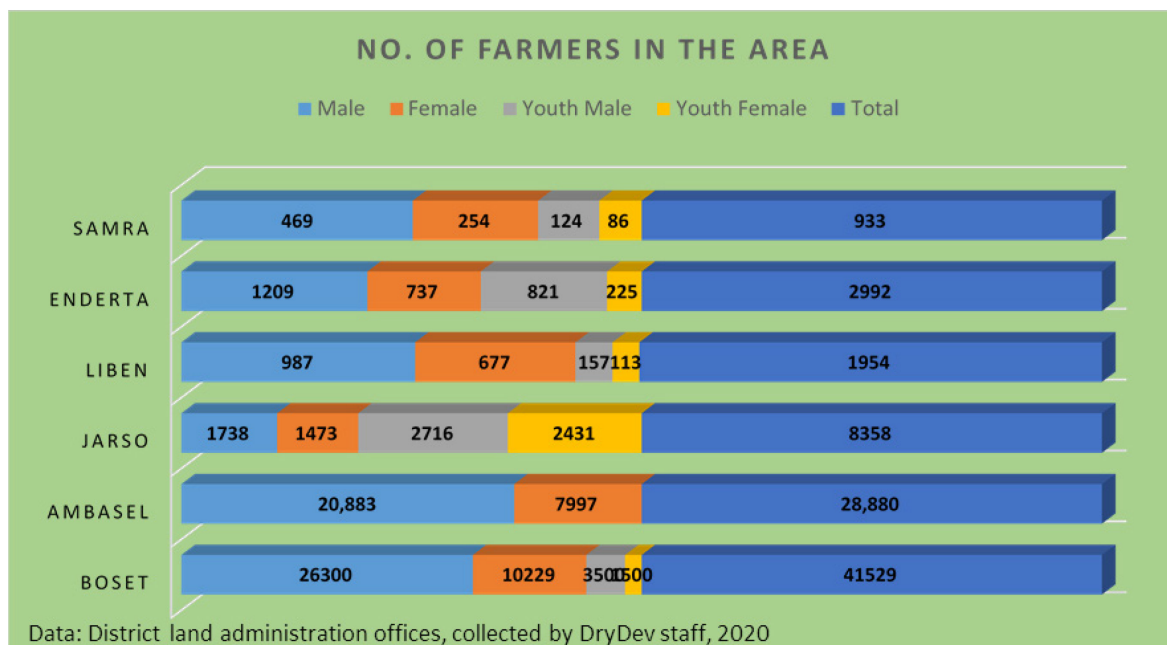
**Figure 2** Map of the areas where field work was carried out.



## 3 The results

### 3.1 Total population in DryDev intervention Woredas

The total population residing in DryDev intervention Woredas is app. 85,000 (see graph 1). App. 44,000 of this total population lives in Ambasel in Amhara and Boset in Oromia. These are the Woredas where more detailed field work has taken place, as shown in the subsequent chapters.

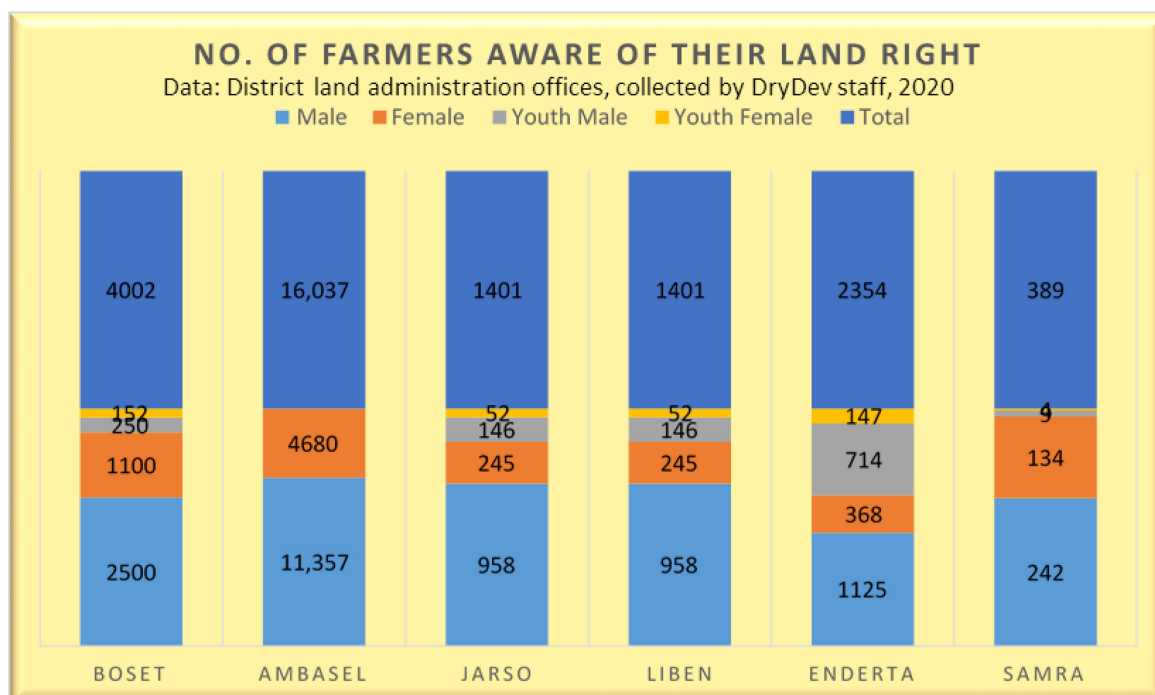


**Graph 1** Total population residing in DryDev Woredas.

### 3.2 Awareness on land rights

A large proportion of the population residing in DryDev's intervention zones is well aware of the tenure rights that they have. A majority of male respondents participated in one or more awareness raising events organised by the government, in many cases supported by DryDev. Among female respondents however the percentage of awareness on tenure rights is much smaller than among men. Awareness among the male youth is extremely low, while awareness among female youth is practically nil.

This is in line with the statistics derived from the District offices which show that awareness raising events and training organised at the Regional, Zonal or Woreda level are mainly visited by males. Female attendance in general is lower, and attendance of youth is very low. There is no clear explanation for these low figures of female and youth participation in awareness raising events and training. Most likely, the adult men are considered to be the heads of the families, and therefore the only ones in the family that attend these meetings. Another reason may be that women are too busy working on the farm, while youth is largely at school, or engaged in other employment. In both cases, the figures illustrate the relatively weak position of women and youth within land governance, which explains the special focus of DryDev on women and youth empowerment in general, and especially with regard to land tenure.



**Graph 2** The level of awareness among DryDev target groups (source: District offices, collected by DryDev staff, 2020).

**Table 1** Numbers of participants taking part in awareness raising events on Land Registration organised by District staff and DryDev (source: District offices, collected by DryDev staff, 2020).

Districts	Male	Female	Youth Male	Youth Female	Total
Boset	2500	1100	250	152	4002
Ambasel	9510	6001	0	0	15,511
Jarso	1200	80	175	45	1500
Liben	958	245	146	52	1401
Enderta	112	39	67	15	233
Samra	72	48	0	0	120

### 3.3 Awareness on land rights: stories from the field



Photo: DryDev staff, land governance staff training 2020-2021

In order to illustrate the quantitative material presented above, the DryDev staff carried out its field trip. They went -amongst others- to Debub Wello where they talked with a local farmer who said: *'I own a plot of 0,5 hectares. Once a year I grow my crops. I grow maize, sorghum and tef mainly. I do have a certificate, I received it without difficulty as I know my rights. I did not use it to get a loan. I don't know whether I could have received it if I asked, I did not try, as I do not need it.'*

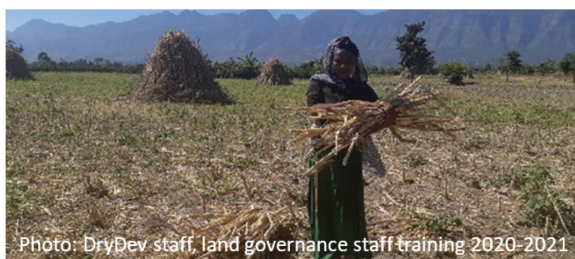


Photo: DryDev staff, land governance staff training 2020-2021

Meanwhile, other DryDev staff met with Hayat Seid, who is working on the farm that she owns. At that moment she was collecting the residues of her crops to be used as animal feed in the long try season. Hayat Seid said that she has a land certificate of the first level. She knows that she can use it to get a loan. For now, she does not need a loan, as she is harvesting enough to feed her family. Maybe in future she will consider investing in her farm, when the market conditions and therefore her profit will be better.



Photo: DryDev staff, land governance staff training 2020-2021

Also in Debub Wello the staff met a group of young boys and girls who were working together on a vegetable farm. These young people said that they do not have their own land, but their parents have. They are working together on a piece of land that they borrow, in order to gain some income for themselves. Vegetable farming, so they said, is good business, and they hope that in future they will own their own piece of land, to become professional vegetable farmers.



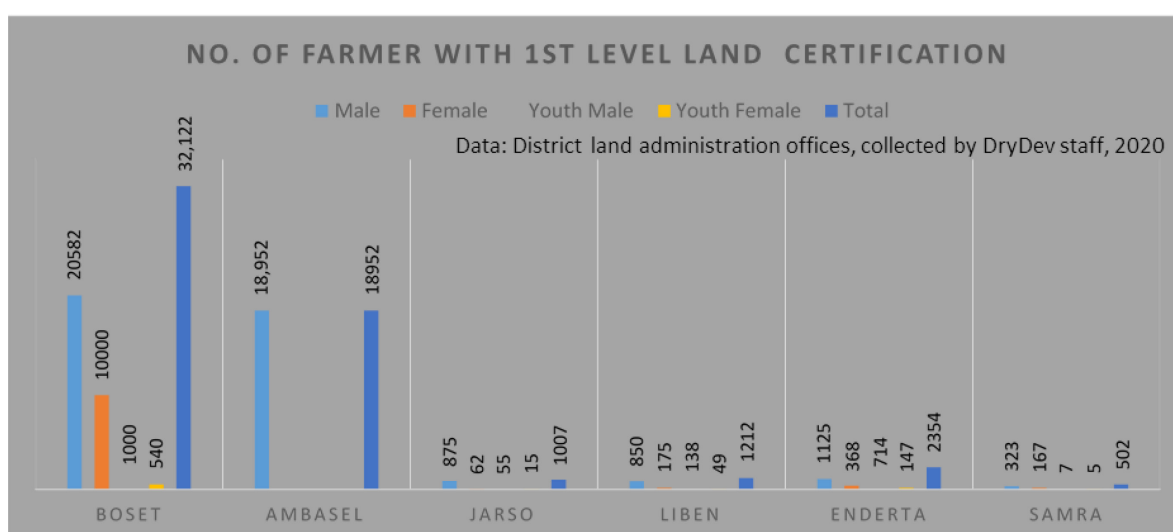
Photo: DryDev staff, land governance staff training 2020-2021

Raising awareness on tenure rights is the duty of the staff of the District Land Administration officers. In Boset, Amin Adem who is the officer in charge is well aware of his duty. Farmers, pastoralists, men and women, young and old, so he said, all need to be aware of their rights, and also be able to claim these, to build a good life for themselves and their families. There are lots of challenges, but the basis of rural livelihoods is land, which needs to be accessible to all those who need it. Amin illustrated this by saying the following: *'Land is like a mother. It can provide us with all we need and want, but only if we take proper care of it'*. Amin Adem is working closely with DryDev staff, to raise awareness on tenure rights, and help securing land rights for all.

### 3.4 The status and degree of land certification (first and second level)

According to the 2016 Land Governance Assessment of the World Bank, and confirmed by the USAID study of 2020, the vast majority of farmers within DryDev intervention Woredas have received their first level certificate (World Bank, 2016; USAID, 2020). This is confirmed by the data collected by DryDev during their field appraisal (see graph 3), showing that first level certification is almost complete. Despite this relative high level of tenure security, unsustainable land use practice pertains, with declining productivity as a result. It is expected that second level certification will solve a number of these pertaining issues, as it will provide more accurate geographical locations and sizes of individual farm plots using technologies such as GPS and satellite imagery. With this new registration and certification system farmers will receive plot-level certificates rather than household-level certificates, with hard copies of certificates, including maps, specific data and the name of the right holder included. Due to the high costs of this operation it may however take time for all farmers to receive a second level certificate (MOA, 2013; Bezu and Holden, 2014).

The second level certification is still in progress, or about to start (see table 2). More precisely, in Boset and Samra it is almost complete, in Jarso it is still ongoing, while in the remaining areas the process has not yet started. As the pressure on land is mounting, the value of a first level certificate is rapidly declining, and the lack of a second level certificate seems to hamper peoples' tenure security in practical terms. Moreover, it is increasingly doubted whether a first level certificate is enough to get a loan, or whether access to financial services will soon be restricted to holders of second level certificates only. In Boset, there is a relatively large percentage of farmers having access to financial services, while in the other Districts (i.e. Enderta) this number remains low.



**Graph 3** Number farmers with registered first level land certification.

**Table 2** No. of farmers with Second level land certification.

Districts	Male	Female	Youth Male	Youth Female	Total
Boset	1274	250	92	49	1665
Samra	357	191	2	1	551



### 3.5 Illustrating land certification in progress: stories from the field



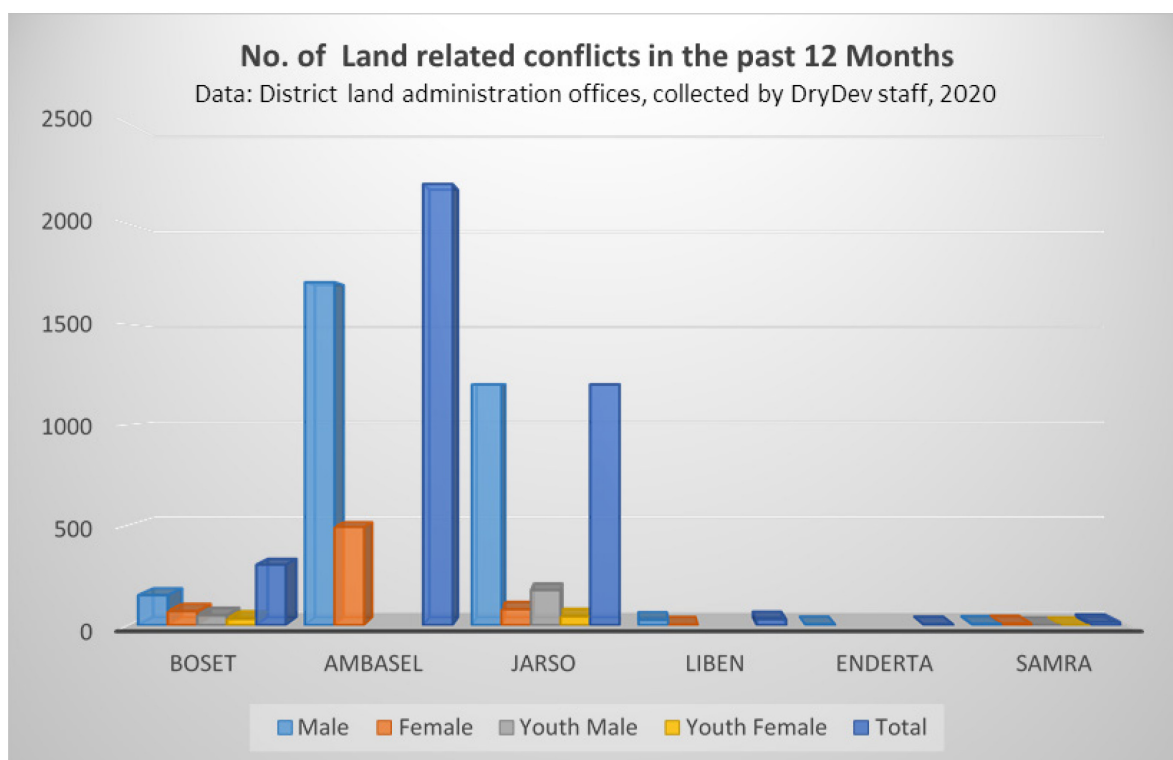
During the field work, DryDev staff residing in Ambasel (Amhara) and Boset (Oromia) interviewed project partners and beneficiaries regarding the progress of the certification process. The interviews confirmed the data presented in the graph, but add qualitative information on how different elements of land governance is experienced by people on the ground. During an interview with DryDev staff, the Land Administration Officers in Ambasel explained how land administration works in practice. The officers know exactly how the process of measurement, registration and certification of plots is being done, and where their responsibility lies. Ambasel's Land Administration Officer said: *'our job is to secure the rights of our rural people. We have mechanisms to raise awareness, mechanisms to address issues, and mechanisms to solve conflicts whenever these arise'*. He is however less sure about the process of allocating rights over communal land and forests, as rules and regulation of these lands is still being developed. There is not such a thing as community forestry yet, which seem to be working well in other countries. So at present, the big question is who actually owns the forest? Formally, all forests are considered communal or state land. Trees cannot be cut by individuals, without having a permit. In Ambasel however, staff met a person who just returned from the forest, where he cut some trees, in order to sell it on the market. Should this be considered a crime? The person argues: *'There is a great shortage of firewood. I have to cut some trees and sell these on the market, where it will make a good price. I have to pay food, to be taken home and feed my family'*.

Also with regard to the communal grazing land it is hard to tell who is entitled to herd their animals or plant crops. This creates confusion among herders, who do not know where to bring their cattle to graze, and conflict with farmers who are looking for good land. Ahmed for example said that he has goats, and he is always searching for free land to graze his animals. There are farms everywhere, so he said, but he does not have a farm himself. He doesn't want to spoil someone else's crops, but it is just hard to find the grasses that his animals need to stay healthy. It also creates confusion among farmers, who do not know what to do when cattle cross their field, yet they know how difficult it is to obtain quality grass. It also creates tension between herders and farmers, as they both need the land to make themselves a living.

After the conversation with Ahmed, DryDev staff met a lady who was passing by with crop residues on her head. She would have wanted to leave the residues on the land, so she said, to improve the soil fertility, as how she had learned during a course. She would also have wanted to leave it there for the cattle to eat. But despite all, she has decided to take it home, to be used as fuel. Firewood has become so expensive, that she prefers to burn the remaining of her crops. And so she does.

### 3.6 Occurrence of land related conflicts

As shown in the following graph, there is an increasing number of conflicts related to land, especially in Ambasel and Jarso District.



**Graph 4** Number of land related conflicts during the past 12 months (2020).

The field trip was used to ask what are the underlying reasons for these conflicts. The interviews raised the following explanatory information:

- Farm land keeps expanding its boundaries and encroaches upon the grass land;
- The shift from communal land to cultivated land is not done according to the rules;
- Grazing land is increasingly turned into farm land and urban settlement;
- Water is increasingly used for irrigation, reducing the amount of water for human and animal consumption;
- The period for field closure to allow for its rehabilitation is not always respected;
- There is a lack of awareness on sustainable land use and land management;
- Land transfers, gifts and inheritance is not properly recorded;
- Delineation of fields and boundaries of parcels near communal land are not always clear;
- The distribution of fertile land is not always fairly done, and there is little support for those who try to make an appeal;
- Population growth leads to increased demands for land to settle, while the boundaries between rural and urban land are not clearly defined;
- Delineation is often done through fencing and road blocks, which creates conflicts between neighbours;
- The boundaries of plots and settlement areas do not align with the territorial boundaries of sub-kebele's.

All the above mentioned sources of conflict relate to the increasing population having an increasing demand for food, land for housing, land for crop production, and grazing land. As a result, there is an expansion of the number and the sizes of farm land, creating disputes over the exact land demarcation and boundaries of plots. Except for in Samra, animals are free to move and find food wherever they can. This creates regular conflicts with the owners of the land, especially in the period



just before the harvest. Crop residues serve as fodder, but not before the crops themselves are harvested. Animal droppings increase the fertility of the soils, but the animals should not destroy the standing crops. Traditional system of co-existence seems to be rapidly eroding, as the land is no longer enough to allow for sharing land and simultaneous use. Despite the high rate of first level certification, many land transfers are informally done, leading to new unclarities and informalities. Land is given to family members, or divided over the children when a head of household passes away, without formal land transfer and redefinition of the boundaries of the parcels. This is exactly the reason why second level certification is recommended, but due to the complicated procedures and high costs involved, the process of second level certification remains behind.



In all DryDev's intervention areas agricultural investment is on the increase, which means that farming systems become more rational, and private property is becoming more and more common. Yet with the shift to private tenure arrangements there is an increasing pressure on communal land. As a result, the availability of communal land and grazing land is rapidly declining, leading to competition and conflict on the remaining land. Whereas available water sources are increasingly used for irrigation purposes, water for animals is becoming scarce. Herders have to walk for hours in order to drink their animals. Even the water availability for human consumption is getting scarce. People, especially women and children are spending hours to fetch water for domestic use. In Jarso and Boset people spend an average of two hours in finding water, while in Liben this may even mount to eight hours. Near Ambasel, the field work staff met Kebed, who is on his way back home after fetching water from the spring far away from his home (data collected from District offices).

**Table 3** Walking hours to the nearest water source (data derived from District offices).

Walking hours for herders to fetch water for their animals to drink						
	Boset	Ambasel	Jarso	Liben	Enderta	Samra
Walking hour	2	1	2	8	1	1

Urban expansion further increases land pressure, especially in the more urbanised Districts of Boset and Ambasel, where urban land is increasing at the expense of rural land. Physical space is reducing and the price of land is on the increase. Unclear land transactions are happening all over, a phenomena which does not contribute to the transparency of land governance. Fences and road blocks are symptoms of land pressure, and these are emerging everywhere. Spatial planning maybe a solution, yet only in Boset and Samra there is a spatial plan developed, while in the other Districts there is not.

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## 4 The way forward

From the previous chapters it has become clear that improving land governance through tenure security alone is not enough to secure rural people's lives and livelihoods. It certainly helps to increase the transparency and credibility of land policies and administrations, and it helps to secure land rights for all land users. But raising the quality of life of Ethiopia's rural population entails more. It also entails raising the quality of land, vegetation, soil and water. To this end, DryDev has invested a lot in sustainable land- and water management activities, to ensure that land, after finalization of the titling process, will keep its fertility and productive capacity to provide nutritious food for its owners, and remain productive for future generations to come. DryDev has invested a lot of effort to enhance food production, and raise households' incomes through income generating activities and increased access to financial services. Rich is DryDev's legacy of watershed rehabilitation and livelihood improvement through the many technical and institutional trainings which were provided by the team. Great are the many examples of hands-on trainings organised to rehabilitate watersheds through sustainable land and water management, reforestation, farmer managed natural regeneration and soil improvements, recovering many hectares of land. Great are also the many trainings provided to farmers introducing them to novel production techniques, in an attempt to intensify land use and increasing yields per hectare. DryDev has made great progress by providing institutional support to its watershed committees to manage and govern their watersheds well. Large numbers of government staff were encouraged to apply participatory methods and more effective extension services, to strengthen relations between those having rights, and those having the duties to secure these rights.

But the way forward requires even more, and goes beyond the scope of the DryDev programme. The documents and articles consulted during the appraisal all plead for dialogue as being the next step to drive the process of land governance in Ethiopia forward. Constructive dialogue where multiple stakeholders from different sectors at local, regional and national level share their perspectives and concerns regarding land, and explore the potential pathways for structural improvement. Throughout the years, DryDev has raised the capacity of its target groups to engage in land dialogue at the local level. Through the appraisal and training, DryDev staff has acquired the practical skills to organise and facilitate multi-stakeholder land dialogue at the district level. By networking with partners like Land for Life and GIZ who supported the training, DryDev has strengthened its position to engage in land dialogue at the national level. Building on the outcomes of DryDev and the trust that it has created at all levels of governance, World Vision could embark upon a new programme that aims at the establishment of land dialogue at the local, the district, the regional and the national level. This would enlarge World Vision's scope of influence, and offer new opportunities to combine land management and agricultural innovation with institutional innovation through land governance, to further contribute to improving the lives of many.



Photo: DryDev staff, land governance staff training 2020-2021

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## 5 Conclusions

The previous chapters reflect the outcomes of a rapid appraisal carried out by DryDev staff in 2020. The aim of this appraisal was to expose DryDev staff to the concept of land governance, and get more grip on the complex situation of land governance within the area where they work. Throughout the process, land governance was approached from a land tenure perspective, to help DryDev staff to understand the actual situation of land tenure on the ground.

The appraisal was part of a larger journey on land governance which aimed at the enhancement of DryDev staff capacities on land governance in theory and in practice. Stronger land governance capacities will enable DryDev staff to raise public awareness on the importance of tenure security, and strengthen the relation between its target groups and government staff who are responsible for implementing the process of land reform. The appraisal was embedded in a two weeks training on land governance. This training helped DryDev staff to put the appraisal results into a larger framework of land governance and land reform. The training covered the various aspects of land governance like land rights, land administration, land policy, spatial planning and spatial decision making. It zoomed into the issue of land conflicts, and covered the basic skills of conflict management. It also zoomed in on the value of building dialogue, and provided staff with the practical skills to design and facilitate multi-stakeholder dialogue themselves.

During the execution of the appraisal and the training it was realized that within Ethiopia, a lot of effort, time and finance is invested in land reform, including the improvement of land policies, improvement of the registration system, reduction of the number of conflicts through registration, accurate administration systems, and transparent communication. Enormous progress is being made, yet shortcomings are also witnessed, especially in the area of communicating the rules and regulations, both from the side of right holders (farmers, herders, rural and urban citizens, private companies) and from the side of the responsible government agencies.

Having the right to land is a central element in good land governance, which has been extensively covered in this document. But having the right to produce, and the right to take part in spatial planning and decision making are equally important components of land governance. All these three components are highly interrelated, as one cannot go without the others. Throughout DryDev's implementation period, all these three components have received ample attention, with an extra boost to the element of land governance in its final stage. With this, the DryDev programme is a living example of a multi-faceted approach to rural development, and it has built a solid foundation for subsequent programmes to build upon.

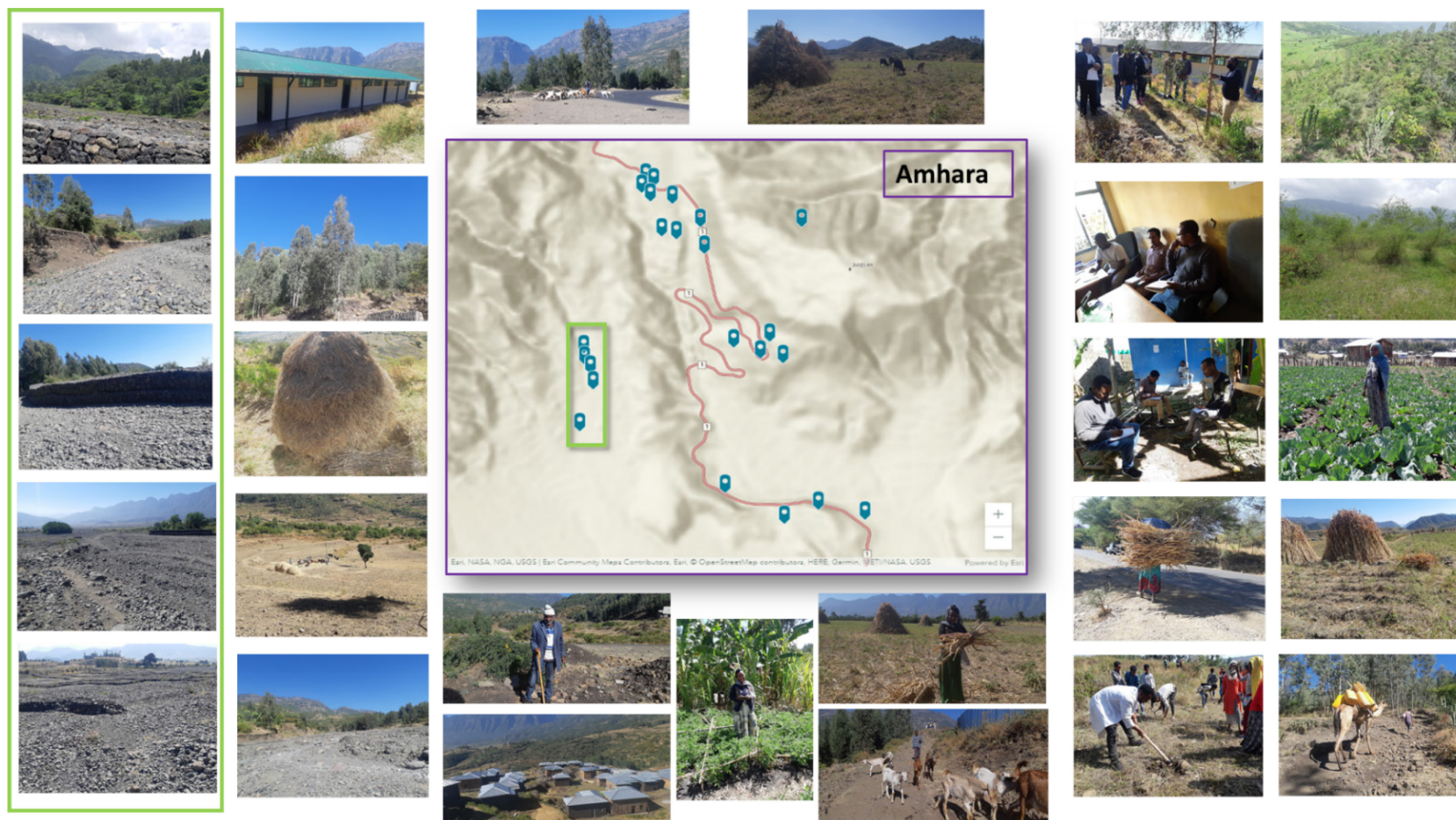
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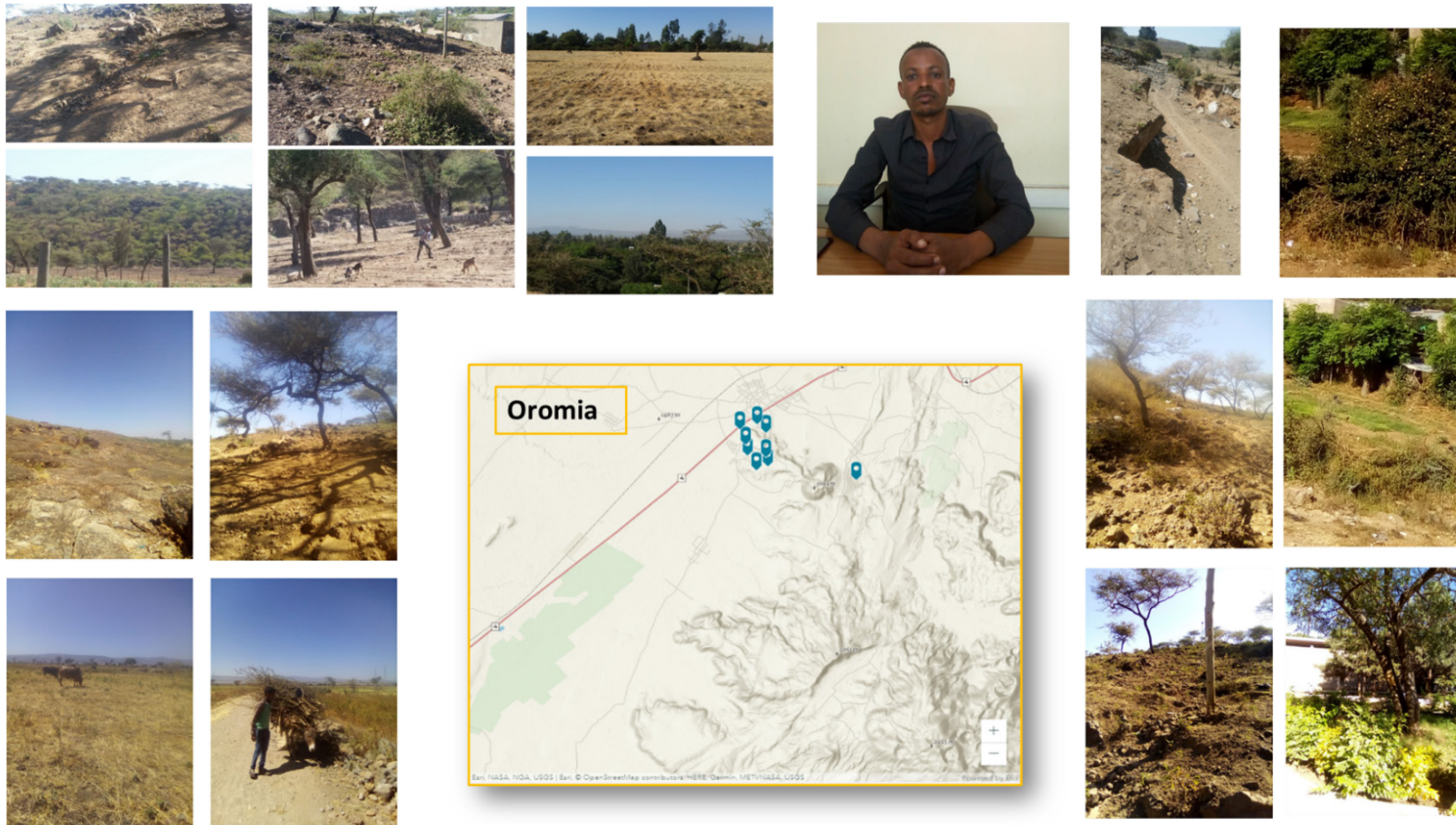
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## Appendix 1 Overview of the field work in Amhara (extracted from Polarsteps)



## Appendix 2 Overview of the field work in Oromia (extracted from Polarsteps)





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